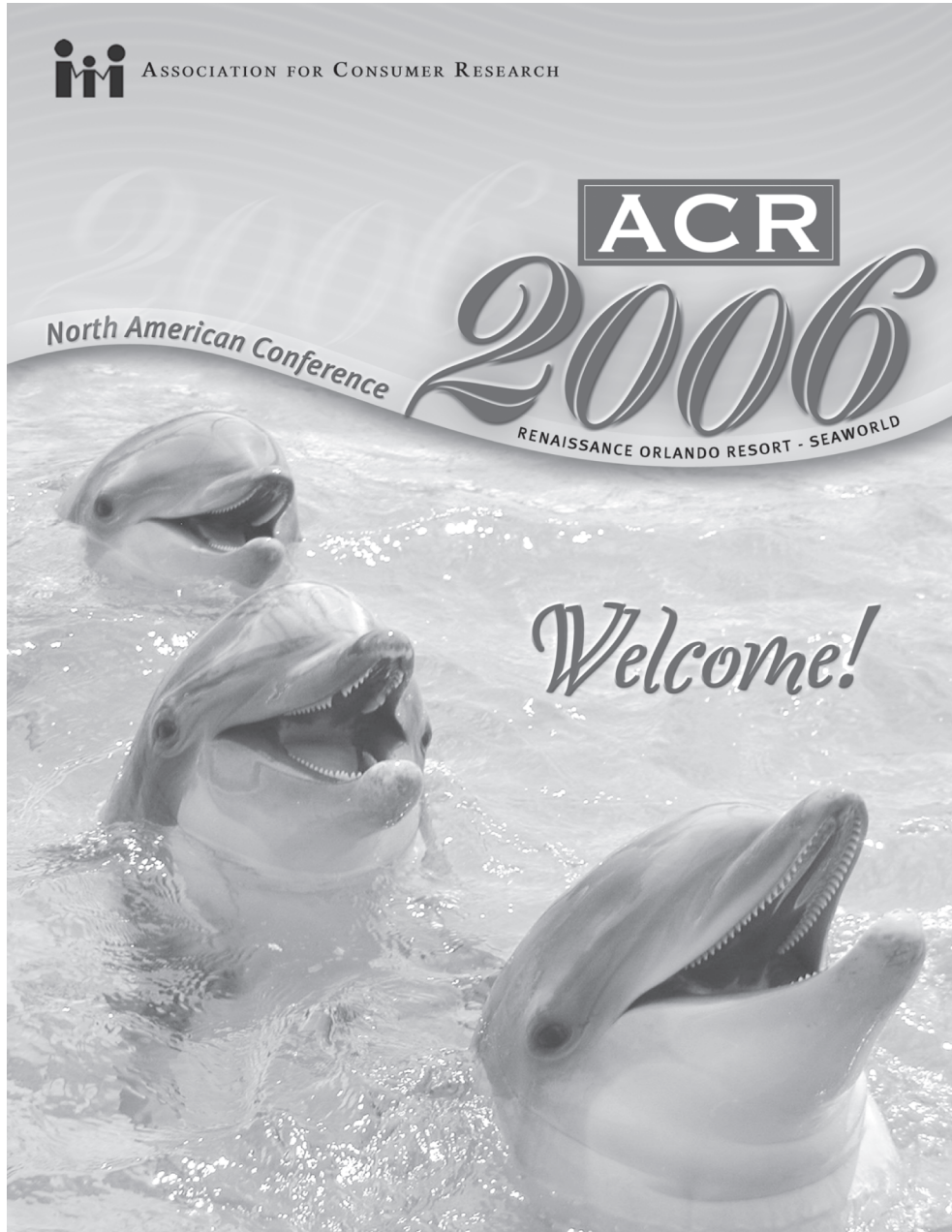


Advances in Consumer Research

Volume
XXXIV



Editors
Gavan J. Fitzsimons
Vicki G. Morwitz

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International Standard Book Number (ISBN): 0-915552-59-0

International Standard Serial Number (ISSN): 0098-9258

Gavan J. Fitzsimons and Vicki G. Morwitz, Editors

Advances in Consumer Research, Volume 34

(Duluth, MN: Association for Consumer Research, 2007)

Preface

The 34th Annual Conference of the Association for Consumer Research (ACR) was held at the Renaissance Orlando Resort at Seaworld in Orlando, Florida, from September 28-October 1, 2006. These proceedings include summaries of the presentations made at the conference in special sessions, competitive paper sessions, working paper sessions, roundtables, and the film festival.

The research presented at the conference this year was perhaps the most stimulating, high quality and diverse than at any previous ACR meeting. This year, records were set for the number of submissions in virtually every category, reflecting the growing interest in consumer research across a wide number of fields. As a result of this increased supply of research the quality of the work presented was exceptional. We were able to accept 30% of the 453 papers submitted for the competitive paper track, 43% of the 105 special session proposal submissions, as well as 112 working papers. In addition, the program included a film festival with 9 intriguing and engaging films as well as 8 roundtable sessions. A record high was also set in the number of people attending the conference (862) including over 200 from outside the U.S. and over 300 doctoral students. Over 140 students attended the doctoral symposium that preceded ACR.

We want to thank the generous donors who provided financial support for this year's conference including the College of Business at the University of Central Florida, the Warrington College of Business at the University of Florida, the Labovitz School of Business and Economics at University of Minnesota Duluth, Interpretive Software, the *Journal of Consumer Research*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Survey Monkey, and the University of Chicago Press.

We also want to thank all the people who provided us with invaluable help with this conference. We especially want to thank the members of the ACR program committee, the working paper reviewers, film festival reviewers, and competitive paper reviewers. In addition, we owe a special thanks to all the student volunteers from Duke University and New York University who helped us tremendously. A number of folks played leadership roles in this year's conference and deserve special recognition. We thank Loraine Laugesk, University of California-Irvine, and Patti Williams, University of Pennsylvania, who co-chaired the roundtable sessions, Russell Belk, University of Utah, and Robert Kozinets, York University, who co-chaired the film festival, Sucharita Chandran, Boston University, and Andrea Morales, Arizona State University, who co-chaired the working papers poster session, Steve Nowlis, Arizona State University, and Rebecca Ratner, University of Maryland, who co-chaired the doctoral symposium, and Andrea Morales, Arizona State University, and Joe Nunes, University of Southern California, for helping us organize our Saturday night special event at Universal's Islands of Adventure. More than 400 ACR conference attendees attended the Saturday night event and gasped, laughed, and screamed on the rollercoaster with their ACR colleagues for the first time.

We also owe special thank you's to Alex Cherfas, University of Minnesota-Duluth, for his help with the ACR web system, Amber Turner, Duke University, for her help with academic aspects of the conference, Patty Salo Downs, ACR conference coordinator, for doing everything necessary to ensure the success of the conference and always doing so with patience and a smile, and Rajiv Vaidyanathan, ACR Executive Director, for all his support throughout the process. Finally, we want to thank Barbara Kahn, President of ACR, for trusting us with this conference and supporting us throughout its planning and execution.

Gavan J. Fitzsimons, Duke University
Vicki G. Morwitz, New York University
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FILM FESTIVAL

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WORKING PAPERS

Sucharita Chandran, Boston University

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Table of Contents

Preface	iii
ACR Conference Committee and Reviewers	iv
Table of Contents / Conference Program	xviii

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

<i>Moving the Needle: Can ACR Help Increase Our Research Productivity</i>	1
Barbara E. Kahn, University of Pennsylvania, USA	

ASSOCIATION FOR CONSUMER RESEARCH 2006 ACR NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE

**THURSDAY
28 September 2006**

ACR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
12:00pm-5:00pm

**ACR DOCTORAL SYMPOSIUM
Part I**
1:00pm-5:00pm

Plenary Session
1:00pm-2:30pm

Break Out Sessions
3:00pm-5:00pm

ACR WELCOME RECEPTION
6:00pm-8:00pm

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FRIDAY
29 September 2006

JCR ASSOCIATE EDITOR'S MEETING
7:30am-9:00am

FRIDAY
29 September 2006

ACR FILM FESTIVAL
8:00am-12:00pm

Chairs
Russell Belk, University of Utah, USA
Robert Kozinets, York University, Canada

Coffee Grounds and the Global Cup: Glocal Consumer Culture in Scandinavia 5
Dannie Kjeldgaard, University of Southern Denmark
Jacob Ostberg, Stockholm University School of Business

People's Choice Award Winning Film

Scenes from a Street: Visual Impact of Globalization on Consumptionscapes 6
Ebru Ulusoy, University of Texas-Pan American

Cultural Co-Consumption: 21 Conversations about the People We Consume With 7
Gary F. Gebhardt, University of South Florida
Paul A. Swindle, University of South Florida

The Stonewall Metaphor: Making An Impact with Transformative Consumer Research 8
Eric D. DeRosia, Brigham Young University
Glenn L. Christensen, Brigham Young University

Consumption of Counterfeit Luxury Goods: How and Why? 10
María Eugenia Pérez, Tecnológico de Monterrey
Raquel Castaño, Tecnológico de Monterrey
Claudia Quintanilla, Tecnológico de Monterrey

Center for Consumer Culture Award Winning Film

Empowering the Citizen-Consumer: Striving to Reduce Maternal Deaths and Morbidity in Pakistan 10
Paul Henry, University of Sydney
Marylouise Caldwell, University of Sydney

Dirty Little Secret: Home Chaos and Professional Organizer 11
Russell Belk, University of Utah
Joon Yong Seo, University of Utah
Eric Li, University of Utah

Why Don't Consumers Behave Ethically? The Social Construction of Consumption 12
Giana Eckhardt, Suffolk University
Timothy Devinney, Austrian Graduate School of Management
Russell Belk, University of Utah

What's Gorgeous Consumption? 13
Hiroshi Tanaka, Hosei University
Junko Kimura, Hosei University

FRIDAY
29 September 2006

SESSION 1
8:00am–9:30am

1.1. Competitive Paper : Brighter Side of Marketing

Chairs: Laurie Meamber, George Mason University, USA
Tim Heath, Miami University, USA

Mi Casa es Whose Casa? An Experimental Investigation of Consumers' Propensity to Participate in Multilateral Sharing Systems 14

Randall L. Rose, University of South Carolina, USA
Catherine Poynor, University of South Carolina, USA

The Muse Effect: When Romantic Motives Create Creativity 15

Vladas Griskevicius, Arizona State University, USA
Robert Cialdini, Arizona State University, USA
Douglas Kenrick, Arizona State University, USA

Gift-Giving Behaviors: Views from an Attachment Perspective 16

Hieu P. Nguyen, University of Texas at Arlington, USA
James M. Munch, University of Texas at Arlington, USA

Small Gains or Smaller Losses: Optimal Price Promotions and the Silver Lining Effect 18

Peter Jarnebrant, Columbia University, USA
Eric Johnson, Columbia University, USA
Olivier Toubia, Columbia University, USA

1.2. Roundtable Session: Researching Visual Consumption 19

Chair: Jonathan Schroeder, University of Exeter, UK

Participants:

Janet Borgerson, University of Exeter, UK
Kent Drummond, University of Wyoming, USA
Fuat Firat, University of Texas, Pan American, USA
Rika Houston, California State University, Los Angeles, USA
David Luna, Baruch College – CUNY, USA
Leighann Neilson, Queens University, Canada
Stefano Puntoni, Rotterdam School of Management, Netherlands
Linda Scott, University of Oxford, UK

1.3. Special Session: Workbench Issues in Transformative Consumer Research

Chair: Julie L. Ozanne, Virginia Tech, USA
Jonathan Deschenes, Concordia University, Canada
Discussion Leader: Connie Pechmann, University of California at Irvine, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Workbench Issues in Transformative Consumer Research 20

Julie L. Ozanne, Virginia Tech, USA
Jonathan Deschenes, Concordia University, Canada

Behind Closed Doors: A Reflection on the Emotional Challenge of Doing Consumer Research on Painful Topics
Jonathan Deschenes, Concordia University, Canada

Consumer Research in the Shadow of the Towers
Jean-Sebastien Marcoux, HEC Montreal, Canada

Participatory Action Research as Engaged Practice: Implications for Transformative Consumer Research
Julie Ozanne, Virginia Tech, USA
Bige Saatcioglu, Virginia Tech, USA
Canan Corus, Virginia Tech, USA

1.4. Special Session: The Muscle Model of Self-Control Revisited: Does Exerting Self-Control Always Cause Depletion?

Chair: Sabrina Bruyneel, K.U.Leuven, Belgium / Carnegie Mellon University, USA
Discussion Leader: Klaus Wertenbroch, INSEAD, France

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

The Muscle Model of Self-Control Revisited: Does Exerting Self-Control Always Cause Depletion? 23
Sabrina Bruyneel, K.U.Leuven, Belgium / Carnegie Mellon University, USA

The Influence of Positive Affect on Regulatory Depletion
Wen (Echo) Wan, Northwestern University, USA
Alice M. Isen, Cornell University, USA
Brian Sternthal, Northwestern University, USA

Inoculations of Self-Control: Switching vs. Reinforcement Effects of Recalling Past Behavior
Anirban Mukhopadhyay, HKUST, Hong Kong
Jaideep Sengupta, HKUST, Hong Kong
Suresh Ramanathan, University of Chicago, USA

Getting Into It. Exerting Self-Control Enhances Self-Control Performance on Similar Tasks
Kelly Geyskens, K.U.Leuven, Belgium
Sabrina Bruyneel, K.U.Leuven, Belgium / Carnegie Mellon University, USA
Siegfried Dewitte, K.U.Leuven, Belgium

1.5. Special Session: Measurement of Subjective Wellbeing

Chair: Jason Riis, New York University, USA
Joachim Vosgerau, Carnegie Mellon, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Measurement of Subjective Wellbeing 27
Jason Riis, New York University, USA
Joachim Vosgerau, Carnegie Mellon University, USA

Measuring Cross-National Differences in Subjective Wellbeing
Jason Riis, New York University, USA
Daniel Kahneman, Princeton University, USA

A New Method for Comparing Subjective Wellbeing Across Countries and its Correlation with Suicide
Joachim Vosgerau, Carnegie Mellon, USA
Hubert Gatignon, INSEAD, France
Ed Diener, University of Illinois-Urbana Champagne, USA

Personality, Culture, and Subjective Wellbeing
Hans Baumgartner, Pennsylvania State University, USA
Jan-Benedict Steenkamp, UNC–Chapel Hill, USA

Critique of the Measurement of Happiness
Dan A. Ariely, MIT, USA
Uri Gneezy, University of San Diego, USA
Moshe Hoffman, University of Chicago, USA

1.6. Special Session: The Role of Metacognition in Consumers' Judgments

Chair: Manoj Thomas, Cornell University, USA
Discussion Leader: Chris Janiszewski, University of Florida, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

The Role of Metacognition in Consumers' Judgments 28
Manoj Thomas, Cornell University, USA

The Role of Ease in Consumers' Emotional Judgments
Derek D. Rucker, Northwestern University, USA
Pablo Briñol, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, Spain
Richard E. Petty, Ohio State University, USA

The Role of Subjective Ease in Price Comparisons
Manoj Thomas, Cornell University, USA
Vicki G. Morwitz, New York University, USA

Perceptual Fluency, Attitudes and Choice
Andy Mitchell, University of Toronto, Canada
Seh-Woong Chung, Singapore Management University

1.7. Competitive Paper : What's Right is Right! Consumer Social Responsibility

Chair: Katherine White, University of Calgary, Canada

Intending To Be Ethical: An Examination of Consumer Choice in Sweatshop Avoidance 31
Deirdre Shaw, Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland
Edward Shiu, Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland
Louise Hassan, University of Stirling and the Open University, United Kingdom
Caroline Bekin, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom
Gillian Hogg, University of Strathclyde, Scotland

HOOLIGAN'S HOLIDAY: Rethinking Deviant Consumer Behavior and Marketing 39
Aubrey R. Fowler III, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, USA

Consumer Vigilantism 45
Olga Kravets, University of Sydney, Australia

A Room with a Viewpoint: Using Normative Appeals to Motivate Energy Conservation in a Hotel Setting 47
Noah J. Goldstein, Arizona State University, USA
Robert B. Cialdini, Arizona State University, USA
Vladas Griskevicius, Arizona State University, USA

1.8. *Competitive Paper* : Factors Influencing Brand Judgments

Chair: Alokparna Monga, University of Texas at San Antonio, USA

<i>“Uh-oh, Where is Our Brand Headed?” Exploring the Role of Risk in Brand Change</i>	49
Henrik Sjodin, Stockholm School of Economics, Sweden	
<i>The Moderating Effect of Brand Commitment on Consumer Response to Logo Shape Redesign</i>	54
Michael F. Walsh, West Virginia University, USA	
Vikas Mittal, University of Pittsburgh, USA	
Karen L. Page, University of Pittsburgh, USA	
<i>The Effects of Perceived Congruity Between Origin, Brand and Product on the Purchase Intention of a Branded Product of Origin</i>	55
Philippe Aurier, Montpellier University, France	
Fatiha Fort, ENSA Montpellier-MOISA Research Unit, France	
<i>Self-Brand Connections and Brand Resonance: The Role of Gender and Consumer Emotions</i>	64
David Moore, University of Michigan, USA	
Dayna Wurster, University of Michigan, USA	

1.9. *Competitive Paper* : Qualitative Approaches to Understanding Consumers

Chair: Therese Louie, San Jose State University, USA

<i>Gettysburg Co-Constructed: Producing and Consuming Narratives in an American Battlefield</i>	67
Athinodoros Chronis, California State University, USA	
<i>Representing Consumer Research: A Novel Approach</i>	70
Stephen Brown, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland	
<i>Authenticity in the Performing Arts: A Foolish Quest?</i>	75
Maud Derbaix, University of Namur, Belgium	
Alain Decrop, University of Namur, Belgium	
<i>Aesthetic Advertisements and Scientific Evaluations: Divergent Philosophies in Advertising Production</i>	81
Aidan Kelly, Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland	
Katrina Lawlor, Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland	
Stephanie O’Donohoe, University of Edinburgh, UK	

<p style="text-align: center;">FRIDAY 29 September 2006 KEITH HUNT NEWCOMERS’ BREAKFAST 9:30am-10:00am</p>
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<p>FRIDAY 29 September 2006</p> <p>SESSION 2 10:00am-11:30am</p>
--

2.1. Roundtable Session: Disseminating Transformative Consumer Research: Getting Research Results Out of the Tower and Into Consumers' Lives 83

Chair: Stacey Menzel Baker, University of Wyoming, USA

Participants:
David Hunt, University of Wyoming, USA
David Mick, University of Virginia, USA
Julie Ozanne, Virginia Tech University, USA

2.2. Special Session: Low-Fat Foods and High-Fat People: The Role of Anticipated and Experienced Consumption Pleasure and Guilt

Chair: Pierre Chandon, INSEAD, France
Discussion Leader: Stella Volpe, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Low-Fat Foods and High-Fat People: The Role of Anticipated and Experienced Consumption Pleasure and Guilt 84
Pierre Chandon, INSEAD, France
Brian Wansink, Cornell University, USA

The Unhealthy = Tasty Intuition and its Effects on Taste Inferences, Enjoyment, and Choice of Food Products
Rajagopal Raghunathan, The University of Texas at Austin, USA
Rebecca Naylor, University of South Carolina, USA
Wayne Hoyer, The University of Texas at Austin, USA

Nutrition Claims, Anticipated Guilt, and Consumption Quantity
Brian Wansink, Cornell University, USA
Pierre Chandon, INSEAD, France

Getting More out of Guilty Pleasures
Kelly Goldsmith, Yale University, USA
Eunice Kim, Yale University, USA
Ravi Dhar, Yale University, USA

2.3. Special Session: Thinking About the Future

Chair: Ying Zhang, University of Chicago, USA
Discussion Leader: Tanya L. Chartrand, Duke University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Thinking About the Future 85
Ying Zhang, University of Chicago, USA

To Be Optimistic or To Be Accurate: How Self-Control and Accuracy Motives Influence Predictions of Goal Pursuit
Ying Zhang, University of Chicago, USA
Ayelet Fishbach, University of Chicago, USA

Remedying Hyperopia: The Effects of Self-Control Regret on Consumer Behavior

Anat Keinan, Columbia University, USA

Ran Kivetz, Columbia University, USA

Planning For Which Future? Lay Theories of Self-Control and the Temporal Framing of Goal-Directed Behavior

Anirban Mukhopadhyay, HKUST, Hong Kong

Nidhi Agrawal, Northwestern University, USA

2.4. Special Session: Order Effects in Multiple Choices: Of Lost Love, Spent Willpower, and Relinquished Control

Chair: Simona Botti, Cornell University, USA

Discussion Leader: Barbara E. Kahn, University of Pennsylvania, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Order Effects in Multiple Choices: of Lost love, Spent Willpower, and Relinquished Control 89
Simona Botti, Cornell University, USA

Setting the Stage or Making the Final Cut: The Timing of Control in the Choice Process

Simona Botti, Cornell University, USA

Tom Meyvis, New York University, USA

The Effect of Attribute Order and Variety on Choice Demotivation: A Field Experiment on German Car Buyers

Jonathan Levav, Columbia University, USA

Mark Heitmann, St. Gallen University, Switzerland

Andreas Herrmann, St. Gallen University, Switzerland

Sheena S. Iyengar, Columbia University, USA

The Bidirectional Relationship Between Making Choices and Self-Regulation

Kathleen D. Vohs, University of Minnesota, USA

Jungkeun Kim, University of Minnesota, USA

2.5. Special Session: When Who I Am Affects Who and How Much I Help: Social Influences on Giving

Chair: Karen Page, University of Pittsburgh, USA

Discussion Leader: Joan Nelson, Heart of Florida United Way, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

When Who I Am Affects Who and How Much I Help: Social Influences on Giving 93
Karen Page, University of Pittsburgh, USA

"I" Give, but "We" Give More: The Impact of Identity and the Mere Social Information Effect on Donation Behavior

Jen Shang, Indiana University, USA

Rachel Croson, University of Pennsylvania, USA

Americus Reed, University of Pennsylvania, USA

Tsunami or Katrina?: Effect of Conflicting Identities in Donation Behavior

Karen Page, University of Pittsburgh, USA

Vikas Mittal, University of Pittsburgh, USA

William Ross, Penn State University, USA

Giving and Sharing in Concentration Camps: The Impact of Third Party Influences

Tina Lowrey, University of Texas at San Antonio, USA

Jill Klein, INSEAD, France

2.6. *Competitive Paper: The Thoughts We Don't Have: The Unconscious Mind*

Chair: Michael Tsiros, University of Miami, USA and Athens Laboratory of Business Administration

<i>The Effect of Unintended Information Acquisition</i>	97
Lan Xia, Bentley College, USA	
Kent B. Monroe, University of Richmond and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA	
<i>Sex-related Cues Instigate the Urge to Splurge. How An Incidental Visceral State Renders Subsequent Behavior, Judgment and Decision-Making More Impulsive</i>	100
Bram Van den Bergh, K.U. Leuven, Belgium	
Siegfried Dewitte, K.U. Leuven, Belgium	
Luk Warlop, K.U. Leuven, Belgium	
<i>Positive Implicit Memory Effects for Event Incongruent Sponsorship</i>	102
Olivier Trendel, Grenoble Ecole de Management / Institut du Capital Client, France	
Luk Warlop, K. U. Leuven, Belgium	
<i>Implicit and Explicit Influences on Spontaneous and Deliberate Food Choices</i>	104
Marie-Cecile Cervellon, International University of Monaco, Principality of Monaco	
Laurette Dube, McGill University, Canada	
Barbel Knauper, McGill Univeristy, Canada	

2.7. *Competitive Paper: Cross Cultural Constructs*

Chair: Rika Houston, California State University, USA
Michael Callow, Morgan State University, USA

<i>Investigating The Interactive Effects of Visual Imagery and Brand Familiarity on Brand Recall: A Cross-Cultural Study</i>	110
Andrei Mikhailitchenko, Cleveland State University, USA	
Galina Mikhailitchenko, Psychological Institute of Russian Education Academy, Russia	
<i>The Safety of Objects: An Examination of Materialism and Brand Connections</i>	112
Aric Rindfleisch, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA	
James E. Burroughs, University of Virginia, USA	
Nancy Wong, Georgia Institute of Technology, USA	
<i>Cultural Differences in Brand Extension Judgments and Feedback Effects</i>	114
Kyeongheui Kim, University of Toronto, Canada	
Jongwon Park, Korea University, Korea	
Jungsang Yeo, Dong Guk University, Korea	
<i>Linguistic Differences between Chinese and English and Their Effects on Consumers' Ability to Generate Images</i>	116
Beichen Liang, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA	

2.8. *Competitive Paper: Rethinking Interactive and Online Marketing*

Chair: Charles McMellon, Hofstra University, USA

<i>Media Technologies: Mediated Families</i>	122
Shakeel Siddiqui, Dublin City University, Ireland	
Darach Turley, Dublin City University, Ireland	
<i>Live From Shopping Malls: Blogs and Chinese Consumer Desire</i>	131
Xin Zhao, University of Hawaii at Manoa, USA	
Russell W. Belk, University of Utah, USA	

Virtual Onscreen Assistants: A Viable Strategy to Support Online Customer Relationship Building? 138
 Kathy Keeling, University of Manchester, UK
 Peter McGoldrick, University of Manchester, UK
 Susan Beatty, University of Manchester, UK

Consuming Hyperplaces: Servicescape, Service-Escape, and the Production of the Servicespace 145
 Chris Houliez, University of Saskatchewan, Canada

2.9. Competitive Paper: MSI

**Friday
 29 September 2006**

ACR LUNCHEON AND PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS
 11:30am-1:00pm

ACR FILM FESTIVAL
 1:00pm-6:15pm

**Friday
 29 September 2006**

SESSION 3
 1:00pm-2:30pm

3.1. Roundtable Session: Grant Funding Opportunities and Challenges for Transformative Consumer Research 146

Chairs: Cornelia Pechmann, University of California, Irvine USA
 Eric Johnson, Columbia University, USA

Participants:

Paul Bloom, Duke University, USA
 David Brinberg, Virginia Tech University, USA
 Dan Freeman, University of Delaware, USA
 Joseph Plummer, Advertising Research Federation, USA
 Ron Hill, University of South Florida, USA
 Punam Keller, Dartmouth College, USA
 Kathleen Kelly, Colorado State University, USA
 David Mick, University of Virginia, USA
 Robert O’Conner, National Science Foundation, USA

3.2. Special Session: Cultural Identity and Judgment–To Bias or not to Bias

Chair: Cristel Russell, Cristel Antonia Russell, San Diego State University, USA
 Ana Valenzuela, Baruch College, USA
 Discussion Leader: Angela Lee, Kellogg, Northwestern University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Cultural Identity and Judgment–To Bias or not to Bias 147
 Cristel Antonia Russell, San Diego State University, USA
 Ana Valenzuela, Baruch College, USA

Cultural Identity and the Antecedents of Risky Decision-Making: Am I Good or Lucky?

Ana Valenzuela, Baruch College, USA
Peter Darke, University of British Columbia, Canada
Donnel Briley, University of Sydney, Australia

When Does Culture Matter? Effects of Personal Knowledge on the Correction of Culture-based Judgments

Donnel A. Briley, University of Sydney, Australia
Jennifer Aaker, Stanford University, USA

Cultural Identity Salience as a Catalyst of Consumer Resistance

Dale W. Russell, INSEAD, France
Cristel Antonia Russell, San Diego State University, USA

3.3. Special Session: “New Thoughts and New Possibilities”: Frontiers in Consumers’ Interpretations of New Products

Chair: Reetika Gupta, Lehigh University, USA
Sankar Sen, Baruch College/CUNY, USA
Discussion Leader: S Ratneshwar, University of Missouri-Columbia, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

“New Thoughts and New Possibilities”: Frontiers in Consumers’ Interpretations of New Products 151
Reetika Gupta, Lehigh University, USA
Sankar Sen, Baruch College/CUNY, USA

From Combination Products to Brand Alliances: How Conceptual Combination Influences Consumers’ Preferences

Page Moreau, University of Colorado, Boulder, USA
Jen Dale, University of Colorado, Boulder, USA
Amna Kirmani, University of Maryland, College Park, USA

Conceptual Combination and Categorization of Ambiguous Products

Priyali Rajagopal, Southern Methodist University, USA
Robert Burnkrant, Ohio State University, USA

Learning and Liking through Comparison: The Influence of Multiple Analogies on New Product Interpretations and Preferences

Reetika Gupta, Lehigh University, USA
Sankar Sen, Baruch College/CUNY, USA

3.4. Special Session: From First to Second Generation: Moderated Nonconscious Behavior Effects

Chair: S. Christian Wheeler, Stanford University, USA
Discussion Leader: James Shah, Duke University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

From First to Second Generation: Moderated Nonconscious Behavior Effects 155
S. Christian Wheeler, Stanford University, USA

Same Prime, Different Effects: Segmentation in Nonconscious Behavior Influence

S. Christian Wheeler, Stanford University, USA
Jonah Berger, Stanford University, USA

Nonconscious Relationship Reactance: When Significant Others Prime Opposing Goals

Amy Dalton, Duke University, USA
Tanya Chartrand, Duke University, USA

Nonconscious Effects on Economic Decisions: The Role of Perceptual Construals in Mediating Priming-to-Behavior Effects
 Dirk Smeesters, Tilburg University, Netherlands
 S. Christian Wheeler, Stanford University, USA
 Aaron Kay, University of Waterloo, Canada

3.5. Special Session: Variety, Expectations, and Choice

Chair: Alexander Chernev, Northwestern University, USA
 Discussion Leader: Barbara Kahn, University of Pennsylvania, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Variety, Expectations and Choice 159
 Alexander Chernev, Northwestern University, USA
 Ryan Hamilton, Northwestern University, USA

Too Much of a Good Thing? Option Attractiveness and Assortment Choice
 Alexander Chernev, Northwestern University, USA
 Ryan Hamilton, Northwestern University, USA

Great Expectations?! Assortment Size, Expectations and Satisfaction
 Kristin Diehl, University of Southern California, USA
 Cait Poynor, University of South Carolina, USA

Do I Like It If You Choose For Me? The Influence of Relationship Norms on Consumer Satisfaction
 Pankaj Aggarwal, University of Toronto, Canada
 Simona Botti, Cornell University, USA

3.6. Competitive Paper: Framing Effects

Chair: Lisa Abendroth, Boston University, USA

To Add or Not To Add? The Effects of Add-ons on Product Evaluation 163
 Marco Bertini, London Business School, UK
 Elie Ofek, Harvard Business School, USA
 Dan Ariely, MIT, USA

Segmenting and Targeting American University Students to Promote Responsible Alcohol Use: A Case for Applying Social Marketing Principles 164
 Sameer Deshpande, University of Lethbridge, Canada

The Framing Effect of Price Format
 Marco Bertini, London Business School, UK
 Luc Wathieu, Harvard Business School, USA

Money: A Bias for the Whole 166
 Arul Mishra, University of Iowa, USA
 Himanshu Mishra, University of Iowa, USA
 Dhananjay Nayakankuppam, University of Iowa, USA

3.7. *Competitive Paper: Qualitative Analysis of Consumer Sub-cultures*

Chair: Anders Bengtsson, Suffolk University, USA

<i>Shedding the Cocoon: A “Mortal Embodiment” Perspective of Organ Donation in Supporting and Enhancing Life</i>	167
Ai-Ling Lai, University of Gloucestershire, UK	
Janine Dermody, University of Gloucestershire, UK	
Stuart Hanmer-Lloyd, University of Gloucestershire, UK	
<i>Consumer Culture Matters: Insights from Contemporary Representations of Cooking</i>	175
Paul Hewer, Strathclyde University, Scotland	
Douglas Brownlie, University of Stirling, Scotland	
<i>An Investigation of Household Decision Making Among Immigrants</i>	180
L. Wakiuru Wamwara-Mbugua, Wright State University, USA	
<i>We Love to Hate You: Discourse Between the Distance Running Subculture and Mainstream Media</i>	187
Tandy D. Chalmers, University of Arizona, USA	
Hope Jensen Schau, University of Arizona, USA	

3.8. *Competitive Paper: Moods, Emotions, and What They Do To Us*

Chair: Lisa Watson, University of Regina, Canada

<i>Mood Self Verification Explains the Selection and Intake Frequency of Comfort Foods</i>	189
Brian Wansink, Cornell University, USA	
Collin Payne, Cornell University, USA	
<i>Going Along Versus Going Alone: When Fear and Romance Alter the Influence of Reference Groups</i>	191
Vladas Griskevicius, Arizona State University, USA	
Noah Goldstein, Arizona State University, USA	
Chad Mortensen, Arizona State University, USA	
Robert Cialdini, Arizona State University, USA	
Douglas Kenrick, Arizona State University, USA	
<i>Side Effects From Fear: The Automatic Inhibition of Threat-Relevant Brand Advertising</i>	192
Jesper Nielsen, University of Arizona, USA	
Stewart Shapiro, University of Delaware, USA	
<i>“Hopelessly Devoted to You” -Towards an Extended Conceptualization of Consumer Devotion</i>	194
Elisabeth A. Pichler, University of Innsbruck, Austria	
Andrea Hemetsberger, University of Innsbruck, Austria	

3.9. *Competitive Paper: Consumer Targeted Advertising*

Chair: Sara Appleton-Knapp, SDSU College of Business, USA

<i>When More May Be Less: The Effects of Regulatory Focus on Responses to Maximal/Minimal Comparative Frames</i>	200
Shailendra Jain, Indiana University, USA	
Nidhi Agrawal, Northwestern University, USA	
Durairaj Maheswaran, New York University, USA	
<i>“Be All You Can Be”: The Influence of Advertising Slogans on Regulatory focus and Consumer Spending Behavior</i>	206
Marieke L. Fransen, University of Twente, The Netherlands	
Bob M. Fennis, University of Twente, The Netherlands	
Ad Th. H. Pruyn, University of Twente, The Netherlands	

Does Confirmation Trump Valence? Confirmation and the Effects of Negative and Positive Political Advertising 208
 Joan M. Phillips, University of Notre Dame, USA
 Joel E. Urbany, University of Notre Dame, USA
 Thomas J. Reynolds, University of Texas at Dallas (Emeritus) and SRDA, USA

Perceived Variability, Category Size, and the Relative Effectiveness of “Leading Brand” Versus “Best in Class” Comparative Advertising Claims 209
 Xiaojing Yang, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, USA
 Shailendra Jain, Indiana University Bloomington, USA
 Charles Lindsey, State University of New York, Buffalo, USA
 Frank Kardes, University of Cincinnati, USA

Friday
29 September 2006

SESSION 4
 3:00pm-4:30pm

4.1. Special Session: Regulatory Focus and the Use of Time in the Evaluation of Persuasive Messages

Chair: Anne Laure Sellier, New York University, USA
 Discussion Leader: Brian Sternthal, Northwestern University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Regulatory Focus and the Use of Time in the Evaluation of Persuasive Messages 210
 Anne-Laure Sellier, New York University, USA
 Brian Sternthal, Northwestern University, USA

The Pressing Preference for Prevention: The Impact of Temporal Construal on the Persuasiveness of Prevention versus Promotion Framed Product Information
 Ginger L. Pennington, University of Chicago, USA
 Jennifer L. Aaker, Stanford University, USA
 Cassie Mogilner, Stanford University, USA

Faster Is Not Always Better: Regulatory Focus and the Interpretation of Download Time
 Anne Laure Sellier, New York University, USA
 Amitava Chattopadhyay, INSEAD, Singapore

Regulatory Focus and Direct Comparative Ad Framing
 Shailendra Pratap Jain, Indiana University, USA
 Charles D. Lindsey, State University of New York at Buffalo, USA
 Nidhi Agrawal, Northwestern University, USA
 Durairaj Maheswaran, New York University, USA

4.2. Special Session: How Consumers Evaluate the Quality of Purchase Decisions

Chair: Justin Kruger, New York University, USA
 Discussion Leader: Mary Frances Luce, Duke University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

How Consumers Evaluate the Quality of Purchase Decisions 214
 Justin Kruger, New York University, USA
 Gerald Häubl, University of Alberta, Canada

Do the Means Justify the End? The Effect of Choice on Evaluation of Hedonic versus Utilitarian Outcomes

Simona Botti, Cornell University, USA
Ann McGill, University of Chicago, USA

The Opposing Effects of Personalized Recommendations on Objective and Subjective Decision Outcomes

Gerald Häubl, University of Alberta, Canada
Benedict G.C. Dellaert, Erasmus University Rotterdam
Murat Usta, University of Alberta, Canada

Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Focalism in Evaluations of Consumer Choice

Justin Kruger, New York University, USA
Jeremy Burrus, Columbia University, USA

4.3. Special Session: The Role of Consumption in Re-establishing Cultural Stability: Case Studies of Disaster Recovery

Chair: Michelle F. Weinberger, University of Arizona, USA
Discussion Leader: John F. Sherry, University of Notre Dame, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

The Role of Consumption in Re-establishing Cultural Stability: Case Studies of Disaster Recovery 218
Michelle F. Weinberger, University of Arizona, USA

Meeting the Needs of Adolescent Disaster Survivors: Getting the Right Consumer Goods into the Right Hands

Jill G. Klein, INSEAD, France
Laura Huang, INSEAD, France

The Construction of Memory in the Aftermath of 9/11

Jean-Sebastien Marcoux, HEC Montreal, Canada

Tradition and Renewal: Reconstruction of Culture through Consumption

Michelle F. Weinberger, University of Arizona, USA
Melanie Wallendorf, University of Arizona, USA

4.4. Special Session: That's Not What I Wanted: Perspectives on Unwanted Choice Options and Outcomes

Chair: Merrie Brucks, University of Arizona, USA
Wendy Attaya Boland, University of Arizona, USA
Discussion Leader: Deborah J. MacInnis, University of Southern California, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

That's Not What I Wanted: Perspectives on Unwanted Choice Options and Outcomes 222
Merrie Brucks, University of Arizona, USA
Wendy Attaya Boland, University of Arizona, USA

Gone But Not Forgotten: The Role of Unacceptable Options in Decision Making

Katrien Wijnen, Ghent University, Belgium
James R. Bettman, Duke University, USA
Joel Huber, Duke University, USA

Constructive Preferences for Rejected Options: When You Can't Get What You Want

Wendy Attaya Boland, University of Arizona, USA
Merrie Brucks, University of Arizona, USA
Jesper H. Nielsen, University of Arizona, USA

What's Yours Is Mine: Self-construal and Reactance on Behalf of Others
Sarah Moore, Duke University, USA
Gavan J. Fitzsimons, Duke University, USA

4.5. Special Session: The Flavors of Emotions: Interplay of Affect and Decision Making

Chair: Monica Wadhwa, Stanford University, USA
Discussion Leader: Antoine Bechara, University of Southern California, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

The Flavors of Emotions: Interplay of Affect and Decision Making 225
Monica Wadhwa, Stanford University, USA

On the Consumption of Negative Feelings
Eduardo B. Andrade, University of California, Berkeley, USA
Joel B. Cohen, University of Florida, USA

In Search of Homo Economicus: Transitivity, Emotions, and Cognition
Leonard Lee, MIT, USA
Dan Ariely, MIT, USA
On Amir, University of California, San Diego, USA

Tantalizing Effects of Sampling: The Influence of Sampling on Motivational States
Steve Nowlis, Arizona State University, USA
Baba Shiv, Stanford University, USA
Monica Wadhwa, Stanford University, USA

4.6. Special Session: Catching Up with Consumer Visuals: Theory, Evidence, Upgrades, and Plug-Ins

Chair: Linda Scott, Oxford University, UK
Discussion Leader: David Mick, University of Virginia, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Catching Up With Consumer Visuals: Theory, Evidence, Upgrades, and Plug-Ins 229
Linda Scott, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Imagining Identity: Technology and the Body in Marketing Communications
Jonathan Schroeder, University of Exeter, UK
Peter Dobers, Mälardalen University, Sweden

Reason and Realism: Image as Argument
Linda Scott, Oxford University, UK
Patrick Vargas, University of Illinois, USA

Pictures, More Pictures, Nothing But Pictures: Image as Genre
Barbara J. Phillips, University of Saskatchewan, Canada
Edward F. McQuarrie, Santa Clara University, USA

4.7. *Competitive Paper: Product Perception*

Chair: Kalpesh Desai, The State University of New York at Binghamton, USA

<i>The Moderating Role of Need for Cognition and Counterfactual Thinking on Product Evaluation</i>	233
Kai-Yu Wang, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA	
Minli Liang, SUNY-Brockport, USA	
Laura Peracchio, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA	
<i>Visualization and New Product Evaluation: The Role of Memory- and Imagination-Focused Visualization</i>	235
Min Zhao, University of North Carolina, USA	
Steve Hoeffler, Vanderbilt University, USA	
Darren Dahl, University of British Columbia, Canada	
<i>Design and the Big Five: Linking Product Aesthetics to Product Personality</i>	238
Frédéric F. Brunel, Boston University, USA	
Rishtee Kumar, Boston University, USA	
<i>Product Design Perception and Brand Categorization</i>	240
Robert Kreuzbauer, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA	
Alan J. Malter, University of Arizona, USA	

4.8. *Competitive Paper: Reactance, Trust, and Loyalty*

Chair: Meryl Gardner, University of Delaware, USA

<i>Playing Games Efficiently: Hedonic Learning and Loyalty</i>	247
Kyle B. Murray, University of Western Ontario, Canada	
Steve Bellman, Murdoch University, Australia	
<i>Using Public Commitment to Gain Customer Compliance</i>	249
Stephanie Dellande, Chapman University, USA	
Prashanth Nyer, Chapman University, USA	
<i>Consumer Experiences and Market Resistance: An Extension of Resistance Theories</i>	256
Angeline Grace Close, University of Nevada Las Vegas, USA	
George M. Zinkhan, University of Georgia, USA	
<i>Reducing Reactance Induced Backlash Responses to Recommendations</i>	263
Yael Zemack-Rugar, Duke University, USA	
Gavan J. Fitzsimons, Duke University, USA	
Donald R. Lehmann, Columbia University, USA	

<p style="text-align: center;">FRIDAY 29 September 2006</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACR PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING 4:15pm-4:45pm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">JCR EDITORIAL REVIEW BOARD RECEPTION AND BUSINESS MEETING 4:30pm-6:15pm</p>

FRIDAY
29 September 2006

SESSION 5
4:45pm-6:15pm

5.1. Special Session: Advances in Understanding Consumers' Price Sensitivity

Chair: Joseph Simmons, Yale University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Advances in Understanding Consumers' Price Sensitivity 265

Joseph Simmons, Yale University

The Persuasive Power of Quality: Consumers' Misprediction of their Reactions to Price Promotions

Cenk Bulbul, New York University, USA

Tom Meyvis, New York University, USA

Intuitive Confidence: When Consumer Choices are Sensitive to Matching Prices

Joseph P. Simmons, Yale University, USA

Leif D. Nelson, New York University, USA

Lay Scientist: Ignorance of Value in Compensation Decisions

Claire Tsai, University of Chicago, USA

Christopher Hsee, University of Chicago, USA

The Effect of Opportunity Cost Salience on Purchase Decision

Shane Frederick, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

Nathan Novemsky, Yale University, USA

Jang Wang, Yale University, USA

Ravi Dhar, Yale University, USA

Stephen M. Nowlis, Arizona State University, USA

5.2. Special Session: Belief Confidence and Consumer Reactions to Persuasive Messages:

Chair: Wes Hutchinson, Univeristy of Pennsylvania, USA

Discussion Leader: Americus Reed, Univeristy of Pennsylvania, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Belief Confidence and Consumer Reactions to Persuasive Messages: Measures, Models, and Mechanisms 266

J. Wesley Hutchinson, University of Pennsylvania

Yanliu Huang, University of Pennsylvania

Believing that One is Strong as a Defensive Weakness: Using Defensive Confidence to Attract Reluctant Audiences

Dolores Albarracin, Univeristy of Florida, USA

Amy L. Mitchell, Univeristy of Florida, USA

Marta R. Durantini, Univeristy of Florida, USA

Allison Earl, Univeristy of Florida, USA

Justin Levitt, Univeristy of Florida, USA

Joanne Gunnoe, Alachua County Health Department, USA

Counting Every Thought: Indirect Measures of Cognitive Responses to Advertising

Yanliu Huang, Univeristy of Pennsylvania, USA

J. Wesley Hutchinson, Univeristy of Pennsylvania, USA

Sampling, Overconfidence, and Consumer Decisions
Jack B. Soll, Duke University, USA
Joshua Klayman, University of Chicago, USA

5.3. Special Session: Recent Research on Implicit Motivation

Chair: Andrew Mitchell, University of Toronto, Canada
Discussion Leader: Tanya Chartrand, Duke University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Recent Research on Implicit Motivation 270
Andrew Mitchell, University of Toronto, Canada

Unconscious Goals and Creativity: Activating Creativity Goals Breaks Established Associations and Leads to the Generation of Original Ideas
Gordon B. Moskowitz, Lehigh University, USA
Kai Sassenberg, University of Jena, Germany

The Automatic Evaluation of Goals
Melissa J. Ferguson, Cornell University, USA

Automatic Evaluations and Self-Control
Darlene Walsh, University of Toronto, Canada
Andrew Mitchell, University of Toronto, Canada

5.4. Special Session: It's All in How You Look at it—The Impact of Having an Incremental or Entity Theory on Consumer Behavior

Chair: Subbu Sivaramakrishnan, University of Manitoba, Canada
Discussion Leader: Harish Sujjan, Tulane University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

It's All in How You Look at it—The Impact of Having an Incremental or Entity Theory on Consumer Behavior 274
Subbu Sivaramakrishnan, University of Manitoba, Canada

Implicit Theories: Implications for Consumer Behavior
Carol S. Dweck, Stanford University, USA

Revising Negative Initial Judgments of Salespeople: The Role of Implicit Theories in Overcoming the Perils of Active Listening
Subbu Sivaramakrishnan, University of Manitoba, Canada
Harish Sujjan, Tulane University, USA
Mita Sujjan, Tulane University, USA

The Role of Implicit Theories in Brand Extendibility
Eric Yorkston, Texas Christian University, USA
Joseph Nunes, University of Southern California, USA
Shashi Matta, Ohio State University, USA

5.5. *Competitive Paper: Consumer Demographic Differences*

Chair: Adriana M. Boveda-Lambie, University of Rhode Island, USA
Ann Veeck, Western Michigan University, USA

<i>Minority Consumers' Experiences of Marketplace Discrimination in Services: A Conceptual Model of Antecedents and Customer Outcomes</i>	278
Gianfranco Walsh, University of Koblenz-Landau, Germany	
Donna McGuire, University of Strathclyde Business School, Scotland	
<i>Brand in the Hand or Sand in the Hand? A Contextualized Account of Adolescents' Mobile Phone Consumption</i>	280
Ian Grant, University of Strathclyde, Scotland	
Stephanie O'Donohoe, University of Edinburgh, Scotland	
<i>A Multivariate Segmentation Model of the Older UK Consumer Market</i>	286
Lynn Sudbury, Liverpool John Moores University, UK	
Peter Simcock, Liverpool John Moores University, UK	
<i>Demographics in Sales Promotion Proneness: A Socio-Cultural Approach</i>	288
Kyoung-Nan Kwon, Michigan State University, USA	
Yoo Jin Kwon, Iowa State University, USA	

5.6. *Competitive Paper: Online Shopping and Marketing*

Chair: Igor Makienko, Loyola University New Orleans, USA

<i>Information Search and Consideration Set Formation in a Web-Based Environment</i>	295
Girish Punj, University of Connecticut, USA	
Robert Moore, Mississippi State University, USA	
<i>Selective Versus Comprehensive Processors: Gender Differences in Web Consumer Behavior</i>	303
Marie-Odile Richard, HEC-Montreal Business School, Canada	
Jean-Charles Chebat, HEC-Montreal Business School, Canada	
Zhiyong Yang, Concordia University, Canada	
Michel Laroche, Concordia University, Canada	
<i>Forced vs. Voluntary Exposure Web Ads: Immediate and Long-Term Impact of Ad Avoidance on Communication Outcomes</i>	304
Patrali Chatterjee, Montclair State University, USA	
<i>"Is it Really Complicated?" Motivational Differences in the Effects of Structural and Outcome Complexity on Consumers' Web site and Brand Evaluations</i>	305
Reetika Gupta, Lehigh University, USA	
Stephen J. Gould, Baruch College/CUNY, USA	

5.7. *Competitive Paper: The Dark Side of Marketing*

Chair: Ron Faber, University of Minnesota, USA
Tina Kiesler, California State University, Northridge, USA

<i>Mothers' Perceptions of their Control over their Children's Diets</i>	306
Simone Pettigrew, University of Western Australia, Australia	
Michele Roberts, University of Western Australia, Australia	

<i>Relationships Can Disappear in a Puff of Smoke: A Test of TMT and Risk Perceptions on Smoking Behavior</i>	312
Ingrid Martin, California State University-Long Beach, USA	
Michael Kamins, University of Southern California, USA	
<i>The Dark Side of Brand Community: Inter-Group Stereotyping, Trash Talk, and Schadenfreude</i>	314
Thomas Hickman, Loyola University, USA	
James Ward, Arizona State University, USA	

5.8. **Competitive Paper: Getting Through to the Consumer: Advertising and its Effects**

Chair: Sharmistha Law, University of Toronto, Canada

<i>A Meta-Analysis of Humor Effects in Advertising</i>	320
Martin Eisend, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany	
<i>The Role of Power in Consumer Persuasion</i>	324
Pablo Brinol, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, Spain	
Derek Rucker, Kellogg School of Management, USA	
Richard Petty, Ohio State University, USA	
Carmen Valle, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, Spain	
Alberto Becerra, Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, Spain	
<i>The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Firm Reputation, Advertising Correction, and Consumer Defensiveness</i>	326
Peter Darke, Florida State University, USA	
Laurence Ashworth, Queens University, Canada	
Robin Ritchie, University of Western Ontario, Canada	
<i>The Impact of Perceived Advertising Creativity on Ad Processing and Responses</i>	328
Xiaojing Yang, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, USA	
Robert Smith, Indiana University, USA	

<p>Friday 29 September 2006</p> <p>RECEPTION AND WORKING PAPER SESSION 6:15pm-8:00pm</p>

Working Paper: Working Paper Poster Session

<i>Endowment Effect as Inertia Equity in Brand Switching</i>	329
Gwei Ye, Towson University	
Curtis Haugtvedt, Ohio State University	
W. Fred Van Raaij, Tilburg University	
<i>Relationship Proneness—The Concept, Its Dimensions and Indicators</i>	329
Alberto Marcati, LUISS Guido Carli University, Italy	
Claudio Barbaranelli, University of Rome La Sapienza, Italy	
Michele Vecchione, University of Rome La Sapienza, Italy	
<i>U.S. Consumer's Cultural Choices: The Interplay of Ethnocentrism and Global Openness</i>	331
Dale Russell, INSEAD, France	
<i>Self-Monitoring and Status Motivation: An Implicit Cognition Perspective</i>	332
Sandor Czellar, HEC Paris, France	

<i>A Construal Level Theory Approach to Understanding Self-Control Strategies</i>	334
Kelly Haws, University of South Carolina	
<i>Collins's Interaction Ritual Theory: Using Interaction Rituals to Conceptualize How Objects Become Sacred Symbols</i>	335
Kyle A. Huggins, University of Arkansas - Fayetteville, USA	
Jeff B. Murray, University of Arkansas - Fayetteville, USA	
Jeremy Kees, University of Arkansas - Fayetteville, USA	
Elizabeth H. Creyer, University of Arkansas - Fayetteville, USA	
<i>Increasing Persuasion, Reducing Resistance: Maximizing the Efficacy of Persuasive Appeals for Esthetic Product Consumption</i>	337
Elyria Kemp, University of Arkansas, USA	
Elizabeth H. Creyer, University of Arkansas, USA	
<i>Are Good Intentions Enough? Encouraging Regular Savings Through Implementation Intentions</i>	338
Cäzilia Loibl, The Ohio State University, USA	
Robert Scharff, The Ohio State University, USA	
<i>Consumers' Appreciation of Product Personalization</i>	339
Ruth Mugge, Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands	
Jan P. L. Schoormans, Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands	
Addie de Lange, Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands	
<i>Consideration of Future Consequences as a Moderator of Temporal Framing and Regulatory Focus in a Risk Domain</i>	341
Jeremy Kees, Villanova University	
Scot Burton, University of Arkansas	
Elizabeth Creyer, University of Arkansas	
Eric Knowles, University of Arkansas	
Kyle Huggins, University of Arkansas	
<i>Managing Experiential Marketing: Insight from a Prototypical Experience</i>	342
Elyria Kemp, University of Arkansas, USA	
Jeff Murray, University of Arkansas, USA	
<i>Immediacy Bias in Consumer Attitudes and Choices over Time</i>	344
Katherine White, University of Calgary, Canada	
Leaf Van Boven, University of Colorado at Boulder, USA	
<i>The Second Wind Phenomenon: Recovery from Cognitive Fatigue with Sensory Arousal</i>	344
Adam Craig, University of South Carolina, USA	
Roland Leak, University of South Carolina, USA	
Cait Poynor, University of South Carolina, USA	
<i>The French Paradox Redux: Internal and External Cues of Meal Cessation</i>	345
Brian Wansink, Cornell University, USA	
Collin R. Payne, Cornell University, USA	
Pierre Chandon, University of Pennsylvania, USA	
Paul Rozin, University of Pennsylvania, USA	
<i>Exercise Behavior in Loyalty Program: The Influence of Regulatory Focus</i>	346
Ahmad Daryanto, Maastricht University, the Netherlands	
Ko de Ruyter, Maastricht University, the Netherlands	
Martin Wetzels, Maastricht University, the Netherlands	
Paul G. Patterson, University of New South Wales, Sidney, Australia	
<i>Hey, What Gives?</i>	
<i>The Effects of Altruistic Versus Egoistic Charity Appeals on Donation Intentions</i>	347
John Peloza, Simon Fraser University, Canada	
Katherine White, University of Calgary, Canada	
<i>Consumer Goal Orientation in Different Service Contexts: The Different Impacts of Affect on Perceived Quality and Satisfaction</i>	349
Cheng Lu Wang, University of New Haven, U.S.A.	
Ying Jiang, University of Connecticut, U.S.A.	

<i>Multidimensional Price Comparison: The Moderating Role of Across Consumers and Across Firms Price Comparison on Perceived Fairness, Regret, and Satisfaction</i>	350
Felix Tang, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, China	
Jianmin Jia, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, China	
<i>Impact on Online-store Loyalty from Store Image under Influences from Consumption Values</i>	351
Yiping Song, Fudan University, China	
Baijun Zhu, Fudan University, China	
<i>The Effects of Product Scandals on Parent Brands: Linguistic Signatures of a Protective Mechanism</i>	353
Simon Ineichen, University of Basel, Switzerland	
Arnd Florack, University of Basel, Switzerland	
<i>Choosing Between Service Sequences: The Joint Effect of Ego Depletion and Mood on Consumers' Decision Strategy</i>	354
Miriam de Groot, Maastricht University, The Netherlands	
Benedict G. C. Dellaert, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands	
<i>A Need-Satisfaction Model of Superstitious Behavior</i>	355
Rajiv Vaidyanathan, University of Minnesota Duluth, USA	
Praveen Aggarwal, University of Minnesota Duluth, USA	
Taihoon Cha, University of Minnesota Duluth, USA	
Seungwoo Chun, University of Minnesota Duluth, USA	
<i>Is There an Expected Trade-off Between a Product's Ethical Value and Its Effectiveness?: Exposing Latent Intuitions about Ethical Products</i>	357
Michael Luchs, The University of Texas at Austin, USA	
Rebecca Walker Naylor, University of South Carolina, USA	
Julie R. Irwin, The University of Texas at Austin, USA	
Rajagopal Raghunathan, The University of Texas at Austin, USA	
<i>Examining the Influence of Prominent on Nonprofit Organizations</i>	358
Christine M. Bennett, University of Minnesota, USA	
Hakkyun Kim, University of Minnesota, USA	
Barbara Loken, University of Minnesota, USA	
<i>"I'm Glad I Did" or "I Wish I Had.": The Comparative Effects of Satisfaction and Non-Purchase Regret on Future Purchase Intentions</i>	358
Henrik Hagtvedt, University of Georgia, USA	
Matthew Lancellotti, California State University Fullerton, USA	
Vanessa Patrick, University of Georgia, USA	
<i>Food for Thought: Role of Counterfactual Thinking in the Interpretation of Health Claims and Nutrition Information</i>	360
Khaled Aboulnasr, Florida Gulf Coast, University, USA	
Anu Sivaraman, University of Delaware, USA	
<i>Choosing to Conceal: An Investigation of the Impact of Social Influence on Luxury Consumption</i>	361
Christine M. Bennett, University of Minnesota, USA	
Jane E J Ebert, University of Minnesota, USA	
<i>From Egotism to Averseness: The Role of Implicit Self Judgments in Seller Choice</i>	362
Luke Kachersky, Baruch College, City University of New York, USA	
Hyeong Min Kim, Baruch College, City University of New York, USA	
<i>An Exploratory Study on Attitude Toward Luxury Products, Counterfeits and Imitations</i>	363
Brigitte Muller, HEC Lausanne, Switzerland	
Bruno Kocher, HEC Lausanne, Switzerland	
<i>The Effect of Market and Merchant Comparisons on Customer Satisfaction: The Moderating Role of Information Uncertainty and Price Negotiation</i>	365
Velitchka D. Kaltcheva, Loyola Marymount University, USA	
Michael Tsiros, University of Miami and ALBA Graduate Business School, USA	

<i>Do I Belong? Clothing, Group Membership, and Identity During the College Transition</i>	366
Mark A. Rademacher, University of Wisconsin–Madison, USA	
<i>What do Rats Think While They Run? Goal Distance and Cognitive Effort Acceleration</i>	368
Shirley Y. Y. Cheng, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA	
Jessica Y. Y. Kwong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong	
<i>The Influence of Consumer Altruism on Complaining Behavior</i>	369
Piotr Chelminski, Providence College, USA	
Robin Coulter, University of Connecticut, USA	
<i>The Impact of Culture Orientation on Consumption Impulsiveness and Beer Consumption</i>	370
Yinlong Zhang, University of Texas at San Antonio, USA	
L.J. Shrum, University of Texas at San Antonio, USA	
<i>Stinkin' Inconvenience!</i>	
<i>How Consumers Experience and Respond to Disgust</i>	373
Selin Atalay, The Pennsylvania State University, USA	
Melea Press, The Pennsylvania State University, USA	
<i>How and When Alphanumeric and Suggestive Brand Names Affect Consumer Preferences</i>	374
Kunter Gunasti, Penn State University, USA	
William T. Ross Jr., Penn State University, USA	
<i>Choice With Inference is Different from Choice without Inference</i>	375
Kunter Gunasti, Penn State University, USA	
William T. Ross Jr., Penn State University, USA	
<i>Mental Visual Imagery, Authenticity and Consumers' Attitude Formation towards Licensed Brands</i>	377
Jen-Yuan Martin Liu, University of Warwick, UK	
Qing Wang, University of Warwick, UK	
<i>Ambivalence as an Inoculating Agent: A Built-In Defense Against Attitude Change</i>	380
Mark Forehand, University of Washington, USA	
Mark Staton, University of Washington, USA	
Brian Tietje, California State University–San Luis Obispo, USA	
<i>Sacred Songs, Secular Words: Discourse on the Consumption of Religious Music</i>	381
Jeaney Yip, University of Sydney, Australia	
<i>An Examination of Recall Measures of Sponsorship Awareness</i>	383
Michael S. Humphreys, University of Queensland, Australia	
T. Bettina Cornwell, University of Queensland, Australia	
Clinton S. Weeks, University of Queensland, Australia	
Anna R. McAlister, University of Queensland, Australia	
<i>Developing a Deeper Understanding of Scarcity: Contextual and Individual Influences on Demand Scarcity</i>	384
Morgan K. Ward, University of Texas, USA	
<i>How Consumers Are Affected by the Framing of Numerical Information</i>	385
Jessica Y. Y. Kwong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR	
Kin Fai Ellick Wong, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Hong Kong SAR	
<i>Contribution of the Concept of Identity to the Understanding of Responsible Consumer Behavior: Application to the Consumption of Fair Trade Products</i>	385
Nile Ozcaglar-Toulouse, Universite de Lille 2-France	
<i>It Doesn't Happen to Mine: A Study of the My-Own-Product Positivity Bias for a Defective Product Management</i>	386
Jae Il Kim, Seoul National University, Korea	
Hak Chul Lee, Seoul National University, Korea	
<i>Consumers Tripping Over Their Roots</i>	387
Dale Russell, INSEAD, France	

<i>Affect Without Cognition</i>	389
Jingjing Ma, Peking University, China	
Li Zhang, Peking University, China	
Xinxin Ma, Central University for Nationalities, China	
<i>Compulsive Buying Questionnaire and Repression: The Impact of Hot vs Cold Data on General and Gender Scoring</i>	391
Fabrice Pombet, University of Exeter, UK	
Stephen K. Tagg, University of Strathclyde, UK	
<i>CAM: A Spreading Activation Network Model of Subcategory Construction</i>	392
Zsolt Katona, INSEAD, France	
Joseph Lajos, INSEAD, France	
Amitava Chattopadhyay, INSEAD, Singapore	
Miklos Sarvary, INSEAD, France	
<i>The Appeal of Others: How to Avoid the Self-Positivity Bias</i>	394
Sutapa Aditya, York University, Canada	
Kelley Main, York University, Canada	
<i>The Effect of Discounting the Influence of Sources of Information on Choice and Product Perceptions</i>	395
Francine Espinoza, University of Maryland, USA	
Rebecca Hamilton, University of Maryland, USA	
<i>Mental Visual Imagery, Authenticity and Consumers' Attitude Formation towards Licensed Brands</i>	396
Jen-Yuan Martin Liu, University of Warwick, UK	
Qing Wang, University of Warwick, UK	
<i>Understanding Value Perceptions in Consumer Relationships: A Look at the Role of Self-Esteem</i>	399
Sylvia Long-Tolbert, University of Toledo, USA	
Raj Suri, Drexel University, USA	
<i>Perceived Fairness: Conceptual Framework and Scale Development</i>	400
Sooyeon Nikki Lee-Wingate, Rutgers University, USA	
Barbara B. Stern, Rutgers University, USA	
<i>Effect of Mood on Information Processing Style and Consequent Purchasing Decisions</i>	402
Kang-Ning Xia, National Chengchi University, Taiwan	
<i>Measuring the Antecedents of Impulsive Buying Behavior on the WWW</i>	403
Arne Floh, WU Wien, Austria	
Maria Madlberger, WU Wien, Austria	
<i>Uncertainty, Virtual Consumption, and Prolonged Happiness</i>	404
Cheng Qiu, National University of Singapore, Singapore	
Yih Hwai Lee, National University of Singapore, Singapore	
<i>Effects of Interpersonal Influences on Innovation Evaluation</i>	405
Eva Tomaseti, Polytechnic University of Cartagena, Spain	
Salvador Ruiz, University of Murcia, Spain	
<i>The Relationship Between Consumer Guilt and Shopping Behavior</i>	405
Lien-Ti Bei, National Chengchi University, Taiwan	
Yu-Tse Lin, National Chengchi University, Taiwan	
Chang-Min Yu, National Chengchi University, Taiwan	
<i>Scarcity's Effects on Evaluation of Prices</i>	406
Rajneesh Suri, Drexel University, USA	
Chiranjeev Kohli, Cal. State Fullerton, USA	
Kent B. Monroe, University of Richmond/Drexel University USA	
<i>Consumer Response to Marketplace Deception: Implication of the Persuasion Knowledge Model</i>	406
Guang-Xin Xie, University of Oregon, USA	
David M. Boush, University of Oregon, USA	
Courtney N. Boerstler, University of Oregon, USA	

<i>Consumer Consideration Sets: Altering Memory, Brand Evaluations, and Choice</i>	407
Antonia Kronlund, Brock University, USA	
Carolyn Yoon, University of Michigan, USA	
<i>Adaptive Selling Behavior among Retail Salespeople: The Use of Overt Cues and Consumer Stereotypes</i>	409
Lynnea Mallalieu, UNC Wilmington, USA	
<i>Luxury Good Expenditures of Husband and Wife Dyads Incorporating User Attitudes</i>	410
Carrie Heilman, University of Virginia, USA	
Frederick Kaefer, Loyola University, USA	
Samuel Ramenofsky, Loyola University, USA	
<i>Does a Broken Heart Lead to an Empty Wallet? Social Exclusion Affects Impulsive Spending</i>	411
Nicole Mead, Florida State University, USA	
Kathleen Vohs, University of Minnesota, USA	
Roy Baumeister, Florida State University, USA	
<i>It's About Time: Sex Differences in Estimating Time for Shopping in Five Contexts</i>	412
Elaine MacNeil, Cape Breton University, Canada	
Peter MacIntyre, Cape Breton University, Canada	
<i>The Role of Prior Knowledge in Advertisement Evaluation</i>	414
Yu Hu, Virginia Tech, USA	
<i>I Self Gift Therefore I am: An Examination of Self-construal and Consumers Attitudes Towards Self-gifting</i>	414
Suri Weisfeld-Spolter, Baruch College, City University of New York, USA	
Maneesh Thakkar, Baruch College, City University of New York, USA	
<i>Anomie Goes Online: The Emo Microculture</i>	417
Tracy A. Rickman, Auburn University, USA	
Michael R. Solomon, Auburn University, USA	
<i>Returns: A Motivational Perspective</i>	418
Jordan Holtzman, U.C. Berkeley, USA	
<i>A Designer is Only as Good as a Star Who Wears Her Clothes: Examining the Roles of Opinion Leaders using the Persuasion Knowledge Model</i>	420
Suri Weisfeld-Spolter, Baruch College, City University of New York, USA	
Maneesh Thakkar, Baruch College, City University of New York, USA	
<i>When We Practice to Deceive: An Exploration Into the Accommodative Role of Deceptive Practices in Market Exchanges</i>	421
David M. Hunt, University of Wyoming, USA	
Scott Radford, University of Missouri, USA	
<i>The Influence of Impression Management Concerns on Product Evaluation</i>	423
Laurence Ashworth, Queen's University, Canada	
Margaret Matear, Queen's University, Canada	
<i>Nostalgia Advertisements: A Content Analysis</i>	424
Robert Madrigal, University of Oregon, USA	
Courtney Boerstler, University of Oregon, USA	
<i>The Impact of Information Format on Consumer Search Order and Choice in an Online Setting</i>	425
Ying Jiang, University of Connecticut, USA	
Girish Punj, University of Connecticut, USA	
<i>The Effects of Reciprocity in a Triadic Relationship</i>	427
Andrew S. Gallan, Arizona State University, USA	
Naomi Mandel, Arizona State University, USA	
Robert Cialdini, Arizona State University, USA	
Eugene Schneller, Arizona State University, USA	

<i>Comparative Content Analysis of Thai and Vietnamese Ads, 1994 and 2004</i>	428
Sela Sar, University of Minnesota, USA	
<i>Are “Paradigms Lost” in Marketing? Some Twenty Years Later...: A Content Analysis</i>	434
Saleh AlShebil, University of Texas at Arlington, USA	
<i>Compulsive Buyers and the Emotional Roller Coaster in Shopping</i>	435
Anna Saraneva, Hanken-Swedish School of Economics, Finland	
Maria Saaksjarvi, Hanken-Swedish School of Economics, Finland	
<i>Knowledge Transfer and Rhetoric: The Influence of Rhetorical Figures on Consumer Learning</i>	436
Marjorie Delbaere, University of Manitoba, Canada	
Malcolm C. Smith, University of Manitoba, Canada	
<i>Distrust: An Alternative Source of Power For Consumers</i>	438
Ahmet Ekici, Bilkent University, Turkey	
<i>Spinning Fantasies into Consumer Attitudes: A Fantasy-Realization Perspective of Attitude Formation</i>	439
R. Justin Goss, Montana State University-Bozeman, USA	
Ian Handley, Montana State University-Bozeman, USA	
<i>The Influence of Line and Surface Modifications in Product Design on Brand Recognition and Novelty</i>	440
Robert Kreuzbauer, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA	
Jan Schoormans, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands	
Dirk Snelders, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands	
<i>Heuristic and Systematic Information Processing when Valuating Multiple Gains and Losses</i>	441
Dorothea Schaffner, New York University, USA	
Andreas Herrmann, University of St.Gallen, Switzerland	
<i>On the Importance of Non-dominant Cultural Dimensions: Effects of Vertical Individualism on Consumer Behaviour in Norway</i>	442
Alexander Jakubanecs, Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration, Norway	
Magne Supphellen, Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration, Norway	
<i>Flip-Flopping of General Action and Inaction States: A Study on the Mental Representation of Action and Inaction Goals</i>	444
Kathleen C. McCulloch, University of Florida, USA	
Kenji Knoguchi, University of Florida, USA	
Dolores Albarracin, University of Florida, USA	
<i>How Do Consumers Categorize Websites?</i>	445
Anjala Krishen, Virginia Tech, USA	
Kent Nakamoto, Virginia Tech, USA	
Pushkin Kachroo, Virginia Tech, USA	
<i>The Use of Images of Dead Celebrities in Advertising—History, Growth Factors, Theory, Legality, Ethics and Recommendations</i>	446
Denver D’Rozario, Howard University, USA	
Ross D. Petty, Babson College, USA	
Leah C. Taylor, Howard University, USA	
Frank K. Bryant, Howard University, USA	
<i>Coping with Mixed Emotions</i>	447
Colleen C. Bee, University of San Diego, USA	
Robert Madrigal, University of Oregon, USA	
<i>Website Image Transfer: Perception of Uninformative Online Ads</i>	448
Xiaojing Yang, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, USA	
Jihui Chen, University of North Dakota, USA	
<i>An Influential Minority: Reaching the New Values-Based Consumers</i>	449
Jenny Mish, University of Utah	
Melea Press, Penn State University	

<i>Look Who's Talking!</i>	
<i>Technology-Supported Impression Formation in Virtual Communities</i>	450
Claire Dambrin, HEC School of Management, Paris	
Kristine de Valck, HEC School of Management, Paris	
<i>When A Good Impression Goes Bad:The Effect of Goal Changes on Repeated Attitudes Enquires</i>	452
Xiuping Li, University of Toronto, Canada	
<i>Understanding Consumers' Perceptions of Fashion</i>	452
Jingyun Zhang, Bowling Green State University, USA	
Ayse Banu Elmadag, University of Alabama, USA	
<i>Information Search due to Extended Separation</i>	454
Kurt A. Carlson, Duke University, USA	
Aner Tal, Duke University, USA	
<i>Do We Really Need a Reason to Indulge?</i>	456
Jing Xu, University of Michigan, USA	
Norbert Schwarz, University of Michigan, USA	
<i>Effects of Self-Affirmation and Individualistic-Collectivistic Appeals on Open-mindedness and Advertising Effectiveness</i>	457
Mary Lou Kohne, University of Cincinnati, USA	
<i>Consumer Weighting of Hedonic and Utilitarian Dimensions across Judgments</i>	459
Laura Smarandescu, University of South Carolina, USA	
Douglas Wedell, University of South Carolina, USA	
<i>Dimensions of Attitude Towards A Sales Promotion Offer</i>	460
Manceesh Thakkar, Baruch College, City University of New York, USA	
Suri Weisfeld-Spolter, Baruch College, City University of New York, USA	
<i>Affect, Affective Precision, and Primacy Effect in Stock Choices</i>	461
Namika Sagara, University of Oregon, Decision Research, USA	
Ellen Peters, University of Oregon, Decision Research, USA	
<i>The Role of Emotional Attachment in Consumers' Responses to Service Changes</i>	462
Maura Scott, Arizona State University, USA	
Martin Mende, Arizona State University, USA	
<i>Inferential and Perceptual Influences of Affective Expectations on Judgments of Experienced Affect</i>	464
Ian Handley, Montana State University, USA	
Dolores Albarracin, University of Florida, USA	
Rick Brown, University of Florida, USA	
Hong Li, University of Florida, USA	
Ece Kumkale, University of Florida, USA	
<i>Consumer Evaluation of Brand Deletion and Feedback Effect: A Motivational Approach</i>	465
Saurabh Goorha, Cornell University, USA	
<i>Motivational Reasons for Misremembering Past Negative Events</i>	467
Leonardo Nicolao, The University of Texas at Austin, USA	
Rajagopal Raghunathan, The University of Texas at Austin, USA	
<i>Marketing Leisure Services to Sensation Seekers: The Relationship between Personality and Emotional Response in Novices Using an Artificial Climbing Wall</i>	468
Stephen R. McDaniel, University of Maryland, USA	
Woo-Young Lee, University of Maryland, USA	
<i>Lost in Translation: Consumers Difficulty in Estimating Expiration Time with Redemption Caps</i>	470
Richard Hanna, Boston College, USA	
Scott Swain, Boston University, USA	
S. Adam Brasel, Boston College, USA	

<i>The Role of Expectations in Set-Size Evaluations</i>	471
Richard Hanna, Boston College, USA	
Scott Swain, Boston University, USA	
S. Adam Brasel, Boston College, USA	
<i>Investigating the Additive Effects of Demographics, Lifestyles, and Personality on Physical Activity Levels in Adult Consumers</i>	472
Stephen R. McDaniel, University of Maryland, USA	
Dae Hee Kwak, University of Maryland, USA	
<i>The Effects of Recurrent Mortality Salience Mediated by the Availability Heuristic on Risky Behavior and Subjective Probability Evidence from AIDS Related Cognition and Sexual Behavior of Indian Truckers</i>	474
Joseph Thomas Paniculangara, University of Central Florida, USA	
<i>The Director's Cut: Exploring Cultural Implications in HIV/AIDS Communication from the Producer's Perspective</i>	475
Andrea D. Scott, Pepperdine University, USA	
Stacy-Ann A. Williams-Smith, University of the West Indies, Jamaica	

SATURDAY
30 September 2006

SCP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
7:30am-9:00am

ACR FILM FESTIVAL
8:00am-11:30am

SATURDAY
30 September 2006

SESSION 6
8:00am-9:30am

6.1. Special Session: Understanding Reactions to Assortments: A Process Perspective

Chair: Kristin Diehl, University of Southern California, USA
Discussion Leader: Brian Wansink, Cornell University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

<i>Understanding Reactions To Assortments: A Process Perspective</i>	478
Kristin Diehl, University of Southern California, USA	
<i>The Psychology of Category Design: The Impact of Goal-Derived Structures on Consumer Information Processing and Choice</i>	
Cait Poynor, University of South Carolina, USA	
Kristin Diehl, University of Southern California, USA	
<i>The Company They Keep: The Influence of Reasons for Option Limitation on Assortment Judgments</i>	
Ann Schlosser, University of Washington, USA	
Tiffany White, University of Illinois, USA	
<i>Search Paradox: The Role of Feature Alignability in the Rise and Fall of Satisfaction</i>	
Jill Griffin, University of Evansville, USA	
Susan Broniarczyk, University of Texas at Austin, USA	

6.2. Roundtable Session: How To Do (Better) Web-Based Research 482

Chair: Dan Goldstein, London Business School, UK

Participants:

Donna Hoffman, Vanderbilt University, USA
Eric Johnson, Columbia University, USA
Gerald Haubl, University of Alberta, USA
Michael Schulte, Columbia University, USA
On Amir, UC-San Diego, USA
Tom Novak, Vanderbilt University, USA
Dan Goldstein, London Business School, UK

6.3. Special Session: Using or Losing Self Control: Antecedents of Regulatory Strength and Regulatory Depletion

Chair: Minjung Koo, University of Chicago, USA
Discussion Leader: Angela Y Lee, Northwestern University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Using or Losing Self Control: Antecedents of Regulatory Strength and Regulatory Depletion 483

Minjung Koo, University of Chicago
Angela Y. Lee, Northwestern University

Against the Odds: Prevention Focus Stands Firm in the Face of Temptations

Minjung Koo, University of Chicago, USA
Aparna A. Labroo, University of Chicago, USA
Angela Y Lee, Northwestern University, USA

Affect as a Cue for Goal Conflict Resolution

Tal Eyal, University of Chicago, USA
Ayelet Fishbach, University of Chicago, USA

Self-control, Depletion and Choice

Nathan Novemsky, Yale University, USA
Jing Wang, Yale University, USA
Ravi Dhar, Yale University, USA
Roy Baumesiter, Florida State University, USA

A Loss of Self-Regulatory Resources Makes People More Passive

Kathleen D. Vohs, University of Minnesota, USA
Matt Gailliot, Florida State University, USA

6.4. Special Session: Did You Know that Questioning Consumers Can Change Behavior?: New Research and Future Directions on the Question-Behavior Effect

Chair: Patti Williams, University of Pennsylvania, USA
Discussion Leader: David Sprott, Washington State University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Did You Know that Questioning Consumers Can Change Behavior?: New Research and Future Directions on the Question-Behavior Effect 487

Patti Williams, University of Pennsylvania, USA
David Sprott, Washington State University, USA

The Effects of Stating Expectations on Customer Satisfaction and Shopping Experience

Chezy Ofir, Hebrew University, Israel
Itamar Simonson, Stanford University, USA

Understanding Positivity Effects of Firm-Sponsored Satisfaction Surveys on Customer Behavior

Paul Dholakia, Rice University, USA
Robert Westbrook, Rice University, USA

Examining the Question-Behavior Effect Using the Implicit Association Test

Andrew Perkins, Rice University, USA
David Sprott, Washington State University, USA
Eric Spangenberg, Washington State University, USA
David Knuff, Oregon State University, USA
Ronn Smith, University of Arkansas, USA

6.5. Special Session: Reconsidering Dramatic Frameworks in Consumer Culture Research

Chair: Gulnur Tumbat, Oregon State University, USA
Markus Giesler, York University, Canada

Discussion Leader: Eric Arnould, University of Arizona, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Rethinking Drama in Consumer Culture Research 488

Gülnur Tumbat, Oregon State University, USA
Markus Giesler, York University, Canada

The War on Downloading: A Music Marketplace Drama in Four Acts

Markus Giesler, York University, Canada
Marius Luedicke, York University, Canada

Four Ds of Risky Leisure: Drama, Divinity, Deservingness, and Deliverance

Gülnur Tumbat, Oregon State University, USA

“We Just Gripe’n Gripe...That’s All We Do!” : Performing the Griping Ritual in the Weight Watchers Brand Community

Risto Moisio, University of Arizona, USA
Mariam Beruchashvili, University of Arizona, USA

6.6. Competitive Paper: Searching for What’s Best: Information Search Processing

Chair: Elizabeth Creyer, University of Arkansas, USA

Currency of Search: Time versus Money 492

Ritesh Saini, George Mason University, USA
Ashwani Monga, University of Texas at San Antonio, USA

How Do Low-Price Guarantees Deter Consumer Price Search? The Effects of Branded Variants and Search Cost 494

Hillbun (Dixon) Ho, University of Arizona, USA

Giving an “E-Human Touch” to E-Tailing: The Moderating Roles of Static Information Quantity and Consumption Motive in the Effectiveness of a Virtual Salesperson 495

Fang Wan, University of Manitoba, Canada
Subramanian Sivaramakrishnan, University of Manitoba, Canada
Zaiyong Tang, Louisiana Tech University, USA

<i>The Benefits Leader Reversion Effect: How a Once Preferred Product Can Recapture Its Standing</i>	497
Kurt A. Carlson, Duke University, USA	
Margaret G. Meloy, Pennsylvania State University, USA	
Daniel S. Lieb, Duke University, USA	

6.7. Competitive Paper: Reaching Out: A Look at Brand Extensions

Chair: S. Adam Brasel, Boston College, USA

<i>The Brand Anchoring Effect: A Judgment Bias Resulting from Brand Awareness and Temporary Accessibility</i>	498
Franz-Rudolf Esch, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany	
Bernd H. Schmitt, Columbia Business School, USA	
Joern Redler, Madeleine Mode, Germany	
Tobias Langner, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany	
<i>Brands as Categories: Graded Structure and Its Determinants</i>	500
Christopher Joiner, George Mason University, USA	
<i>Which Fit Do Consumers Use in Composite Brand Extensions?</i>	507
Roger Pruppers, Maastricht University, The Netherlands	
Hans Ouwersloot, Maastricht University, The Netherlands	
Niraj Dawar, University of Western Ontario, Canada	
<i>Corporate and Product Message Effects on a Product Portfolio</i>	509
Daniel A. Sheinin, University of Rhode Island, USA	
Gabriel J. Biehal, University of Maryland, USA	

6.8. Competitive Paper: Behavioral Decision Theory and Choice

Chair: Kristine Ehrich, Washington State University, USA
Barney Pacheco, The University of the West Indies

<i>Me, Myself, and My Choices. The Influence of Self-Awareness on Preference-Behavior Consistency</i>	510
Caroline Goukens, K.U.Leuven, Belgium	
Siegfried Dewitte, K.U.Leuven, Belgium	
Luk Warlop, K.U.Leuven, Belgium	
<i>Who Chose the Forgone Alternative?: The Effects of Social Comparison on Regret</i>	511
Karen L. Page, University of Pittsburgh, USA	
Vikas Mittal, University of Pittsburgh, USA	
J. Jeffrey Inman, University of Pittsburgh, USA	
<i>To Hold Me Is To Love Me: The Role of Touch in the Endowment Effect</i>	513
Suzanne Shu, Southern Methodist University, USA	
Joann Peck, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA	
<i>Scope Insensitivity in the Service of the Rational Self: The "Mere Token" Effect</i>	515
Oleg Urminsky, Columbia University, USA	
Ran Kivetz, Columbia University, USA	

6.9. *Competitive Paper: Word-of-Mouth, Agency, and Dynamics*

Chair: Qing Wang, Warwick Business School

<i>A Structural Look At Consumer Innovativeness and Self-Congruence In New Product Purchases</i>	517
Kelly O. Cowart, Florida State University, USA	
Gavin L. Fox, Florida State University, USA	
Andrew E. Wilson, Florida State University, USA	
<i>The Effect of Uniqueness on Word-Of-Mouth Agency: The Moderating Roles of Product Category and Availability</i>	519
Amar Cheema, Washington University in St. Louis, USA	
Andrew Kaikati, University of Minnesota, USA	
<i>Personality Characteristics of Market Mavens</i>	522
Vito Brancaleone, La Trobe University, Australia	
John Gountas, La Trobe University, Australia	
<i>Does Word-of-Mouth Change with the Passing of Time?</i>	528
Anat Toder-Alon, Boston University, USA	
Frédéric F. Brunel, Boston University, USA	

<p style="text-align: center;">SATURDAY 30 September 2006</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SESSION 7 10:00am-11:30am</p>
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7.1. *Special Session: Health Marketing: How Consumers Cope*

Chair: Lisa E. Bolton, University of Pennsylvania, USA
Discussion Leader: Joel B. Cohen, University of Florida, USA; Editor JPPM, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

<i>Health Marketing: How Consumers Cope</i>	530
Lisa E. Bolton, University of Pennsylvania, USA	
<i>How Does Drug And Supplement Marketing Affect A Healthy Lifestyle?</i>	
Lisa E. Bolton, University of Pennsylvania, USA	
Americus Reed II, University of Pennsylvania, USA	
Kevin G. Volpp, Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center and University of Pennsylvania, USA	
Katrina Armstrong, University of Pennsylvania, USA	
<i>Getting Emotional About Health</i>	
Nidhi Agrawal, Northwestern University, USA	
Geeta Menon, New York University, USA	
Jennifer L. Aaker, Stanford University, USA	
<i>Fact, Fear, or Regret: Getting People to Cope Actively</i>	
Kirsten Grasshof, Salisbury University, USA	
Barbara Kahn, University of Pennsylvania, USA	
Mary Frances Luce, Duke University, USA	

7.2. Special Session: Negativity Biases in Consumer Preferences, Choices, and Outcome Perception

Chair: Carey K. Morewedge, Princeton University, USA
Discussion Leader: Dan Ariely, MIT, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Negativity Biases in Consumer Preferences, Choice, and Outcome Perception 534

Carey K. Morewedge, Princeton University, USA

Do People Agree More On Who is Pretty or On Who is Ugly?

Christopher Hsee, The University of Chicago, USA

De gustibus non est disputandum? The Impact of the Nature of the Chosen Option in Positive and Negative Contexts

Thomas Kramer, City University of New York, USA

Michal Maimaran, Stanford University, USA

Itamar Simonson, Stanford University, USA

Negativity Bias in the Perception of External Agency

Carey K. Morewedge, Princeton University, USA

7.3. Special Session: Current Methodological Concerns for the Behavioral Researcher

Chair: Joachim Vosgerau, Carnegie Mellon, USA
Discussion Leader: Joel Huber, Duke University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Current Methodological Concerns for the Behavioral Researcher 536

Joachim Vosgerau, Carnegie Mellon, USA

A Meditation on Mediation

Dawn Iacobucci, Wharton, USA

Mean-Centering and the Interpretation of ANOVA and Moderated Regression

Joachim Vosgerau, Carnegie Mellon, USA

Hubert Gatignon, INSEAD, France

An Extended Paradigm for Measurement Analysis of Marketing Constructs Applicable to Panel Data

Hans Baumgartner, Penn State University, USA

Jan-Benedict E.M. Sreenkamp, University of Northern Carolina, USA

7.4. Roundtable Session: The Question-Behavior Effect: Current and Future Research 539

Chair: David Sprott, Washington State University, USA

Participants:

- Pierre Chandon, INSEAD, France (on leave at Wharton)
- Paul Dholakia, Rice University, USA
- Gavan J. Fitzsimons, Duke University, USA
- Chris Janiszewski, University of Florida, USA
- Jonathan Levav, Columbia University, USA
- Andrew Perkins, Rice University, USA
- Baba Shiv, Stanford University, USA
- Itamar Simonson, Stanford University, USA
- Ronn Smith, University of Arkansas, USA
- Eric Spangenberg, Washington State University, USA
- Chezy Ofir, Hebrew University, Israel
- Vicki G. Morwitz, New York University, USA

7.5. Special Session: Possessions and Identity: Shifting Identities, Shifting Relationships

Chair: Jonah Berger, Stanford University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Possessions and Identity: Shifting Identities, Shifting Relationships 541
Jonah Berger, Stanford University, USA

I Wasn't Myself When I Chose That: Identity-Salience Fluctuations and Post-Choice (Dis)Satisfaction
Robyn A. LeBoeuf, University of Florida, USA
Julia Belyavsky, University of Florida, USA

Attachment Style, Psychological Security, and Consumer Response to Special Possession Loss
Rosellina Ferraro, University of Maryland, USA
Jennifer Escalas, Vanderbilt University, USA
James R. Bettman, Duke University, USA

Identity Shifts and the Decision to Consume
Jane Machin, Virginia Tech, USA

Don't Confuse Me with Them: Identity-Signaling and Product Abandonment
Jonah Berger, Stanford University, USA
Chip Heath, Stanford University, USA

7.6. Special Session: Gazing into the Crystal Ball: How Thinking about the Future Impacts the Present and Relates to Faulty Memories of the Past

Chair: Rebecca K. Ratner, University of Maryland, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Gazing into the Crystal Ball: How Thinking about the Future Impacts the Present and Relates to Faulty Memories of the Past 545
Rebecca K. Ratner, University of Maryland, USA

Contrasting Against the Future: The Unexpected Effects of Expectation
Tom Meyvis, New York University, USA
Leif Nelson, New York University, USA

Forecasting and Backcasting: Predicting the Impact of Events on the Future

Jane E. J. Ebert, University of Minnesota, USA

Daniel T. Gilbert, Harvard University, USA

Why We Don't Learn to Accurately Forecast Our Feelings: How the Misremembering of Our Predictions Blinds Us to Our Past Forecasting Errors

Rebecca K. Ratner, University of Maryland, USA

Tom Meyvis, New York University, USA

Jonathan Levav, Columbia University, USA

How Predictions Differ from Actual Adaptation to Durable Products

Jing Wang, Yale University, USA

Nathan Novemsky, Yale University, USA

Ravi Dhar, Yale University, USA

7.7. Competitive Paper: Belief Formation and Learning

Chair: Robin Coulter, University of Connecticut, USA

How Cue Congruity Affects Consumer Perceptions 549

Anne Roggeveen, Babson College, USA

Dhruv Grewal, Babson College, USA

Cue Competition, Attention Shifting, and the Highlighting Effect 551

Marcus Cunha, University of Washington, USA

Juliano Laran, University of Florida, USA

Do You or Someone You Know? When does Prior Experience Mitigate Unrealistic Optimism and Pessimism in Risk Perception 553

Ying-Ching Lin, National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan

Priya Raghubir, University of California at Berkeley, USA

The Moderating Effects of Past Experience on Behavioral Intentions 555

Blair Kidwell, University of Kentucky, USA

Robert D. Jewell, Kent State University, USA

7.8. Competitive Paper: Demographic Segmentation of Consumers

Chair: Lance-Michael Erickson, University of Arizona, USA

The Role of Fictionality on Gender Differences in Responses to Emotional Melodramatic Entertainment 557

Jennifer J. Argo, University of Alberta, Canada

Rui (Juliet) Zhu, University of British Columbia, Canada

Darren Dahl, University of British Columbia, Canada

Love and Consumption in Poor Families Headed by Lone Mothers 559

Kathy Hamilton, University of Strathclyde, Scotland

Miriam Catterall, Queen's University, Belfast

The Use of Seeker and Sentry Persuasion Management Strategies by Heterosexual Male Shoppers 565

Linda Tuncay, Loyola University Chicago, USA

Cele C. Otnes, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

Children's Conceptualizations of Sales 566

Wendy A. Boland, University of Arizona, USA

Lance-Michael Erickson, University of Arizona, USA

7.9. Competitive Paper: Goal-Directed Behavior: From Motivations to Negotiations

Chair: Margaret Hogg, Lancaster University Management School, UK

Individuality, Relatedness, or None of the Above? How Thinking Concretely Can Impair the Activation of Self-Relevant Goals 567
 Carlos Torelli, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

The Dilution Model: How Additional Goals Undermine the Perceived Effectiveness of a Common Means 569
 Ying Zhang, University of Chicago, USA
 Ayelet Fishbach, University of Chicago, USA
 Arie W. Kruglanski, University of Maryland, USA

Hungry for Money: The Desire for Caloric Resources Increases The Desire for Financial Resources and Vice Versa 571
 Barbara Briers, HEC Paris, France
 Mario Pandelaere, K.U.Leuven, Belgium
 Siegfried Dewitte, K.U.Leuven, Belgium
 Luk Warlop, K.U.Leuven, Belgium

Does Silence Matter? Effect of Time Taken to Respond on Bargaining Outcomes & Evaluations 573
 Shweta S. Oza, University of Maryland, USA
 Joydeep Srivastava, University of Maryland, USA

SATURDAY
30 September 2006

ACR LUNCHEON AND BUSINESS MEETING

ACR FILM FESTIVAL
 1:00pm-3:00pm

Saturday
30 September 2006

SESSION 8
 1:00pm-2:30pm

8.1. Special Session: Challenges and Extensions to Standard Beliefs in Branding Research

Chair: Kelly Goldsmith, Yale University, USA
 Tom Meyvis, New York University, USA

Discussion Leader: C.Whan Park, University of Southern California, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Challenges and Extensions to Standard Beliefs in Branding Research 575
 Kelly Goldsmith, Yale University, USA
 Tom Meyvis, New York University, USA

Development of the Brand Experience Scale 580
 Lia Zarantonello, IULM University, Italy
 Bernd H. Schmitt, Columbia University, USA
 Josko J. Brakus, University of Rochester, USA

The Effects of Brand Name Structure and Product Experience on Brand Extension Evaluations and Parent Brand Dilution
Sanjay Sood, University of California, Los Angeles, USA
Kevin L. Keller, Dartmouth College, USA

Beyond Survival of the Fittest: The Influence of Mindsets on Consumers' Response to Brand Extensions
Tom Meyvis, New York University, USA
Kelly Goldsmith, Yale University, USA
Ravi Dhar, Yale University, USA

8.2. Special Session: Automatic Heart and Automatic Mind: Nonconscious Affective and Cognitive Influences on Consumer Behavior

Chair: Michal Maimaran, Stanford University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Automatic Heart and Automatic Mind: Nonconscious Affective and Cognitive Influences on Consumer Behavior 583

Michal Maimaran, Stanford University, USA
S. Christian Wheeler, Stanford University, USA

Effects of Specific, Nonconscious Emotion Primes on Behavior

Yael Zemack-Rugar, Virginia Tech, USA
James R. Bettman, Duke University, USA
Gavan J. Fitzsimons, Duke University, USA

Circles, Squares, and Choice: Graphical Priming Effects on Uniqueness and Variety Seeking

Michal Maimaran, Stanford University, USA
S. Christian Wheeler, Stanford University, USA

Be Better or Be Merry: How Mood Affects Self-Control

Ayelet Fishbach, University of Chicago, USA
Aparna A. Labroo, University of Chicago, USA

Individual Susceptibility to Priming Effects

Stacy L. Wood, University of South Carolina, USA
Catherine Poynor, University of South Carolina, USA
Tanya Chartrand, Duke University, USA

8.3. Roundtable Session: Exploring the Co-Evolution of Possession Constellations, Self, and Identity: Part Two—Mundane Consumption 588

Chair: Robert E. Kleine, III, Ohio Northern University, USA

Participants:

Eric Arnould, University of Arizona, USA
Linda Price, University of Arizona, USA
Margaret Hogg, Lancaster University, UK
Mike Solomon, St. Joseph's University, USA
Susan Kleine, Bowling Green State University, USA
Americus Reed, University of Pennsylvania, USA
Karen Fernandez, University of Auckland, New Zealand
Jean-Sebastien Marcoux, HEC-Montreal, Canada
Shakeel Siddiqui, Dublin City University, Ireland
Stacy Baker, University of Wyoming, USA
Terry Bristol, Arizona State University-West, USA
Barb Carroll, University of Georgia, USA
Tandy Chalmers, University of Arizona, USA
June Cotte, University of Western Ontario, Canada
Carolyn Curasi, Georgia State University, USA
Benet DeBerry-Spence, University of Illinois-Chicago, USA
Amber Epp, University of Georgia-Lincoln, USA
Gerri Henderson, University of Texas-Austin, USA
Radan Martinec, Ohio Northern University, USA
Catherine Roster, University of New Mexico, USA
Andrea Wojnicki, University of Toronto, Canada

8.4. Special Session: Space, The Final Frontier: Consumer Adaptation, Resistance and Redefinition of Spatial Limitations in the Marketspace

Chair: Teresa Pavia, University of Utah, USA
Discussion Leader: Lisa Penalosa, University of Colorado, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Space, the Final Frontier: Consumer Adaptation, Resistance and Redefinition of Spatial Limitation in the Marketspace 590

Teresa Pavia, University of Utah, USA
Marlys Mason, Oklahoma State University, USA

Expanding Retail Spaces: Website Accessibility for Consumers with Visual Impairments

Carol Kaufman-Scarborough, Rutgers University, USA
Terry Childers, University of Kentucky, USA

The Homeless Renegotiating Marketspaces: Hey! Why is Your Store in Our Living Room?

Natalie Ross Adkins, Creighton University, USA
Susie Pryor, University of Nebraska, USA

Marketspace Power Struggles: Families Confronting Spatial Limitations

Marlys Mason, Oklahoma State University, USA
Teresa Pavia, University of Utah, USA

8.5. *Special Session: How Long Does it Seem? Advancing the Understanding of Past and Future Time Perception*

Chair: Robyn A. LeBoeuf, University of Florida, USA
Discussion Leader: Daniel Read, University of Durham, UK

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

- How Long Does it Seem? Advancing the Understanding of Past and Future Time Perception* 594
Robyn A. LeBoeuf, University of Florida, USA
- How Long Did That Take? The Role of Causal Attribution in Estimating Elapsed Time*
David Faro, London Business School, UK
Ann McGill, University of Chicago, USA
Reid Hastie, University of Chicago, USA
- 1995 Feels so Close Yet so Far: The Effect of Event “Markers” on the Subjective Feeling of Elapsed Time*
Kristin Diehl, University of Southern California, USA
Jonathan Levav, Columbia University, USA
Gal Zauberman, University of Pennsylvania, USA
- Perceptions of the Length of Future Time Intervals: A Simulation Perspective*
Robyn A. LeBoeuf, University of Florida, USA
Joseph P. Simmons, Yale University, USA

8.6. *Special Session: The Effects of Mortality Salience on Consumption*

Chair: Michal Herzstein, University of Delaware, USA
Discussion Leader: Jamie Lynn Goldenberg, University of South Florida, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

- The Effects of Mortality Salience on Consumption* 598
Michal Herzstein, University of Delaware, USA
- Marketing under Frequent Terror Attacks*
Michal Herzstein, University of Delaware, USA
Sharon Horsky, IDC, Israel
- Mortality Salience, Control, and Choice*
Rosellina Ferraro, University of Maryland, USA
Nidhi Agrawal, Northwestern University, USA
- Shop ‘Til You Drop: The Effect of Mortality Salience on Consumption Quantity*
Naomi Mandel, Arizona State University, USA
Dirk Smeesters, Tilburg University, Netherlands

8.7. *Competitive Paper: Contemporary Perspectives on Market Places*

Chair: Laurel Anderson, Arizona State University, USA

- Ordinary Resistance as a Parasitic Form of Action: A Dialogical Analysis of Consumer/Firm Relations* 602
Dominique Roux, Paris 12 University-IRG, France
- Globalization and Rituals: Does Ramadan Turn into Christmas?* 610
Ozlem Sandikci, Bilkent University, Turkey
Sahver Omeraki, Bilkent University, Turkey

<i>Team-Sponsorship in the Formula One–Does it affect Brand Perception? An Empirical Assessment in the German Car Market</i>	616
David M. Woisetschlager, University of Muenster, Germany	
<i>The Commercial Appeal of Communism. Semiotic Tensions in the U.S. Stoli Advertising Campaign</i>	624
Natasha Tolstikova, University of Maine, USA	
Matthias Bode, University of Hannover, Germany	

8.8. Competitive Paper: Why Buy? Factors Affecting Purchase Decisions

Chair: Meera Venkatraman

<i>Attribute-Value Functions and the Importance of Attributes</i>	627
Koert Van Ittersum, Georgia Institute of Technology, USA.	
Joost M.E. Pennings, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA	
<i>Why Not Buy the Leading Brand? A Preliminary Investigation of the Dynamics of Brand Choice</i>	628
WoonBong Na, KyungHee University, Korea	
YoungSeok Son, Hallym University, Korea	
Roger Marshall, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand	
<i>Utility Blindness: Why Do We Fall For the Deal?</i>	630
Maggie Wenjing Liu, University of Toronto, Canada	
Dilip Soman, University of Toronto, Canada	
<i>The Effect of Mindsets on Consumer Decision Strategies</i>	631
Alison Jing Xu, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	
Robert S. Wyer, Jr., Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	

8.9. Competitive Paper: Beliefs and Relationships of the Self: Alone and Between Trustees Across Generations

Chair: Fleura Bardhi, Northeastern University, USA

<i>“Confidentially Yours” : Restricting Information Flow Between Trustees Enhances Trust-Dependent Transactions</i>	632
Vincent Mak, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	
Rami Zwick, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	
<i>The Effect of Superstitious Beliefs on Consumer Judgments</i>	634
Thomas Kramer, Baruch College, CUNY, USA	
Lauren Block, Baruch College, CUNY, USA	
<i>Ambivalent Relationships and Projection onto Indexical Objects</i>	636
Deborah D. Heisley, California State University, Northridge, USA	
Deborah Cours, California State University, Northridge, USA	
<i>The Spyglass Self: A Model of Vicarious Self-perception</i>	642
Noah J. Goldstein, Arizona State University, USA	
Robert B. Cialdini, Arizona State University, USA	

SATURDAY
30 September 2006

SESSION 9
3:00pm-4:30pm

9.1. Special Session: Processes and Outcomes of Consumer Interactions within Brand Communities

Chair: Stefania Ordovas de Almeida, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil
Discussion Leader: James McAlexander, Oregon State University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Processes and Outcomes of Consumer Interactions within Brand Communities 644
Stefânia Ordovás de Almeida, University of São Paulo, Brazil
Utpal M. Dholakia, Rice University, USA

The Impact of Market Use of Consumer Generated Content on a Brand Community
Albert Muñoz, DePaul University, USA
Hope Jensen Schau, University of Arizona, USA

How to Get in With the in Crowd
Catja Prykop, Credit Suisse, Sweden
Nader T. Tavassoli, London Business School, UK
Andreas Herrmann, Universitat St. Gallen, Switzerland

Understanding Differences between Firm-Managed and Customer-Managed Brand Communities
Stefania Ordovas de Almeida, Unviersity of Sao Paulo, Brazil
Utpal M. Dholakia, Rice University, USA
Silvia Vianello, Universita Ca' Foscari di Venezia, Italy

9.10. Special Session: Ferber Award Session

9.2. Special Session: Fighting Obesity in Away-from Home Consumption: Healthier Food, Better Nutritional Labels, or Menu Assortment?

Chair: Pierre Chandon, INSEAD, France
Discussion Leader: Stella Volpe, University of Pennsylvania, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Fighting Obesity in Away-from Home Consumption: Healthier Food, Better Nutritional Labels, or Menu Assortment? 647
Pierre Chandon, INSEAD, France
Brian Wansink, Cornell University, USA

How Health Claims Bias Portion Size Estimations and Lead to Obesity
Pierre Chandon, INSEAD, France
Brian Wansink, Cornell, USA

Why Improved Nutritional Labels May not Help Combat Obesity
Paul Bloom, Duke University, USA
Lisa Bolton, University of Pennsylvania, USA

Don't Quite Super Size Me: Demand for Portion Sizes and Bundles Based on Menu Format

Kathryn Sharpe, Duke University, USA

Richard Staelin, Duke University, USA

Joel Huber, Duke University, USA

9.3. Special Session: Do we Always Judge a Book by its Cover? The 'How' and 'When' of the Effect of Consumers' Stereotypes on Evaluations of Products and Services

Chair: Shashi Matta, Ohio State University, USA

Discussion Leader: Dawn Iacobucci, University of Pennsylvania, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Do we Always Judge a Book by its Cover? The 'How' and 'When' of the Effect of Consumers' Stereotypes on Evaluations of Products and Services 648
Shashi Matta, Ohio State University, USA

When Women Lead, Do Consumers' Perceptions of Her Firm Follow?

Valerie Folkes, University of Southern California, USA

Shashi Matta, Ohio State University, USA

Racial Stereotypes in Consumer Judgment: The Effect of the Presence of Others

David Faro, London Business School, UK

Ann McGill, University of Chicago, USA

Beyond Demographics and Stereotypes: Effects of Urban Identification on Responses to Actor Race in Advertising

Marlene Morris, University of Georgetown, USA

Ladies and Gentlemen, Lend Me Your Attitudes...: Implicit Attitude Formation As a Result of Group Membership and Consumption Stereotypes

Andrew Perkins, Rice University, USA

Brad Pinter, Penn State Altoona, USA

Anthony G. Greenwald, University of Washington, USA

Mark Forehand, University of Washington, USA

9.4. Roundtable Session: Philosophy and Consumption 652

Chair: Janet Borgerson, University of Exeter, UK

Participants:

Shona Bettany, Bradford University, UK

Susan Dobscha, Bentley College, USA

Marcus Giesler, York University, Canada

Kent Grayson, Northwestern University, USA

Ashlee Humphreys, Northwestern University, USA

Krittinee Nuttavuthisit, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

Rob Kleine, Ohio Northern University, USA

Jonathan Schroeder, University of Exeter, UK

Alladi Venkatesh, University of California-Irvine, USA

Clara Gustafsson, Stockholm University, Sweden

9.5. *Special Session: Time and Decision: New Perspectives on Present-Biased Preferences*

Chair: Selin Malkoc, University of Minnesota, USA
Discussion Leader: Drazen Prelec, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Time and Decision: New Perspectives on Present-Biased Preferences 653
Selin A. Malkoc, University of Minnesota, USA

A New Method of Measuring Temporal Discounting: The Motivational Present Value of Future Rewards
Jane Ebert, University of Minnesota, USA
Drazen Prelec, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

Impatience is In the Mindset: Carryover Effects of Processing Abstractness in Sequential Tasks
Selin Malkoc, University of Minnesota, USA
Gal Zauberger, University of Pennsylvania, USA
James Bettman, Duke University, USA

Longitudinal Time Inconsistency
Daniel Read, University of Durham, UK
Shane Frederick, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

9.6. *Special Session: Changing Colors of My Thinking Hat: Influence of Situational and Task-Related Factors on Thinking Styles*

Chair: Monica Wadhwa, Stanford University, USA
Discussion Leader: Amitava Chattopadhyay, INSEAD, Singapore

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Changing Colors of My Thinking Hat: Influence of Situational and Task-Related Factors on Thinking Styles 657
Monica Wadhwa, Stanford University, USA

New Measures of Task-Specific Experiential and Rational Cognition
Thomas P. Novak, Vanderbilt University
Donna L. Hoffman, Vanderbilt University

Thinking Inside the Box: Why Consumers Enjoy Constrained Creative Experiences
Darren W. Dahl, University of British Columbia, Canada
C. Page Moreau, University of Colorado, US

The Eye's Mind and the Mind's Eye: Impact of Overt Visual Attention on Creative Thinking"
Baba Shiv, Stanford University, USA
Monica Wadhwa, Stanford University, USA

9.7. *Competitive Paper: Keep Them Coming Back: Customer Loyalty and Relationship Management*

Chair: Larry Compeau, Clarkson University, USA

The Process by Which Brand Committed Consumers Evaluate Competitive Brands: The Case for Similarity and Dissimilarity Testing 662
Sekar Raju, University at Buffalo, USA
H. Rao Unnava, Ohio State University, USA

Agent Gender and Sex-Typed Social Influenceability in Online Communication 664
Eun-Ju Lee, Chung-Ang University, Korea

<i>Let Your Workspace Speak for Itself: The Impact of Material Objects on Impression Formation and Service Quality Perception</i>	669
Joost W.M. Verhoeven, University of Twente, The Netherlands	
Thomas J.L. Van Rompay, University of Twente, The Netherlands	
Ad Th.H. Pruyn, University of Twente, The Netherlands	

<i>A Two-Step Model of Service Dissatisfaction: Theory and Evidence</i>	675
Lisa C. Wan, The Chinese University of Hong Kong	
Haksin Chan, The Chinese University of Hong Kong	

9.8. Competitive Paper: New Scale Development and Refinement

Chair: Dipayan Biswas, Bentley College, USA

<i>Consumers' Arrogance: Construct Conceptualization and Preliminary Validation Evidence</i>	677
Ayalla Ruvio, University of Haifa, Israel	
Aviv Shoham, University of Haifa, Israel	
Shlomo Hareli, University of Haifa, Israel	

<i>Sustained Consumer Fascination</i>	679
Canan Corus, Virginia Tech, USA	
Julie L. Ozanne, Virginia Tech, USA	

<i>The Brand Dislike Construct: Scale Development and Application to Actual Brands</i>	680
Daniele Dalli, Università di Pisa, Italy	
Silvia Grappi, Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, Italy	
Simona Romani, Università di Sassari, Italy	
Giacomo Gistri, Università di Pisa, Italy	

<i>Toward a Theory on the Content and Structure of Money Attitudes</i>	682
Steven Michael Burgess, University of Cape Town, South Africa	

9.9. Competitive Paper: Media Effects on Brand Perceptions and Consumer Trust

Chair: Ashesh Mukherjee, McGill University, Canada

<i>Does a Medium Context Have a Priming or an Interference Effect? It Depends on How You Look At It</i>	684
Wim Janssens, University of Antwerp, Belgium	
Patrick De Pelsmacker, University of Antwerp, Belgium	
Maggie Geuens, Ghent University, Belgium	

<i>When Advertising Integration with Media Content Fails and Succeeds</i>	686
Jing Wang, University of Iowa, USA	
Bobby Calder, Northwestern University, USA	

<i>Convergence of Interests—Cultivating Consumer Trust through Corporate Social Initiatives</i>	687
Shuili Du, Boston University, USA	
C.B. Bhattacharya, Boston University, USA	
Sankar Sen, Baruch College, USA	

<i>The Effects of Different Category Context on Target Brand Evaluations</i>	688
Myungwoo Nam, INSEAD, Singapore	
Brian Sternthal, Northwestern University, USA	

SATURDAY
30 September 2006
JCP EDITORIAL BOARD MEETING
 4:30pm-6:00pm

SATURDAY
30 September 2006
SESSION 10
 4:45pm-6:15pm

10.1. Special Session: Casino Gambling: Meanings, Motives and Marketers

Chair: June Cotte, University of Western Ontario, Canada
 Discussion Leader: David Sprott, Washington State University, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Casino Gambling: Meanings, Motives and Marketers 689
 June Cotte, University of Western Ontario, Canada

The Effect of Visual Stimuli in Casinos on Emotional Responses and Problem Gambling Behavior
 Karen Finlay, University of Guelph, Canada
 Vinay Kanetkar, University of Guelph, Canada
 Jane Londerville, University of Guelph, Canada
 Harvey H. C. Marmurek, University of Guelph, Canada

An Assessment of the Value of Slot Clubs as Drivers of Casino Loyalty
 Flavia Hendler, University of Nevada–Las Vegas, USA
 Kathryn A. Braun-LaTour, University of Nevada–Las Vegas, USA

Not Leaving Las Vegas: Identity Projects of Local Vegas Gamblers
 Kathryn A. Braun-LaTour, University of Nevada–Las Vegas, USA
 June Cotte, University of Western Ontario, Canada

10.2. Special Session: Instant Choices versus Slow-Developing Preferences: How Preferences Form and Shift over Time

Chair: Wendy Liu, University of California Los Angeles, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Instant Choices versus Slow-Developing Preferences: How Preferences Form and Change over Time 692
 Wendy Liu, University of California Los Angeles, USA

Choice Construction versus Preference Construction: The Instability of Preferences Learned in Context
 On Amir, University of California San Diego, USA
 Jonathan Levav, Columbia University, USA

Preference Exploration and Learning: The Role of Intensiveness and Extensiveness of Experience
 Steve Hoeffler, University of North Carolina, USA
 Dan Ariely, MIT, USA
 Pat West, Ohio State University, USA
 Rod Duclos, University of North Carolina, USA

The Effect of Decision Interruption and Suspension on Preferences
Wendy Liu, University of California Los Angeles, USA

New Insights on the Benefits of Unconscious Thought
Ap Dijksterhuis, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

10.3. Special Session: Access versus Ownership in Consumer Research

Chair: Ashlee Humphreys, Northwestern University, USA
Discussion Leader: Russell Belk, University of Utah, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Access versus Ownership in Consumer Research 696
Ashlee Humphreys, Northwestern University, USA
Markus Geisler, York University, Canada

Tensions between Access and Ownership in the Media Marketplace
Markus Giesler, York University, Canada
Ashlee Humphreys, Northwestern University, USA

Write and Wrong: Ownership, Access and Value In Consumer Co-Created Online Fan Fiction
Clinton D. Lanier, Jr, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, USA
Hope Jensen Schau, University of Arizona, USA
Albert M. Muñoz, Jr., DePaul University, USA

Guardianship and Ownership on Nebraska Century Farms
Eric Arnould, University of Arizona, USA
Carolyn Curasi, Georgia State University, USA
Linda Price, University of Arizona, USA

10.4. Special Session: “Fakin’ It”: Why Do Consumers Buy Counterfeit Goods?

Chair: Sankar Sen, Baruch College/CUNY, USA

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

“Fakin’ It”: Why Do Consumers Buy Counterfeit Goods? 700
Sankar Sen, Baruch College/CUNY, USA

“When You Aren’t What You Are Wearing”: How Consumers of Counterfeits are Evaluated
Stephanie Geiger-Oneto, University of Houston, USA

Robin Hood is Alive: The Perceived Morality and Social Acceptance of Pirated Products and Counterfeits Usage
Hannah Chang, Columbia University, USA
Anat Keinan, Columbia University, USA
Donald Lehmann, Columbia University, USA

Exposing the Designer Paradox: Understanding How Consumers Rationalize Purchasing Counterfeit Designer Merchandise
Deborah Brown McCabe, Arizona State University, USA
Mark Rosenbaum, Northern Illinois University, USA

What’s In a Logo? Exploring Motivations to Purchase Counterfeit Brands
Keith Wilcox, Baruch College/CUNY Graduate Center, USA
Hyeong Min Kim, Baruch College/CUNY, USA
Sankar Sen, Baruch College/CUNY, USA

10.5. Competitive Paper: Understanding the Consumer as a Person: Studying the Consumer and His Values

Chair: Torsten Ringberg, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA

<i>Cueing Common Ecological Behaviors to Increase Environmental Attitudes and Behavior</i>	701
Gert Cornelissen, Catholic University Leuven, Belgium	
Mario Pandelaere, Catholic University Leuven, Belgium	
Luk Warlop, Catholic University Leuven, Belgium	
Siegfried, Dewitte, University Leuven, Belgium	
<i>Progressing a Taxonomy of Possible Reflexivities: Guidelines for Reflexive Practice in Consumer Research</i>	703
Shona Bettany, University of Bradford, UK	
Helen Woodruffe-Burton, University of Lancaster and University College of St.Martins UK	
<i>Auspiciousness: Coping with Kratophany</i>	704
Karen V. Fernandez, University of Auckland, New Zealand	
Ekant Veer, University of Auckland, New Zealand	
John L. Lastovicka, Arizona State University, USA	
<i>One or Many?: Examining Consumption Experiences from the Lens of Multiple Selves</i>	709
Shalini Bahl, University of Utah, USA	
George Milne, University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA	

10.6. Competitive Paper: To Indulge or Not to Indulge. That is the Question: A Look at Consumer Self-Control

Chair: Monika Kukar-Kinney, University of Richmond, USA

<i>Lines in the Sand: Using Category Widths to Define and Pursue Self-Control Goals</i>	711
Cait Poynor, University of South Carolina, USA	
Kelly Haws, University of South Carolina, USA	
<i>Stress and Eating: Disentangling the Effects of Psychological, Autonomic and Endocrine Components of Stress Response</i>	712
Zhenfeng Ma, University of Toronto Institute of Technology, Canada	
Aida Faber, McGill University, Canada	
Laurette Dubé, McGill University, Canada	
<i>Beating Back that Triple-Chocolate Cake: Mental Accounts as Instruments of Self-Regulation</i>	713
Parthasarathy Krishnamurthy, University of Houston, USA	
Sonja Prokopec, University of Houston, USA	
<i>Making Prudent vs. Impulsive Choices: The Role of Anticipated Shame and Guilt on Consumer Self-Control</i>	715
HaeEun Chun, University of Southern California, USA	
Vanessa M. Patrick, University of Georgia, USA	
Deborah J. MacInnis, University of Southern California, USA	

10.7. Competitive Paper: Customer Relationship Management

Chair: Daniel Laufer, Yeshiva University, USA

<i>Building Customer Relationships: A Comparison Across Multiple Service Encounters</i>	720
Hung-Chang Chiu, National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan	
Monle Lee, Indiana University South Bend, USA	
Yi-Ching Hsieh, National Central University, Taiwan	
Li-Ya Chen, Ming Chuan University, Taiwan	

<i>Switching Barriers in the Four-Stage Loyalty Model</i>	726
Markus Blut, University of Muenster	
Heiner Evanschitzky, University of Muenster	
Verena Vogel, University of Muenster	
Dieter Ahlert, University of Muenster	

<i>Why Companies Should Make Their Customers Happy: The Neural Correlates of Customer Loyalty</i>	735
Hilke Plassmann, California Institute of Technology, USA and University of Muenster, Germany	
Peter Kenning, University of Muenster, Germany	
Dieter Ahlert, University of Muenster, Germany	

<i>Optimizing Variety in Mass Customization: A Theoretical Perspective</i>	740
Sanjay Puligadda, Pennsylvania State University, USA	
Rajdeep Grewal, Pennsylvania State University, USA	
Arvind Rangaswamy, Pennsylvania State University, USA	
Frank R. Kardes, University of Cincinnati, USA	

10.8. Competitive Paper: Affect and Judgments

Chair: Hayden Noel, Baruch College, USA
 Lilia Ziamou, Baruch College, USA

<i>Temporal Sequence Effects: A Memory Framework</i>	743
Nicole Votolato Montgomery, Ohio State University, USA	
H. Rao Unnava, Ohio State University, USA	

<i>Mood and Comparative Judgment</i>	745
Cheng Qiu, National University of Singapore, Singapore	
Catherine W. M. Yeung, National University of Singapore, Singapore	

<i>Complexity Effects on Consumer Choice Consistency</i>	747
Benedict Dellaert, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands	
Bas Donkers, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands	
Bernard Conlon, TNS Australia, Sydney, Australia	
Arthur Van Soest, Tilburg University, The Netherlands	

<i>Recollections of Pleasure and Pain: When Losers are Motivated to Edit their Retrospective Evaluations</i>	749
Elizabeth Cowley, University of Sydney, Australia	
Colin Farrell, University of Sydney, Australia	

<p>SATURDAY 30 September 2006</p> <p>CONFERENCE SPECIAL EVENT Universal's Marvel Island of Adventure 7:30pm–10:30pm</p>

**SUNDAY
01 October 2006**

**JCR POLICY BOARD MEETING
7:30am-12:00pm**

**RESEARCH NETWORKING
8:00am-10:00am**

**ACR DOCTORAL SYMPOSIUM PART II
8:00am-12:00pm**

Author Index 750

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Moving the Needle: Can ACR Help Increase Our Research Productivity

Barbara E. Kahn, University of Pennsylvania, USA¹

Like all of the presidents before me, I checked out previous presidential addresses to see the issues discussed, and I discovered that *all* the good topics were taken. Previous presidents have discussed the definition of consumer research; many have addressed the quality of research, there have been calls for more theory, for different perspectives (anywhere from the international perspective to the perspective of children). And of course just last year, David Mick called for nothing less than transformative consumer research. So what was left? Although many of you might be happier if I stopped right now and acknowledged that indeed it has all been said, I did find one topic that no one seems to have addressed previously, and it does affect us all.

This topic came to me at the AMA doctoral consortium this summer after overhearing some doctoral students discussing the difficulties of trying to set up a subject pool. As I was listening to them, I realized that in all the myriad presidential addresses, research productivity issues had never been discussed.

I decided that one way to attack this problem could parallel the process I used when I began working on my current research stream: understanding patient decision making. I started on that right after I got tenure (and right after my second parent had been diagnosed with cancer). Both of those events: the freedom (and obligation) of tenure and the pain of coping with the battles of cancer, motivated me to do research about “important,” “impactful” issues. But since this was a new stream for me, I had to start from scratch. The process I used then (see for example, Kahn and Luce 2003) and the process I used now is basically the same: first, I tried to learn about existing behavior. Second I looked to see where behaviors didn’t make sense and could be improved. Third, I identified the stresses or barriers that were hindering effective behavior. And finally I looked for a way to make a real contribution

Beginning, with the last point, since the contribution here would be through ACR, I wanted to ascertain a priori that there were ways that ACR could make a difference. I identified four potential areas: First ACR could help in sharing experiences. Second, ACR could initiate formalized mentoring programs. Third ACR could help through the power gained from being part of a group. Finally ACR could help by facilitating exchanges among various types of research resources.

To learn about the underlying problems, I conducted an online survey. I sent the link to the total population of fully paid non-student ACR members which at the time was about 1000. I ended up analyzing a sample of 376, which represented almost a 40% response rate. In the survey, I asked people to indicate the “degree of problem” they were experiencing for various research-related activities; I collected a few descriptive statistics and I had several open-ended questions. I kept the total survey time to about 5 minutes. In parallel I also emailed a smaller sample, sampling

broadly by gender, geography, rank, and methodology to get a richer appreciation of the issues.

The data I collected allowed me to test a few null hypotheses with respect to productivity issues. Specifically I was interested in whether there was gender equality or inequality, whether type of methodology mattered, and whether productivity issues varied by career stage.

First the gender issue. Gender equality? No, not quite. There is a significant “glass ceiling” in our field. We have 56% male, 44% female overall, but the percentage of females drops significantly in the more senior ranks (62% male, 38% female). This finding could be caused by several factors, but as I will illustrate later, I can show significant differences in perceived research productivity issues by gender and this may be a factor in this decline.

To test the effect of research methodology I listed the 36 methodologies that we use at ACR for reviewing and I similarly allowed people to indicate *up to four* that represented their expertise. Every *single one* of the 36 techniques listed had at least a few people represented. ACR is surprisingly diverse. Although we are diverse, it is also clear, that a majority (69%) of our members do some experimental work. For purposes of the subsequent analyses, I have simplified this data as follows: I classify members as “experimental” if they checked the experimental box; I classified members as “survey researchers” if they did not check the experimental box, but did check the survey research box. Finally if members did not check the experimental or survey research boxes but checked one of the multiple qualitative approaches listed, I classified them as a consumer culture theorist (CCT) (Arnould and Thompson 2005). There are a small number of ACR members who do not fit in any of these three classifications and I have deleted them from the analysis.

Using this coding I found that while there are more experimentalists at every rank (overall, 69% experimentalists, 19% CCT, and 13% survey) the differential is exceptionally great at the assistant level (82% experimental, 12% CCT and 7% survey, $p=.0002$). Further the number of experimentalists declines significantly with rank (assistant=105, associate=64, full=45 and chair=30) while the other methodologies are less affected by rank (for CCT, assistants=15, associates=24, full=15 and chair=15, and for survey, assistants=9, associates=14, full=20 and chair=6). Although I can think of several hypotheses as to why this might occur, I have not tested any of them, so I leave the issue to future research.

The last hypothesis I tested was whether people at different ranks perceived research barriers differently, and this is definitely true. I had 36% assistants, 28% associates, 22% fulls and 14% chairs. To get at perceived barriers to research productivity, I included an open-ended question that asked: “if you could have more resources for research what would you wish for?” I found a significant “wishes * rank” interaction ($p=.03$). For assistants and associates, the ranking was: more access to research participants (this included a host of issues such as: more participants, more lab space, non-student participants, establishing a research panel, setting up a behavioral lab etc.) The second factor was the need for more time, and the third factor was a need for research funding.

For full professors, the same factors were important but the relative ordering shifted. Time constraints rose to number 1, need for research participants was number 2 and research funding was number 3. At the chaired level, time constraints were again the most

¹Kim Corfman, Ravi Dhar, Jennifer Escalas, Susan Fournier, Donna Hoffman, Dawn Iacobucci, Punam Anand Keller, Mary Frances Luce, Robert Meyer and Lisa Peñaloza made many excellent comments on earlier versions of this address. I greatly appreciate their help. This is a slightly revised version of the address delivered at the 2006 Conference of the Association for Consumer Research held in Orlando, Florida.

important and research funding dropped out of the top three. A new wish emerged in the number two slot, a request for administrative support, and number three was need for research participants.

In addition to the top 3 “wishes,” there were also significant differences further down the list. The full and chair professors were more likely to mention a need for administrative support, access to good PhD students, relief from teaching, and resources to make an impact. Associate professors were more likely to mention equipment needs such as MRI or video equipment and access to data sets. Finally assistant professors were more likely to ask for help in finding co-authors or to request help with statistical analysis or software issues.

I also examined the three top barriers to research productivity in more detail. First, to understand the research resources that were available to our members, I asked respondents to indicate with a yes or no vote which of the following they had access to (the numbers in parentheses indicate the percentage of “yes” votes overall): a voluntary participant pool (50%), a required participant pool (34%), a behavioral lab (20%), an online panel (10%), school resources in paying for research participants (29%), or a shared participant pool across departments or schools (10%). I also asked several descriptive questions about the respondents’ schools, such as whether the school was public or private, had an undergraduate business program, had a PhD program and the size of the general undergraduate population. Several of these factors moderated the research resources that were available but the most interesting moderators were the public/private factor and whether or not there was a PhD program.

Overall, 68% of the respondents come from public and 32% from private universities. In my email correspondence, I learned that for members at public schools, especially large ones, getting undergraduate participants is not the issue, but as one professor at a public university wrote: “Our main “problem is *not* having a behavioral lab. Being a large, public institution, we have TONS of subjects, but can only run studies in classrooms so it limits what you can do research wise.” The data supported this observation. Public universities are over represented in the proportion of schools that have *required* participant pools (of the schools that have required participant pools, 79% are public) but they are under represented by the proportion of schools that have behavioral labs (of the schools that have behavioral labs, only 47% are public) or payment for research participants (of the schools that provide resources for research participants, only 52% are public).

The presence of a PhD program also significantly affects the availability of research resources. Overall 64% of respondents have PhD programs and that was correlated with a higher likelihood of having a required subject pool (of the schools that had a required pool, 73% had PhD programs) and a behavioral lab (of the schools that behavioral labs 92% had PhD programs).

I also asked whether access to *enough* research participants was a problem for respondents on a 1-7 scale where 1 indicated it was a real problem and 7 indicated it was not a real problem. 30% of the respondents checked the bottom two boxes indicating that this was a real problem. But the problem differed by type of methodology.

Experimentalists were more likely to feel like they had access to research participants, but just did not have *enough* whereas non experimentalists (both survey and qualitative researchers) didn’t even feel like they had easy access to research participants.

This result suggests that the analysis should be in two stages: For experimentalists, the issue is develop a useable participant pool on campus and then get enough participants. So we would want to know how many research participants are enough, and what is necessary for a good on-campus behavioral lab.

For non-experimentalists, on-campus participant pools are not as likely to solve the problem. For those there are three possible alternatives: (1) online panels (although there is some debate whether qualitative research is doable with online panels), (2) sharing data sets and/or creative solutions to data access, and (3) locating alternative funding sources that can help with the collection of hard-to-get data.

To answer the question “how many participants are enough?” I refer to an analysis done at Insead (Brendl & Vosgerau 2000, posted on the ACR website). They looked at several “A” journals from 1998-2000 and estimated on average how many research participants were needed to produce a paper for that journal. They found: at JCR, an average of 3.8 experiments were run, using an average of 453 participants (and this figure as well as the ones below should be augmented because they do not include subjects used for pilot studies, manipulation checks, etc.), at OBHDP, an average of 2 experiments were run with a total of 232 participants; at JPSP, an average of 3.4 experiments were run with a total of 322 participants. But since not all experimentation leads to A-level results, they assumed a 1 out 3 success ratio, leading to their conclusion that a faculty member needs 1800 experimental sessions to produce one “A” paper.

On my survey respondents indicated that on average they had access to 605 research participants a semester, or 1200 a year, short of the necessary 1800 sessions. The median at 200/semester or 400/year was significantly short of the requirement. The Insead estimate can obviously be scaled up to the school level and used in reports to deans or funding institutions to make the case for resource increases. For example, at Wharton, making a few assumptions (one of which is that we can run 2-3 experiments/participant hour), I calculated that we would need a lab that generated 9000 participant hours/year to keep our experimental faculty productive.

Looking across various lab programs, it’s clear that there are many different models but the more successful programs have:

- dedicated physical space preferably with networked computers and a focus group room. In addition, it is necessary to have centralized subject-management software.
- a faculty champion and several lab personnel to manage the lab
- Finally, unlike the psychology model, where individual faculty tend to have their own private labs, for consumer research, most of the successful labs tend to pool resources across a department and/or across the school, allowing greater opportunity for piggy backing and other positive synergies

For survey researchers (and probably others), another solution is the online panel. Although only 10% of the respondents currently have online panels, this is obviously a huge growth area for the future. Rather than go into details here about issues to consider in setting up an online panel, I suggest that interested members should read the document that I put up on the ACR website that Donna Hoffman created which discusses some of the issues one should consider in setting up an online panel.

ACR can also use its clout as a prestigious organization of consumer researchers to negotiate special arrangements with some online survey software vendors. For starters, Qualtrics (Survey Z), which is the software that I used to generate my online survey has agreed to provide a special arrangement JUST for ACR members. They will allow ACR members to create an account and to use their software to collect up to 2000 responses. Simply go to <http://acr.qualtrics.com>, then call 1 800 340 9194 to activate. Members are also eligible to receive an academic grant for their college with

an unlimited number of user accounts. For details, email stuartorgill@qualtrics.com or call the number above.

There are also other possible ways that ACR members can work together. We could establish “ACR” panels, or set up reciprocal arrangements where each institution with an online panel could notify their panelists about other opportunities. Or perhaps ACR can have “sign up portals” on the website where new panelists could fill out a single form and check off all the panels they would like to join. Similarly we could consider sharing access to large and/or unusual consumer databases or maybe set a participant pool exchange where researchers can trade available participant-hours. This could facilitate cross-cultural research as well as help with participant burn out.

The second barrier that many people mentioned was the time problem. To understand how people balanced demands on their time, I asked them to indicate how much of a problem they felt it was to balance research against teaching, administration and home life. For teaching, interestingly, the number of *preps* ($p=.01$) and NOT the number of overall courses taught (*ns*) influenced the perceived difficulty of balancing teaching demands against research productivity. Average course loads in the sample were equivalent to 3.68 semester courses per year (median=3.5, range=0 to 8). The average number of preps was 2.23/year (median =2 and range was 0 to 6).

Again, I asked respondents how much of a problem was it to balance research demands against teaching, administration and home life where 1 indicated a real problem and 7 indicated not a problem. There were three strong moderators.

The first moderator was *gender*. Women found it harder to balance all three against research demands. The means were as follows: with regard to teaching, $M(\text{women})=3.9$, $M(\text{men})= 4.4$ ($p<.05$), with regard to administration, $M(\text{women})= 3.8$, $M(\text{men})=4.4$, ($p<.05$), and with regard to home life, $M(\text{women})=3.7$, $M(\text{men})=4.3$, ($p<.03$)

This may provide some clue to the “glass ceiling” issue. For example, one woman wrote: “There are so very few women with small children who are pre-tenure at the top business schools. Why is being tenure track at a top school so incompatible with motherhood?” Another respondent wrote: I think that the biggest problem women face is summarized by the book “Women Don’t Ask” which includes research that shows that a big difference between men and women is that men assume that virtually everything is negotiable and women wait for someone to tell them that it is OK to negotiate.

The second moderator was *methodology*. There was a significant difference on these balance issues by methodology with the qualitative researchers expressing the biggest problems and the experimentalists expressing the least problems. Survey researchers were in the middle. These means were significantly different at the $p=.01$ level. For teaching, $M(\text{CCT}) =3.8$, $M(\text{survey})= 4.1$ and $M(\text{experimental})= 4.6$. For administration, $M(\text{CCT})= 3.7$, $M(\text{survey})=3.9$ and $M(\text{experimental})=4.4$. Finally, for home life, $M(\text{CCT})= 3.7$, $M(\text{survey})= 3.7$, and $M(\text{experimental}) =4.6$.

The last moderator was *rank*. Chaired professors had a harder time balancing administrative demands ($M(\text{chair})=3.2$) than any other rank ($M(\text{associates and full})=4.1$, $M(\text{assistants})= 4.6$, $p<.001$). Respondents mentioned “senior burnout.” One respondent noted that time becomes even more precious for successful people, because that “success” leads to many kinds of requests for help.

These problems are obviously not unique to ACR, but ironically, it is an area of consumer research. For example, research by Gal Zauberman & John Lynch (Zauberman and Lynch 2005) that got quite a bit of media attention tries to diagnose the problem. They found that “people were consistently surprised to be so busy today. But lacking knowledge of what tasks would compete for their time in the future; they act as if new demands would not inevitably arise

that are as pressing as those faced today.” So people over commit because they expect to have more time in the future. But then tomorrow becomes today and... yesterday’s “yes” becomes today’s “damn!”

This research diagnoses the problem but does not provide the answer. As an illustration of this, let me share the following. In the survey, many people mentioned journal or review process issues. Although this is not my focus here, ACR is a sponsor of JCR and we have a representative on the JCR policy board. It is my responsibility this year to appoint someone to this board and I wanted someone who had a great deal of journal and review process experience, and who would be responsive to member feedback so I asked John Lynch to be the next ACR representative, to which he said “yes.....”

And it was not until I was putting together this speech, that I noticed the irony in that!

This suggests that diagnosing the problem and solving the problem are two different things. To find a solution, I asked someone who is an excellent time manager, Punam Anand Keller. She said that using the goal literature she derived the following rules for herself.

1. *Prioritize your activities*. Make a matrix every year of goals and activities and eliminate those activities that are not associated with any goals. Some activities may seem necessary that are not linked with personal goals (e.g., attending a faculty meeting or graduation). Determine how much time you spend on those “non-goals” related activities and develop a strategy that will accommodate them more efficiently (for example, Punam attends two out of four faculty meetings and one out of three graduations).
2. *Learn When to Say No*. She suggests making a list of things you have said no to and sticking it in a place near your phone or computer. Most people don’t know when to say no because they feel bad or they think it’s unfair. A No-list makes you realize you will recover from feeling bad and it might be fair to say no because you have said no to other similar things.
3. *What is your perfect day?* Finally, she says to help motivate your efficient use of time ask yourself what is your perfect day. And then plan accordingly. Her bottom line is: happiness is a choice.

This idea of asking people who have solved problems for their secrets is the heart of the “mentoring” process and we can consider introducing formal mentoring sessions at ACR. Based on this survey, it might make sense to schedule mentoring sessions on time management, dealing with IRB boards, fundraising issues and various methodology workshops. Another related issue that was mentioned, particularly among more junior faculty, was the desire to meet new co-authors and to interact with ACR members more easily. Maybe we can set up a “speed dating” like session to test for research compatibility. If it works for finding marriage partners, it might work for joint research projects!

By the way we have tried to personalize our membership through a new feature we added to the website—and this feature came about because of an idea expressed in our “knowledge exchange.” We now have a new “get to know your fellow ACR members” feature. Every time you click on the website, a different ACR member’s bio and photo will be featured.

The last barrier mentioned was the funding problem. I asked “How much research support do you get per year in \$ from your school?” This question seemed to be interpreted differently by

different people. I believe some people may have factored in research ninths or salary but most did not. Anyway, the average was \$6976 (median: \$4000, range: 0-\$80,000).

Perhaps most interesting is that although people perceive a funding issue, they don't seem to be writing grants. I was surprised that overall 36% of the respondents had *never* tried to get a grant. The issue is particularly acute for younger researchers. 51% of assistants had never tried for grant money (For chaired professors, only 24% had never tried). "The didn't try" was a bigger percentage for all ranks than the "didn't get."

Survey respondents mentioned a whole host of sources where they received their funding, including: Robert Wood Johnson, David Packer, Aspen, MSI, NSF, NIH, ISBM, SSHRC, various state, federal and government grants, United Way, NASD Investor Education Foundation, CIBER and Fullbright. In addition, there is an excellent list of links to information and grant sources on the ACR website. Further David Mick and Ken Doyle have just recently put a new list of funding sources on the website as part of the TCR initiative. Asking for funding is typically done in other academic fields, but apparently is not a habit of ours.

MSI also remains a good source for small grant funding. Mike Hanssens, Executive Director, has committed MSI's support in helping out consumer researchers. He said MSI is very interested in: consumer advocacy type research, and will provide funding to enable access to "real-world" participants for strong research proposals that may otherwise have to be executed on college-students.

In summary, three research barriers seem to be universal: finding sufficient research participants; managing one's time effectively and finding funding sources. The research participant problem differs by types of schools and by research methodology. An initial solution is to share information. ACR may also help members by pooling resources, setting up exchanges or using ACR clout for better negotiation positions.

The time management issues continue to perplex people and is especially an issue for women, qualitative researchers and more senior faculty. Mentoring sessions at ACR may offer one helpful mechanism. Specialty conferences, such as this year's neuroscience conference, may also give us an opportunity to learn about new research paradigms more efficiently and perhaps can help prevent "burnout." Finally, we can also consider providing daycare resources at conferences. The funding problem is interesting, since many of our members are not in the practice of writing grants. It seems like funding sources are available if you ask for them and have strong research proposals.

Overall, this examination has convinced me that although many people think of ACR as JUST the NORTH AMERICAN conference, it can really be much more. The potential to increase our research productivity collectively is there.

Thank you for your attention.

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ACR 2006 North American Film Festival

OVERVIEW

This year marked the fifth consecutive North American ACR Film Festival and it is perhaps this year's festival more than any other that required the prefix "North American." After showings in Gothenberg, Sydney, and Monterrey, with upcoming festivals already confirmed for Milan and Sao Paolo, there is little doubt that the film fest has gone global, thanks to the enthusiastic support of ACR Program Committees, Co-chairs, and Presidents.

This year's offerings begin to mark a real flowering of contributions. We introduced a theme for the film festival, "Having an Impact." Thanks to the generous support of the Center for Consumer Culture we also introduced a new, juried cash prize for the strongest contribution. Many of this year's film-makers were successful contributors from past years, and the learning curve and experience effects were in evidence. Even with global presence, the nine films shown at the festival this year came from six different countries: Denmark, Mexico, USA, Turkey, Australia, and Japan.

Given the theme this year, the tone of the festival was a bit more serious, with several of the films pulling no punches in terms of their critiques of consumer society, and others offering compelling stories or visually graphic and impactful images. Although it would not be our preferred demonstration, the impact of one film was most evident when an audience member fainted. There was a healthy variety in the topics of this year's films, ranging from global effects on local landscapes to the lack of local health care, and from consumption of counterfeits to consumption of coffee.

As always, the films inspired considerable discussion in the sessions. The question and answer periods were enlivened by the detailed discussions with the filmmakers that followed the premiere exhibition of each film. These interactive in-depth topical discussions were, as much as the films themselves, highlights of the sessions.

Continuing the positive trajectory established last year, film quality was very high due to the strong rejection rate. This year's film festival had a rejection rate of 50 percent (compared to last year's then-historic 33 percent rate). Our judgment criteria continue to develop, and we offered all reviewers a set of suggested criteria, and asked them to rate various aspects of the films. We continued the practice of using seasoned visual researchers as reviewers whose comments and ratings were decisive in making exhibition judgments. We owe each of them a great debt of gratitude for their continuing devotion to the film festival, and acknowledge them here.

2006 North American ACR Film Festival Reviewers and Judges

Gary Bamossy, Georgetown University
Stefania Borghini, Bocconi University
Marylouise Caldwell, University of Sydney
Sindy Chapa, University of Texas-Pan-American
Yvette Essounga, University of Texas-Pan-American
Jay Handelman, Queen's University
Annamma Joy, Concordia University
Dannie Kjeldgaard, University of Southern Denmark
Albert Muniz, DePaul University
María Eugenia Pérez, Tecnológico de Monterrey
Diego Rinallo, Bocconi University
Scott Smith, Central Missouri State University
Alladi Venkatesh, University of California, Irvine

COFFEE GROUNDS AND THE GLOBAL CUP: GLOCAL CONSUMER CULTURE IN SCANDINAVIA

Dannie Kjeldgaard, University of Southern Denmark
Jacob Ostberg, Stockholm University School of Business

This videography explores the glocalization of consumer culture by analyzing the consumptionscape of coffee culture in Scandinavia. The purpose of the videography is twofold: Firstly, to explore how the hegemonic brandscape may operate in a cultural context outside of North America by exploring coffee cultural discourses in the Scandinavian context. As a kind of commentary to, or re-inquiry of, Thompson and Arsel's (2004) study of the hegemonic influence that the Seattle-based company Starbucks exerts on the US coffee culture we explore how the logic of the hegemonic brandscape becomes glocalized in the Scandinavian context. While we generally agree with the analysis and take seriously the proposition that Starbucks exerts a global structure of common difference on local coffee cultures across the globe, we wish to explore and illustrate how different local market contexts implies different competitive and positioning roles for Starbucks and the like. Secondly, and more importantly, our purpose is also a more general one: namely to explore whether there is such a thing as a specific Scandinavian consumer culture that interact with global structures in the process of glocalization. Coffee culture seems an eminent site of exploration as Scandinavia constitutes the world's highest per capita consumption of coffee.

Our empirical investigations in Scandinavia, a cultural setting where Starbucks has yet not entered the market albeit gained significant cultural influence, show that there is a long-standing historically established coffee culture that exists in parallel to both a starbuckified coffee culture and a coffee connoisseurship culture. Our detailed analysis of this coffee consumptionscape illustrate that there is a plurality of cultural styles along which the different types of coffee establishments differ. At the same time, we show that there are tendencies toward the hegemonic influx of starbuckified dimensions suggested by Thompson and Arsel.

We identify three ideal typical overall coffee cultural styles: The first one we term Americana reflecting the recent global diffusion of the lactified coffee cultural consumption style most notably symbolized by Starbucks. The Americana coffee cultural style is heavily influenced by the coffee cultural ideals of Starbucks. As already mentioned, the dominant global player has yet to enter the Scandinavian market making room for plenty of simile brands that draw on the style originally laid out by Starbucks. According to an interview with the franchisee at an Espresso House in Lund, the owners of the Espresso House corporation travel to the US a couple of times a year just to visit Starbucks outlets and be inspired. They proudly announce that there is no difference whatsoever between Starbucks and the particular local variation of Espresso House. In addition to these simile brands a number of outlets such as restaurants, hot dog stands, and gas stations utilize the structure of common difference of the coffee shop menu.

The second we term Culinaria and is a more recent tendency obsessed with authenticity in the form of exoticism and high quality. The cultural style of Culinaria makes references to a number of different types of authenticity. One type is through what is perceived as an indexical authenticity through a reference to place of origin, most notably Italian cafés but also French brasseries. The Culinaria category also house a different type of connoisseur café equally obsessed with authenticity but more eclectic in their inspiration than the Italiana cafés described above. These places are a postmodern concoction of everything “authentic”, the menus are comprised of fascinating juxtapositions of elements from across the globe. Others emphasize authenticity by selling products of certain production methods such as organic and “politically correct” products. Rather than interpreting this refined culinary experience as an opposition to the influx of the starbuckified hegemonic consumptionscape we see it as part of a general gastronomic slow food movement not only opposing global standardized consumer culture but equally as much local consumer culture that has deteriorated gastronomic qualities.

The third we term Viennesia reflecting the traditional café culture originating in Vienna in the 17th century. These styles existed in pure forms in many establishments and creolized forms in others. Many of these cafés have a long history and were established at the end of the nineteenth century. Some of them are even explicitly called “Wienerkafé” to really spell out the link to their central European origins. Largely, the legitimacy of these classic cafés is grounded in their craftsmanship in confectionary and pastries. The traditional cafés therefore gain iconic authenticity by expressing that, just like in the Viennese counterparts, the goods for sale are made in-house. Even though the baked goods are at center stage, coffee is an integrated part of the serving and plays a key role. These classic cafés are hence culturally understood as a place where high quality coffee is served.

The historically constituted coffee culture comprises certain structural rules of brand competition in the coffee culture combined with what we interpret as a Scandinavian consumer cultural stance to competition based on an ideal of consensus rather than opposition. This hence constitutes a different hegemonic struggle in the Scandinavian cultural context than in the US context.

The inherently global origins of the existing coffee cultural consumptionscape problematize the notion of glocalization since the local part of the global-local dichotomy does not represent any kind of original authentic culture. Certain coffee cultural consumption styles may have been authenticated over time so that they have come to represent local culture. In the case of the coffee cultural consumptionscape, the symbols of the local (here represented by the classic cafés of the Viennesia type) and the global (Starbuckified coffee culture claiming ‘European’ heritage) all stem from the same socio-historical cultural origins of European coffee culture in the 17th century. Therefore, although Starbuckification exemplifies the hegemonizing force of a recent structure of common difference, it stands in relation to other structures of common difference which are locally ingrained, yet global—or foreign—in origin in an historical perspective.

SCENES FROM A STREET: VISUAL IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON CONSUMPTIONSCAPES

[People’s Choice Award Winning Film]

Ebru Ulusoy, University of Texas-Pan American

“Globalization” process attracts more and more attention in order to understand the consumer culture which is globalizing by ethnoscapescapes, technoscapescapes, financescapescapes, mediascapescapes, ideoscapescapes (Appadurai 2001) and consumptionscapescapes (Ger and Belk 1996). One of the main reasons for this attention is that it captures something about the ways the world is changing and being restructured (Giddens 2000; Held 2000).

Globalization is many times approached as a visualized process both in terms of creating images and analysing such images. Mooij (2004) proposes that it is largely visualized as few ubiquitous global brands whose banners make its announcement (Ger and Belk 1996). But, even though it is illustrated as the spread of Western products and values, it is widely accepted that the process works the other way too even there is mostly asymmetry in flows. This work presents the visual impacts of globalization on a non-Western consumptionscape. It investigates and informs about the globalization, glocalization or creolization scenes on Istiklal Street in Istanbul, one of the world cities witnessing the interplay of the global and the local through the flows from both inside and outside Turkey.

One of the main points here is the interpenetration of the brands and products of transnational companies into the Turkish culture. Homogenization thesis proponents propose the colonization of mostly less affluent local cultures by transnational companies, which they call as Western imperialism. From McDonald’s to Starbucks, most of the inhabitants of our planet are available on Istiklal Street. Although in many aspects they are consumed, or more appropriately, attributed meaning in the same way as it is in the other places in the world, there are still some differences, such as consuming Burger King or McDonald’s as means of socializing, even incorporating these places into everyday lives as places to meet in front of rather than eating inside. Another example for the interpretation and consumption of such brands different than their imported country would be consumer preferences to drink Turkish coffee at a Starbucks coffee shop rather than taking away an American blend coffee and drinking it on the street. As consumption practices change, they also affect the change in values. New generation’s brand focused conversations which weren’t common short time ago (Görpe 2006) are influenced by the interpenetration of “brands” into the everyday life; or eating out on the street, in a culture where people generally refrain from eating or drinking outside (Ger and Belk 1996), is a consequence of growing fast food through global chains and fast foodized local food (e.g. “döner”). Besides the growth in the fast food industry, the global slow food movement (Firat 2005) of international and local cuisine, often in stylized and hyperreal manner (Belk 1996), is also a common scene on this globalized street.

While consumptionscapescapes are increasingly becoming the mixing grounds of dynamic local and global consumption icons, consumption activity is a means of living through necessary contradictions, changes, and uncertainties (Ger and Belk 1996). Another main

point of the film is to display the views of the “reproduced local” and its interplay with the global. Manti (Turkish ravioli with meat) houses, where women preparing the food are exhibited in the shop windows (mostly there is a coca-cola banner around); or Kahramanmaraş (a region in the East of Turkey famous for its ice-cream) ice-cream sellers in their traditional local clothes are of common examples of such reproduction. Most of such traditional scenes, products, and services were not available or that common on Istiklal Street until a few years ago. Münch (1999) explains this reproduction as brought by the “search for authenticity” in the wake of market success rather than to obliterate it in a process of homogenization (Held 2000). Beside local authenticity, the increasing availability of products and images of other non-Western contexts is also noticeable and important in order to understand the hybrid structure of the globalization.

The scenes in this film also props up that the global consumer culture is a jointly shaped culture that gives and takes from all possible sources. Thus, the global culture, produced by the help of transnational cultural forms, is mostly inflected by local conditions and practices. (Kellner 1999: 190). In general, scenes from Istiklal Street support the proposition that globalization as a process is fragmented, rather than being uniform, but it also provides a common language of homogenized fashions, entertainments, and foods (Firat and Venkatesh 1993).

As a conclusion, all these glocalization scenes from a street in a non-Western context reveals the visual transforms of consumptionscapes through the interplay of the global and the local “unique” to the context.

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CULTURAL CO-CONSUMPTION: 21 CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE PEOPLE WE CONSUME WITH

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Across a range of consumption experiences, our enjoyment is dependent on others. Although some consumer research has investigated co-consumption without regard to culture (e.g., Raghunathan and Corfman 2006), the majority of research investigating the role of others in consumption recognizes culture’s primary role (e.g., Goffman 1959; Muniz and O’Guinn 2001; Schouten and McAlexander 1995). The importance of culture cannot be overstated, because it is “the ‘lens’ through which the individual views phenomena” and “the ‘blueprint of human activity, determining the co-ordinates of social action and productive activity” (McCracken 1986).

Culture is defined by shared assumptions, values, norms, symbols and meanings among a group of people; which are created, maintained and taught to new members through processes or interactions led by higher status members (Sherry 1986). Under the rubric of Consumer Culture Theory, researchers “have produced a flurry of research addressing the sociocultural, experiential, symbolic and ideological aspects of consumption” over the past twenty years (Arnould and Thompson 2005). Consistent with a cultural perspective, this stream of research focuses on shared cultural attributes among groups of people, how those shared attributes are maintained and new members are acculturated.

However, few studies have addressed the impact of co-consumption on an individual level when those consumers hold disparate assumptions, expectations and meanings of the same object or event. Although Holt (1997) has suggested that a given object “can be consumed in a variety of ways depending on the cultural frameworks that people apply when they interact with the object,” it is not clear how consumers observing each other consuming in such ways effect each other or how such interactions feed back into to update their existing “culture lenses” and “blueprints.”

For this project we videotaped twenty-four intercept interviews and twenty-four depth interviews soliciting informant perceptions of how the people they consume with affect their conceptualizations of brands and overall satisfaction with service encounters. The intercept interviews were done first, asking informants to explain their ideal and current automobiles and the kinds of people that drive each. For the depth interviews, we took a grounded theory development approach, first asking informants to compare and contrast good versus bad consumption experiences. We then asked whether they ever noticed other people who use the same brands or co-consume with them during activities such as shopping. Our analysis of these phenomenological interviews is revealing.

In situations where co-consumers are proximally situated, the degree to which assumptions, expectations and meanings were shared among consumers was positively correlated to the level of satisfaction or enjoyment of the experience. In cases where there were low levels

of shared cultural attributes, informants described others in classic “deviant” terms, but informants were unable to articulate what shared assumption, value or norm had actually been violated. In a number of cases, we found informants complaining about the deviant behaviors of earlier informants; while earlier informants described later informants as deviants. But, in fact, to be culturally deviant, there must be a shared culture defining such acts.

Thus, our research identifies a type of co-consumption in which there are no shared assumptions, values, norms, symbols and meanings—or processes to create and maintain them—among group members. Although individuals may view and interpret such situations through cultural lenses, no common cultural lens exists providing guidance as to shared assumptions, values, norms, symbols or meaning. Hence, without the shared attributes comprising a culture, these situations are inherently acultural. We label such situations acultural co-consumption encounters.

Juxtaposed against the existing Consumer Culture Theory research literature, acultural co-consumption may appear to be an oxymoron. Conversely, we note that while the existing literature focuses primarily on high involvement consumption experiences around which people create entire brand communities, acultural co-consumption is far more common in the everyday lives of consumers. Hence, insights into how to manage such consumer experiences would offer much more impact than additional studies of well-defined consumption communities.

Our work contributes to the consumer research literature by identifying acultural co-consumption experiences. These co-consumption situations differ from existing research ignoring culture or identifying common cultures, in that people are interacting based on what they perceived to be cultural norms—but conflict with other consumers because there is, in fact, no guiding culture in such situations.

Over the course of twenty-five minutes, we recreate our yearlong experience developing the notion of acultural co-consumption and its importance for consumer researchers. Combining representative informant interview excerpts and graphics illustrating our evolving conceptualizations, we document our journey from investigating how interactions among consumers impact brand meaning and consumption experiences to arrive at a notion of acultural co-consumption.

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THE STONEWALL METAPHOR: MAKING AN IMPACT WITH TRANSFORMATIVE CONSUMER RESEARCH

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Consumer behavior researchers generate and test theories for scholarly purposes. Many, if not all of those theories have implications for marketing managers. While some managers carefully learn and apply consumer behavior theories to their decision making, other managers do not. The result is an information asymmetry among competitors in terms of their understanding of customers.

Many consumer behavior researchers have worked to increase competitive information asymmetry. By teaching at university business schools, many consumer researchers train managers to comprehend consumer behavior jargon and expose managers to consumer behavior theories. The result is an elite set of managers who are able to leverage consumer behavior theories to their competitive advantage.

Consumer behavior researchers may want to reconsider the current state of affairs. Researchers may instead want to work to reduce the asymmetry of information among competitors. The elite managers currently being trained by business schools are not simply in competition with one another. In the broad marketplace, these elite managers are often in competition with entrepreneurs who are sometimes not as well trained. Importantly, these entrepreneurs are not lacking in intelligence or effort, but they often have not had the opportunity to enroll in a consumer behavior class at a university. Over the years, research has shown a high level of entrepreneurial activity among the economically disadvantaged. In emerging economies, entrepreneurs combine to be an important engine for economic growth. These enterprises may be very small, but if they are successful they can have a life-changing impact on that person’s income. Movements such as microfinance are aimed at helping these entrepreneurs succeed. Consumer behavior researchers may also be able to help. To help entrepreneurs compete against elite, well-trained managers who are working in large corporations, consumer behavior researchers can help reduce the information asymmetry in the marketplace. If there really is nothing so practical as a good theory, consumer behavior researchers can help entrepreneurs by helping them see the practical implications of consumer behavior theories.

The effort to reduce information asymmetry can be assisted by understanding more deeply the role information asymmetry plays in competitive environments. To that end, this research inquiry was guided by three questions: What types of information facilitate and inhibit competitive advantage? How does information asymmetry change over time in a competitive context? Lastly, what factors facilitate and inhibit the translation of information asymmetry into competitive advantage?

In an effort to address these questions, the research reported in this film uses historical metaphor as an inductive method for deriving new insights (Hunt and Menon 1995). Metaphors compare objects that are seemingly unrelated; new insights are generated when similarities between the objects are considered. Advertisers commonly employ metaphors in advertisements to entice viewers to generate new insights (e.g., DeRosia 2001). Qualitative researchers employ metaphors as research techniques for generating new insights about consumers' latent associations (e.g. Zaltman 1997). Because metaphors enable new insight, we employ an extended historic metaphor as a qualitative technique—a metaphor that compares events of the American Civil War with modern competitive business environments.

Modern firms compete for customers. In the Civil War, the Union and Confederate armies competed for the control of land. However, these generals had asymmetric insight into the land just as many managers enjoy differing levels of consumer understanding.

As part of this research, a number of primary and secondary historical sources were examined, including official records, private papers, and diaries of participants. The battle of Front Royal in Northern Virginia is closely examined as an example of competitive information asymmetry and the advantages it provided to Confederate generals.

This analysis provides insight into the first research question regarding types of knowledge and competitive advantage. First, deep and detailed information beyond mere measurement and layout was helpful in creating competitive advantage. Depth-knowledge of changes in road conditions in varied weather, the disposition of local residents, and the availability of forage are just a few examples of the textured information provided by confederate mapmakers giving General Stonewall Jackson a competitive advantage.

It should be noted that these deep and detailed insights required both quantitative and qualitative observations. Civil War mapmakers regularly performed quantitative measurements such as using aneroid barometers for measuring changes in altitude. They also wrote lengthy qualitative descriptions of the land in field notebooks and supplemented their maps with “map memoirs” offering qualitative descriptions of the land.

In sum, the metaphor of the Civil War suggests that firms are better able to gain a competitive advantage when their understanding of customers is deep and detailed, with both qualitative and quantitative information.

The second research question guiding this inquiry was, “How does information asymmetry change over time in a competitive context?”

The Civil War record suggests that the asymmetry of information enjoyed by the Confederacy eroded over time as Union generals identified the source of Southern competitive advantage and worked diligently embracing new methods of data collection (such as lighter-than-air hydrogen balloons) to create or capture maps and information that would level the field. Although the asymmetry of information completely dissipated by the end of the war, this research identifies types of information that were superior in terms of creating information asymmetry that was long-lasting.

The third question guiding this inquiry was, “What factors facilitate and inhibit the translation of information asymmetry into competitive advantage?”

The Civil War record suggests that competitive advantage was inhibited when there was poor information sharing and was enhanced when decision makers were assisted in comprehending it. The most important determinant of whether information lead to advantage was the extent to which a general sought to identify the strategic implications of the information he had. For example, in one battle Stonewall Jackson carefully expended resources to save strategic bridges from Union flames. Stonewall was not simply aware of the bridges. He understood their importance because he had studied his maps and wrung from them strategic implications.

In sum, the metaphor of the Civil War suggests that firms can translate an information advantage into competitive advantage when there is good information sharing, when managers are given information that is easily comprehended, when strategic implications are suggested to managers, and when managers strive to discover all the strategic implications of the information, even when those implications are not obvious.

This research has a number of implications for transformative research. Consumer behavior researchers can help economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs by explaining the best consumer behavior theories in widely read media, and doing so in an easily comprehended manner. Entrepreneurs will benefit from exposure to a wide variety of theories, not only the theories thought to be most universal or the theoretical areas most often researched. The most useful theories to entrepreneurs will be those that describe aspects of consumers that are relatively unchanging over time. In these explications of theory, researchers should not shy away from identifying managerial implications. They should suggest a wide variety of ways the theories could be applied. Researchers should motivate entrepreneurs to carefully consider each theory and wring from it all its competitive implications. Lastly, researchers must find a way to teach entrepreneurs the difficult skill of considering a general theory and identifying all the ways it applies to the entrepreneur's specific market.

Recently, the ACR Task Force on Transformative Consumer Research (Mick 2005) defined the mission of transformative consumer research as having a beneficial difference in the lives of consumers. Economically disadvantaged individuals and those in emerging economies were given particular emphasis. We suggest that one way to positively impact such individuals may be to communicate our best theories to struggling entrepreneurs, thus reducing the information asymmetries that advantage the well-trained few.

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CONSUMPTION OF COUNTERFEIT LUXURY GOODS: HOW AND WHY?

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Piracy of a wide range of products has been growing in countries like Mexico, where government control of the manufacturing and import of these goods is not pursued in a rigorous and efficient manner. The International Chamber of Commerce estimates 7% of world trade in counterfeit goods (Fact Sheet, 2005). The International Trade Commission estimates counterfeit sales worldwide grew from \$5.5 billion in 1982 to over \$350 billion in 2005 (Fact Sheet, 2005). According to the Mexican Association of Video and Audio Producers, 90 million pirate CDs were sold in the country in 2004 (El Norte, October 10th, 2005). Lack of adequate legislation limits the authorities' actions to the seizure of pirate goods. The study of this phenomenon is relevant considering that the price, quality, and the characteristics of their distribution points widely differ with the image that these copies intend to project.

This work intends to provide a framework for the study of the process associated with the purchase and consumption of counterfeit luxury goods. What leads consumers to buy them, how do they make the decision, how do they feel afterwards? In the context of consumer culture theory, the concept of extended self has been central in our intent of understanding how possessions become clues for self-definition "It seems an inescapable fact of modern life that we learn, define, and remind ourselves of who we are by our possessions" (Belk, 1988, p. 160). Previous research shows indications of the influence of luxury brands in the structuring of individual identity (see Vigneron and Johnson, 1999 for a review).

The following arguments constitute the core of this work: 1) copies are conspicuous goods that contribute to the formation and reflection of consumers' extended selves, 2) the relationships between needs, goals, actions and emotions have a crucial role in the purchase decision of counterfeit of luxury brands, and 3) the social reactions directed towards the consumers of copies are strongly related with the resulting emotions and coping behaviors developed by these.

Forty six short interviews and twelve in-depth interviews were conducted with consumers who have bought counterfeit luxury goods in ages between 21 and 65 years old. Each in-depth interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes. All participants were women, as it has been shown by previous studies that women tend to develop stronger brand involvements (Sherrod, 1989). Also, it appears to exist a stronger relationship between women and fashion, than between men and fashion, "Historical currents have created a strong association between femininity and the pursuit of fashionability" (Sparke 1995, as cited by Thompson and Haytko, 1997 p.39). Women belonging to upper socioeconomic levels were chosen in order to assume the participant's economic possibilities to buy not only copies, but also originals.

Our findings highlight different points related to the processes associated with the purchase and consumption of counterfeit luxury goods. First, people buy this type of products to identify with certain social groups and project a desired image. Second, the basic patterns in decision-making are: buying counterfeits simply because the opportunity arises, without previous planning; and planning ahead, looking for information, and deciding beforehand. Third, adventure seeking and the social game of "feeling smart in deceiving others" are likely to be important goals in this process. The sense of risk, not necessarily danger, seems to make the experience memorable.

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EMPOWERING THE CITIZEN-CONSUMER: STRIVING TO REDUCE MATERNAL DEATHS AND MORBIDITY IN PAKISTAN

[Center for Consumer Culture Award Winning Film]

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This film highlights the complexities of empowering the citizen-consumer by implementing reform in the public obstetric and gynaecological health care sector of Pakistan. Every year approximately 35,000 women die from pregnancy related complications and a 375,000 suffer severe post-natal injuries. These figures place Pakistan's maternal death and morbidity rates as the highest in South Asia.

The film's narrative is largely conveyed and enacted by Dr Shershah Syed, Secretary General of the Pakistan Medical Association. Highly critical of the government, his determination to reduce pregnancy related deaths in Pakistan is earning him as many enemies as friends. Dr Shershah is former head obstetrician and gynaecologist at the only public health facility operating in Orangi town—a squalid sprawling ghetto on the outskirts of Karachi; reputedly one of the largest slums in Asia. Recently Dr Shershah was removed from this post in Orangi town, a move, attributed by many, to his public criticism of the government.

Four years ago in a joint initiative with international donors and the provincial government of Sindh, the first trial emergency obstetric care unit and school of midwifery was established in Qatar Hospital. The unit aimed to providing cheap and accessible health care for the women of Orangi town. Yet so far, little sign of change has occurred.

Pregnancy related deaths in poor communities like Orangi are abundant. Women are exposed to high levels of violence, malnutrition and disease. Massive illiteracy rates impede basic health care and gross gender disparity prevents women taking control in reproductive decision making. World Health Organisation figures estimate that 49% of all lactating women in urban areas like Orangi are malnourished and heavily anaemic.

DR SHERSHAH SYED: At the end of the day every thing boils down to the empowerment of women and her status in society. If a society does not consider women human beings and is not ready to give woman rights, then it is not ready to give her treatment also.

Traditionally considered a female profession, Dr Shershah never intended to be a gynaecologist. But after studying in the UK and witnessing the quality of health care in comparison to his own country, he returned to home to Karachi and against convention and his family's wishes, studied gynaecology.

DR SHERSHAHS MOTHER: He's just like his father. Whatever decision he makes he remains on that decision. I didn't want him to study the female medicine being a male but he did. I told him this work was not for boys, but he didn't listen; he became a gynaecologist.

Unlike the majority of his colleagues that left Pakistan to work in the lucrative western market, Dr Shershah took his experience and knowledge to impoverished communities desperate for professional care. Other younger gynaecologists, notably female, Nighat Shah and Frizana Iswan, support Dr Shershah's efforts by providing similar medical services.

For under-privileged women in Pakistan, accessing health care verges on the impossible. Distances to even basic health facilities are huge and too often vital drugs or surgeons are unavailable when patients arrive. Women are often forbidden to visit male physicians and strict religious practices such as Purdah prevent women from leaving the home even during an emergency. As a result, Pakistan now has the highest rate of home births in the world.

OLIVIER BRASSEUR, UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND: Islam is not against the control of maternal mortality. But our biggest problem is for people to avail the facilities provided by the government.

Most women rely on traditional birth attendants (known as daies) to supply antenatal and postnatal care. An old profession that has arisen out of necessity in poor communities, daies combine homespun superstition with unhygienic and often brutal delivery practices. Their inability to recognize obstetric emergencies and lack of an effective referral system play a significant role in the current standard of fatalities. Recently the government has funded a program in which young girls are trained as midwives. Training involves acquiring knowledge of standard medical procedures and skills required to assist women in giving birth and to provide post-natal care. Although progress is slow the aim is to replace the country's 80,000 daies with properly trained mid-wives. Significantly, figures from other countries suggest that the availability of properly trained mid-wives places a significant role in reducing maternal death and injury.

DR SHERSHAH SYED: The problem that we are facing is that the number of patients is growing geometrically. First I think we will have ten patients, instead we will have twenty patients. I expect we will have twenty patients instead we get forty or fifty patients. So you provide drugs you provide facilities and the people will come because the people have no money. It's really a problem, I don't know how to cope with it, it's really a problem...

Pakistan's exploding population rate is the fastest growing in the world and absorbing scarce government resources. In thirty years it will be the third most densely populated country in world, behind only that of China and India. The pressure placed on public sector funding is further compounded by expensive military commitments and servicing Pakistan's of massive foreign debt. With less than 0.22% of the domestic product going into health care, Islamabad's commitment to national reform shows little sign of improving.

President General Pervez Musharraf has made his population control program the centrepiece of his domestic policy. In an International Population Day speech earlier this year, Musharraf claimed the key to reducing maternal death rates was to curb family growth trends. However, his fertility control initiative has drawn criticism from hard-line Islamic parties opposed to liberalization of contraceptive and abortion practices. Illegal abortions currently contribute to 30% of maternal deaths.

Despite ongoing government promises and seventy-two women in the National Assembly, three pregnant women continue to die every hour and fifteen more are left with debilitating injuries. The question remains as to how to solve this problem; what are the barriers to consumer-citizen rights, why is progress so slow, who needs to take greater responsibility?

DIRTY LITTLE SECRET: HOME CHAOS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER

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Clutter is symbolic dirt or feces. The accumulation of possessions creates increasing problems of clutter as millions of Americans enjoy unprecedented affluence, growing home sizes, a decline in the real cost of clothing, furnishings, and many gadgets, and an onslaught of new electronic and other products. Professional organizing is a new industry in the United States that has emerged due to the increasing problem of disorganization in our homes and offices. A disorganized home is not only an issue of space utilization in the home, but is also strongly linked to the emotional life of the individual; a physically disorganized home means a disorganized life and a fragmented and chaotic sense of self. In this study we use video ethnography to examine the problem of home clutter. We collaborated with a professional organizer in Utah in order to explore the meanings of clutter and chaos to their clients and to examine how these professional organizers implement a three-stage system they call "See it, Map it, Do it" to help their clients gain a sense of control and manage their disorganized lives physically and spiritually. At the descriptive level, we study the interactions between the professional organizers and their clients.

We first sought to understand how the professional organizers help their clients tackle the problem of growing clutter and disorganization in their homes. At the interpretive level, we explore the meanings of clutter and chaos as well as the attachment to possessions embedded in clients' life stories. Among The role of the professional organizers is not simply a service provider, but in the best of circumstances they provide a gift to the client that releases them from the entanglement of too many possessions and prepares them for rebuilding a fresh life in the future.

The main reason for the creation of clutter is a long and gradual accretion and accumulation of possessions. With limited time, space, and skills in organizing their excessive possessions at home, cluttered consumers increasingly seek help from a professional organizers as well as self-help groups, books, videos, and television shows like "Clean Sweep" and others. The frustration and panic associated with the accumulation of things are magnified by the traumatic life events like birth, death, marriage, divorce, retirement, moving, and other dramatic changes. Most of us share the same ideology that more things mean a better life; thus we accumulate as much as we can. As a result, the tyranny of disorganized possessions controls us more than we control them. It is not just our things that are cluttered and disorganized. So is our time, our computer, and our lives. When they become desperate enough, the largely middle-age, middle-class, female clients studied seek help from professional organizer. A professional organizer is not only a service provider who brings skills and insights to bear in organizing the space of a home, but also a guide who helps clients redraw the lines of meaning and possessions. They help clients to not only rebuild their homes but to rebuild their lives and selves as well. Among the techniques employed are feng shui and meditation.

The clutter in our informants' homes were not composed of unwanted things or disposable waste. To the contrary, the clutter we studied was composed of the possessions which have deep meanings for the individual. Collections, photo albums, books, clothes, furniture, videos, paintings and other possessions were closely connected to the informants' memories, histories, and identities. Informants failed to give up these possessions and they accumulated in their closets, garage, and corners of their homes. Most of the possessions found in the clutter and chaos did not have any practical value for the individual except memories. The emotional attachment to these possessions and the fear of losing their memories and histories were the primary factors in the formation of clutter and chaos.

To get rid of the excess possessions and the chaos of disorder and rebuild a cleaner, less polluted, contaminated, and stigmatized, and more guilt-free environment, informants has to first realize that more is not better and that becoming organized offers an opportunity to create a fresh new life founded on a less extended sense of self. Those who can no longer manage their increasing piles of possessions experience frustration and even panic. They realize that they need somebody to help them to toss things and learn to live in greater simplicity. Thus, the increasing demand for professional organizers hired by perhaps one million Americans this year. We find that an organized life involves not only the changing possessive behaviors, but also adopting a new mind set or lifestyle. This is evident in that some of our informants agreed that their home is a visible manifestation of their mind or inner organization.

WHY DON'T CONSUMERS BEHAVE ETHICALLY? THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF CONSUMPTION

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The fact that consumers believe an ethical issue is important does not imply that when faced with constrained choice options that they will act according to those beliefs. This leads to a conclusion that "all consumers care" but the extent of their "caring" is driven not by beliefs and intentions as much as it is by the constraints and circumstances in which purchasing occurs.

Consumer ethics should involve not only core values about social justice, morality, and just behavior, they should also be relatively easy to act upon given choices available in the marketplace that align with ethical stances. By either choosing products like soaps that contain no animal by-products and have not been tested on animals or by rejecting products like shoes and clothing made with sweatshop labor, consumers can use their expenditures to vote their conscience. Even consumers without strong ethical convictions would like to think of themselves as good people, so doing the "right" thing in their consumption choices should be appealing.

However, doing the right thing may mean paying more, expending more time and effort to find the "right" product, or doing without a popular brand. Therefore consumers may choose to remain ignorant of the labor conditions, environmental impacts, or intellectual property rights issues involved in the products they buy. They can invoke a series of accounts—justifications or excuses—in order to continue to think of themselves as good people, despite engaging in ostensibly unethical consumption behavior. A justification is an account that takes responsibility for the unethical act but attempts to make it seem ethical.

Given that the meaning of ethical consumerism has been under researched and is not well understood, and how important it is to gain this understanding of meaning to try and bridge the gap between ethical beliefs and behavior, we embarked on an interpretive study to understand consumer justifications. We presented our informants from eight countries—USA, Australia, Germany, Sweden, Turkey, China, India and Spain—with three scenarios, each focusing on a different ethical consumption scenario: purchasing Nike athletic shoes made in sweatshop labor conditions, purchasing soap which is non-biodegradable or tested on animals, and purchasing counterfeit Louis Vuitton handbags. Almost all of our informants either did not care about the issues presented to them, or professed to care, but when asked to describe their actual purchasing behavior, revealed a disconnect between their beliefs and behavior. In all cases, they offered justifications for the apparent inconsistency between their beliefs and behaviors. These varied across the countries in which the informants lived. From our informants' in depth discussions of these three consumption situations, in this film we present three varying rationales consumers use to explain their behaviors and/or beliefs: (1) economic rationalism, (2) governmental dependency, and (3) developmental realism.

The Economic Rationalist

In capitalist and individualist countries such as Australia and the US, many of the rationales and justifications used were of an economic rationalist nature. For example, an Australian informant, in discussing how factories operating under sweatshop conditions can be economically beneficial to the country in which it is located, said, "Part of this is a development issue. Years ago it was Japan, then Singapore and Malaysia. Now it is Vietnam and China. These countries need opportunities." Another Australian articulated this line of

thinking as: “Most Australians are concerned about price, not the labor issues. Morals stop at the pocket book. People might say something but if they were to make them [athletic shoes] in Australia at twice the price, people would buy the foreign cheaper brand. These blokes [factory workers in Southeast Asia] are lucky to have a job. If they weren’t making them there these people would not have work. You would not want to upset the labor conditions in these countries [by paying them more]. The advantages to these people outweigh the costs.”

The Governmental Dependents

In socialist democracies such as Germany and Sweden, the justifications that consumers offer for their ethical beliefs and behavior tend to focus around their lack of individual responsibility in addressing the issues. Rather, these consumers think it is the role of the government to address the issues.

In response to buying counterfeit goods, a Swedish informant said, “If it’s legal people should buy it, but if it is illegal, they shouldn’t.” If the government has decided that a particular product can be legally sold in the country, then the consumer does not have a responsibility to question that ruling.

The meaning that consumers in these countries attach to consumer ethical issues are filtered through a lens of holding other institutions responsible for addressing both ethical and consumer related issues. Thus, even if they think a particular practice is wrong, they do not see it as their responsibility to address the issue.

The Developmental Realists

Consumers in emerging markets tended to have quite different justifications for their beliefs and behavior. Even if our urban, middle class informants from China, India and Turkey perceived what was happening in the scenarios to be ethically wrong—and many of them did not—they saw breaching their own sense of morality as part of the price to pay for their country and individuals to develop and grow economically.

For example, in discussing the ethicality of buying soap that is non-biodegradable, our Turkish informants said, “In Turkey people are too poor to worry about such ethical issues.” A Chinese informant said, “To have exploitation of the workers is quite natural, this is the natural adoption of every business throughout the world.”

Some justifications surrounding why it is OK to buy counterfeit products centered on the ethicality of large corporations exploiting the people by charging high prices, especially in Turkey. “In the end they are giant companies. How much loss would Louis Vuitton suffer? I think nothing would happen to Louis Vuitton.”

In India, China and Turkey, consumers attach meanings to these ethical situations through the lens of their economic situation, political education, and intimate knowledge of the development and labor conditions in their countries.

WHAT’S GORGEOUS CONSUMPTION?

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We investigate the values and functions of luxurious possessions. The term affluent becomes relevant in both Marketing and daily lives in the US and Japan. We find books with title of affluent at book store. We see gorgeous celebrities on TV program. There are TV quiz shows introducing the lives and consumption of affluent people. Marketing companies such as eMarketing are targeting affluent and successful in business performance. Its sales of 2002 were 2.5 million US dollars.

Not only real affluent people, as there are 760,000 households with 1 million US dollars monetary assets in Japan, but also ordinary also possess a several luxurious things. There are two research questions in this video. For ordinary, (1) What kind of values do luxurious possessions have? (2) What function do luxurious possessions have?

As Simmel (1919) argued using Trickle Down Theory, luxurious consumption of the ordinary are regarded as secularization or derivation from that of affluent. It is true that luxurious possessions are expensive and its function is conspicuousness and prestige, however, this video claims that there are other values and functions served by luxurious possessions in ordinary people, functions that Trickle Down Theory cannot explain.

Conducting interviews toward the US households and the Japanese college students, we found the cultural differences among the functions and meanings of luxurious things. For the US ordinary, luxurious things let them escape from daily hectic lives, are reward of their hard working, affordable (not necessarily expensive) and something they feel closeness to the possessions. For the Japanese ordinary, luxurious things are something they can feel belongingness to their family and construct self-identity and something for special occasions and showing off to others. In other words, luxuriousness is created not from state of goods but from the relationship between state of goods and state of person.

For future research, we need to continue cultural comparative research in order to find the differences between countries are caused by age differences or cultural differences.

Mi Casa es Whose Casa? An Experimental Investigation of Consumers' Propensity to Participate in Multilateral Sharing Systems

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Sharing has been identified as a potentially underutilized economic engine, allowing for more efficient use of slack resources both within communities and across society in general. A rich literature has developed describing consumers' propensity to gift their property, thereby completely giving up control of the good (Lowrey, Otnes and Ruth 2004), or to unilaterally donate to charitable causes (Small, Loewenstein and Slovic 2005; Small and Loewenstein 2003). However, little is known about the kinds of goods likely to be shared or the motivations and conditions under which consumers are willing to participate in a more complex multilateral sharing system (Gintis 2004). Differing from unilateral donation programs, sharing systems allow the consumer to be both a donor, providing resources to the shared pool, and a beneficiary, drawing from shared resources when needed. In this research, we begin an exploration of consumers' willingness to participate in such arrangements by examining factors on both sides of this equation: those that increase initial motivation to donate to a sharing system as well as those that impact anticipated utility as a beneficiary of the shared resources. We examine these issues in three experiments using student participants.

In study 1 we demonstrate that individuals will be less likely to share goods that are "lumpy" in their consumption as well as in their provision, thereby extending prior theory from the economics literature. Lumpy goods are those that "provision functionality in discrete packages rather than a smooth flow" (Benkler 2004, p. 6); in economic terms, the utility they offer is indivisible within a discrete range. For example, when buying computers, consumers are offered central processing units with processing speeds and capacities that generally far exceed what is needed for mundane everyday tasks.

In study 2 we find that extrinsic (i.e., financial) incentives to participate in sharing systems are primarily effective only when resource slack is large. If individuals are willing to share in a low-slack setting (i.e., when they have little to contribute), it is unlikely that they are doing so expressly in order to gain financial benefit. With little to share, financial rewards that pay per unit shared may not amount to much financial gain, and thus, provide a relatively low amount of motivation. Moreover, seeing a relatively small, but concrete, financial figure assigned to a good to be shared may make the potential donor feel that their contribution is insignificant or unappreciated, further undermining their perception of the magnitude of the intrinsic, intangible rewards they might otherwise anticipate from such a donation. Thus, in conditions of small slack, we believe that the addition of an external incentive is likely to undermine the primary motivation to share, crowding out altruistic tendencies with a relatively small and non-compelling financial reward (Deci 1974; Deci and Ryan 1985). On the other hand, when a large, and therefore, more useful amount of slack is available, cumulative financial rewards may increase the attractiveness of the transaction to a point which exceeds internal motivation, providing a quantified, concrete, utilitarian reason for sharing.

Finally, in study 3 we find that perceived control and resource flow variability interact to predict consumers' propensity to participate in a multilateral sharing system, such that when individuals feel they lack control over usage of a highly variable resource,

sharing systems are more attractive. Furthermore, when consumers have the option of a sharing system and a sole ownership system containing equivalent objective utility, preliminary results also suggest that those facing high variability in resource flow will be willing to pay more for the sharing system than the sole ownership system.

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The Muse Effect: When Romantic Motives Create Creativity

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The topic of creativity has a rich history in psychology and has recently received renewed interest in consumer behavior (e.g., Burroughs and Mick 2004; Moreau and Dahl 2005). The current research explored a popular creativity phenomenon that has never been investigated, but one that has multiple theoretical and practical implications: The muse effect. That is, many creative juggernauts, such as Picasso, Dali, and Dante, attribute their creative bursts to muses—women who, like the nine daughters of Zeus in Greek mythology, inspired great creative output (Prose 2002). But does a romantic state actually lead people to be more creative? And if so, why are muses predominantly women who inspire men—and are there circumstances when male muses should serve to inspire women?

In three experiments, we examined how priming people with several types of romantic motivations influenced their creative displays and creative performance. Our research draws on consumer behavior and psychological research on motivational priming (e.g., Bargh 2002; Chartrand 2005), and on the evolutionary theories of sexual selection and parental investment (Darwin 1871; Trivers 1972). From this foundation, we tested (1) the basic question of whether romantic motives indeed inspire creativity, (2) boundary conditions regarding which specific romantic cues will inspire male versus female creativity, and (3) several possible mechanisms underlying these phenomena. Our purpose in this research is not only to investigate the muse effect, but also to foster new empirical research and theoretical development in consumer behavior regarding creativity, self-presentation, and the rich empirical possibilities stemming from considerations of evolutionary theory.

Some theorists (e.g., Miller 2000) have proposed that creativity may have in part evolved via sexual selection—an evolutionary process whereby the possession and display of a certain trait enhances an individual's ability to attract a mate. Human creativity shares many features with sexually selected traits in other species, like a peacock's tail, and the sexual selection view of creativity has received some empirical support (Haselton and Miller 2006). One distinct marker of a sexually selected trait across species is its conspicuous display in courtship (Andersson 1994). Given that cues related to mating can activate mating goals and its associated pattern of affect (Maner et al. 2005), people—particularly men (Cronin 1993)—should be more likely to display creativity when they are primed with cues related to courtship.

In Study 1, participants looked at photographs of attractive opposite-sex individuals or neutral images, and then wrote several short stories. Afterwards, the stories were rated by four judges blind to condition on various creative dimensions. Results indicated that men, but not women, wrote stories that were more creative after seeing photographs of opposite-sex individuals. Interestingly, men did not spend more time or use more words to write the more creative stories. Thus, it appears that romantic primes didn't just produce more displays of creativity; but that they produced qualitatively more creative displays.

Consistent with Study 1, sexually selected traits in mammals are displayed exclusively by males in 97% of species (Cronin 1993). However, parental investment theory posits that sex differences in sexually selected traits are linked to a species' expected

levels of maternal and paternal parental investment—the time and energy devoted to producing viable offspring (Trivers 1972). In those species in which courtship displays are performed by males, the males tend to invest the absolute minimum in offspring. But when expected parental investment for each sex is more equal, both males and females produce the displays (Buss 2005). Additionally, because women incur significantly higher reproductive costs if they are abandoned by a mate, women should be especially sensitive to the trustworthiness and commitment levels of the man before displaying desirable characteristics like creativity (Haselton and Buss 2000).

In Study 2, pre-tested romantic scenarios were used to induce romantic motivation. The scenarios differed on (1) the expected parental investment of the person, and on (2) the extent to which the potential romantic partner was trustworthy and committed. Afterwards, participants performed the Remote Associates Test (RAT), which is a standardized measure of creativity (Mednick 1962). The results of Study 2 conceptually replicated Study 1: For men, all romantic scenarios produced an increase in creativity; for women, however, neither imagining a brief encounter or a first date altered their level of creativity. However, as predicted, when women imagined desiring to take a budding romantic relationship to the next level—a relationship in which the man would be expected to contribute significant parental investment in the future—this kind of romantic motivation did indeed produce an increase in women's creativity. Additional data indicated that the creative boosts were not related to changes in mood or arousal.

Study 3 further extended the findings by showing that people in a romantic mindset were significantly more creative even when compared to individuals who had a monetary incentive to do well on the creative task.

In summary, this research is the first to examine how romantic motives influence creativity. We found that there is indeed a muse effect, and that this effect is elicited by specific theoretically relevant romantic motivations for men and women. Moreover, this effect does not appear to be related to mood or arousal, and is not caused by increased effort on the creative task. The current research has multiple theoretical implications for the influence of romantic motivation of behavior. For example, it is likely that romantic motives will influence a wide array of strategic consumer behaviors (e.g., conspicuous consumption, donations, etc.), and that other evolutionary relevant motives, such as a desire for status, may play a significant role in consumer behavior. Additionally, these findings have practical implications. For example, a work environment that activates romantic desires is likely to be a more creative environment—although primarily for men. Moreover, men and women are likely to be more creative consumers when specific romantic motivations are activated. We hope that these findings serve as a springboard in furthering consumer research on how specific motivations influence consumer creativity and self-presentation, as well as aid in the development of more stringent consumer theories that incorporate the promising perspective of evolutionary theory.

Gift-Giving Behaviors: Views from an Attachment Perspective

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

A large body of research has investigated different aspects of the gift-giving experience including social, personal, and economic exchanges (Belk and Coon 1991; Mattson 1982), social roles and relationships (Joy 2001; Otnes et al. 1993; Ruth et al. 1999), symbolism (Belk and Coon 1993; Wolfinbarger 1990), anxiety (Wooten 2000) and the personal value of gifts (Larsen and Watson 2001; Ruffle 1999). Researchers have attempted to propose taxonomies of gift-giving motives, including Sherry's (1983) altruistic versus agnostic motives, the Goodwin et al.'s (1990) voluntary versus obligatory motives, and Wolfinbarger's (1990) groupings of motives (altruism, compliance with social norms, and self-interest). However, very few studies have attempted to explore the role of personal attachment in shaping gift giving behaviors among couples.

In an attempt to find the answer to this question, we based our research on findings from the interpersonal relationship literature, particularly Attachment Theory.

Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969, 1973) explains the propensity of people to form lasting affectional bonds with other people and to regulate inner distress, including anxiety, anger, depression, and emotional detachment. According to the theory, early experiences between a child and his or her primary caregiver lay the foundation for functioning in subsequent relationships. Early work (Ainsworth et al. 1978) identified three types of attachment: secure, avoidant, and anxious/ambivalent attachment. Bowlby (1973) found that securely attached people have a strong, secure base and believe that significant others are available in stressful circumstances. They tend to develop mental models of themselves as friendly, good-natured, and likeable whereas significant others are well intentioned, reliable, and trustworthy (Simpson 1990). Mikulincer and Orbach (1995) found that avoidant individuals tend to maintain distance from attachment figures, deny their insecurity and related negative affects. Meanwhile, Simpson (1990) found that anxious/ambivalent individuals tend to develop models of themselves as being misunderstood, unconfident, and underappreciated. In their eyes, significant others are typically unreliable, either unwilling or unable to commit themselves to a permanent relationship.

More recent work on attachment style has suggested that the attachment system could be more precisely conceptualized and measured dimensionally rather than categorically along two fundamental dimensions: attachment-related anxiety and attachment-related avoidance. People who score high on the anxiety dimension tend to worry whether their attachment figures would be available, responsive, and attentive. People who score low on this dimension are more secure with respect to the perceived responsiveness of their partners. People who score high on the avoidance dimension tend to retract from attachment figures and prefer not to rely on others. People who score low on this dimension are more comfortable being intimate with others and are more secure relying on and having others rely on them.

Based on these findings, ten hypotheses were developed and tested in this paper. We were interested in the effects of attachment style on people's gift giving motives (voluntary vs. obligatory), gift selection effort, gift giving anxiety, types of gifts chosen, and expectation of gratitude. A questionnaire was developed and handed

out to 134 undergraduate students, resulting in a usable sample size of 127 responses after data cleaning. Attachment style was measured with the ECR scale (Brennan et al. 1998) while dependent variables were measured with established scales. All scales showed significant reliability.

Multiple regression analysis was used as the analytical tool. Results indicated that nine out of ten hypotheses were supported. As predicted, anxiety attachment is positively related to obligatory rather than voluntary gift giving while avoidance attachment is negatively related to voluntary gift giving. Avoidance attachment was negatively related to gift selection efforts and surprisingly, anxiety attachment was not positively related to gift selection efforts as we had predicted. We also found that anxiety attachment was positively related to choice of gifts that are prestigious, functional, and fun, while it was not the case for avoidance attachment. We also found that anxiety attachment was positively related to gift giving anxiety while avoidant individuals seemed immune from it. Finally, results indicated that as expected, anxiety attachment was positively related to expectations of gratitude while avoidance attachment was not.

This study provides empirical support for the influence of individuals' attachment style on their gift giving behaviors in romantic relationships. The main contribution of this paper is that it provides a fresh perspective on the study of people's gift giving experiences. The personal attachment approach that we propose here is particularly relevant to the inquiry of gift giving behaviors in romantic relationships because it explores gift giving behaviors based on how people see themselves (actual role) versus others (their romantic partners) and consequently use gifts to strengthen that role and also express their aspiration to get closer to their ideal role in the relationship. This research direction is in line with Belk's (1979) contention that the giver's ideal self-concept may be more strongly related to gift choice than either the giver's actual self-concept or the perceptions of the gift by the recipient in both gift selection and symbolic encoding of gift by giver.

This study also provides valuable insights to marketers in their efforts to understand the "hot buttons" that cause consumers to choose certain products as gifts. Marketers could integrate findings from this study into their advertising messages for gifts that would appeal to different attachment patterns. For instance, knowing that anxious individuals experience a high level of anxiety when searching for gifts, marketers or gift consultants could present gift choices that not only take the burden off their shoulders but also communicate the message that they (the gift givers) are committed to the relationship and will therefore be rewarded with much gratitude and appreciation from their partners.

Future research should explore the effects of attachment style from the gift recipient's perspectives and answer these questions: what value do they appreciate the most (economic, functional, social, or expressive)? What gift attributes do they prefer? Do they feel comfortable letting their partners know of their feelings about the gift (for example, if a woman receives a gift that she does not like)? These questions, when answered, will provide valuable insights to marketers in designing marketing strategies and persuasive communications that speak to the heart of both the givers and recipients of the gifts.

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Small Gains or Smaller Losses: Optimal Price Promotions and the Silver Lining Effect

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The representation of information as an integrated whole or as segregated components may have different effects on the decisions taken based on that information. This is the starting point for an analytical and empirical investigation of two phenomena: the silver lining effect (Thaler 1985), and the use of instant rebates in retailing (Lanctot 2002). We derive conditions for the appearance of the silver lining effect, based on prospect theory (Kahneman and Tversky 1979), and apply the results to a consumer setting, in which an instant rebate is used as the silver lining.

Rebates are common in modern retailing, especially consumer electronics, where they are the most common means of promotion (Lanctot 2002). The most commonly studied variant of rebates has been the mail-in rebate (e.g. Jolson, Weiner and Rosecky; Soman 1998), which has two characteristic elements: effort is required in order to receive the price reduction, and this effort occurs after the purchase, adding an intertemporal component to the purchase decision. We focus on the “instant rebate” in order to eliminate these two components and center on the effect of the representation of price as a base price and a separate reduction.

This form of promotion entails that the retailer, instead of simply presenting a new, lower, price, presents the old price accompanied by the amount that is “given back” to the customer upon purchase. We interpret this as a possible application of the silver lining effect (Thaler 1985), and next derive conditions for its implications for decision making.

In accord with the findings of Bateman et al. (2004), we assume that consumers treat purchases as losses, at least to some extent; thus, we can apply prospect theory (Kahneman and Tversky 1979) in our analysis. We take the value function $v(x)$ to be any concave function $g(x)$ for $x \geq 0$ (with $g(0)=0$), and $l(-x)=-\lambda g(-x)$ for $x < 0$; $g(x)$ is then the “gain function” and $l(-x)$ the “loss function.” This results in the characteristic curve kinked at $x=0$ due to the loss aversion parameter λ .

Thaler (1985) observed that when an outcome is composed of several parts, prescriptions can be issued for when it is optimal to combine (integrate) the parts, and when it is best to keep them separate in mind (segregate). We examine the case of a “mixed loss;” that is, where a loss, say $x < 0$, is combined with a smaller gain, say $y > 0$, making the overall outcome negative. The value from integrating the components is then $v(x + y) = l(x + y)$ and that from segregating them is $v(x) + v(y) = l(x) + g(y)$. In the first case, then, there is only a loss, whereas in the second there is a loss and a gain.

Our analysis shows that the optimality of segregation versus integration depends on the size of the gain, the size of the loss, the loss aversion parameter λ , and the degree of diminishing sensitivity (i.e., concavity) of the function $g(x)$. For any fixed loss L , there exists a threshold value of the loss aversion coefficient, λ^* , such that if λ is above this, it is optimal integrate for all $G \leq L$, and if λ is below this, it is optimal to segregate small gains (below a smallest gain G^*) from the loss.

From this analysis follow several predictions, of which two are tested empirically. We assume that participants treat information largely as it is presented to them (the concreteness principle, Slovic 1974). We first predict that for a small price reduction, a rebate (segregation) should be more optimal than a discount, and vice

versa for a large price reduction. Second, there should be a preference for segregation among participants with lower loss aversion, and for integration among those with higher loss aversion.

The hypotheses were tested in an online study using a hypothetical choice scenario, where participants chose to buy or not to buy a DVD player in one of four conditions (2(frame: rebate vs. discount) \times 2(size: small vs. large)). The results confirm the hypotheses. In the low reduction conditions, respondents preferred the product under the rebate ($M=.63$) versus under the discount ($M=.36$; Fisher’s exact $p=.03$), while in the high reduction conditions, respondents marginally preferred the product under the discount ($M=.70$) versus under the rebate ($M=.52$; Fisher’s exact $p=.11$); a logit analysis confirmed that the interaction was significant ($\chi^2=6.48, p=.01$).

For testing the second hypothesis, a measure of loss aversion was adapted from Götte, Huffman, and Fehr (2004); as predicted, there was a (marginally significant) interaction between the framing of the reduction and loss aversion ($\chi^2=3.47, p=.06$).

These results indicate that our analysis is valid, and have important implications for the optimal management of promotions; it also extends our understanding of the mental representation of information in decision making.

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ROUNDTABLE
Researching Visual Consumption
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This roundtable discussed methodological and theoretical issues of aesthetics, images, and vision as it pertains to consumer behavior via interdisciplinary research examples and exemplars. We surveyed recent efforts in studying visual issues in consumer behavior, including Web browsing and design, advertising interpretation, digital photography and visual tools in research. This session presented research methods for studying visual consumption, with an emphasis on interpretation, representation, and interdisciplinary methods. We introduced key literature sources, and draw upon participant's own research to generate new insights into visual methods and topics in consumer research. One current concern is how visual strategy creates value.

Visual issues are being recognized as important issues in consumer behavior and consumer research (e.g., Pracejus, Olsen and O'Guinn, 2006; Phillips and McQuarrie 2004; Schroeder, 2002; Scott and Batra, 2003). Visual images constitute much corporate communication about products, economic performance, and social responsibility, and also inform governmental efforts to create positive attitudes for citizens, consumers, and organizations. Brand image, corporate image, advertising images, and images of identity all depend upon compelling visual imagery. Various referred to as the attention economy, the aesthetic economy, and the experience economy, this visual turn in marketing may call for new perspectives and research approaches. What does the production and consumption of images mean for marketing and society? How does the handling of images in the allied fields of visual studies, art history, film theory, design management, and corporate identity shed light on the relationships between visual processes and consumption? Visual consumer research cuts across methodological and topical boundary lines—the possibilities and problems of visual approaches encompass experimental and interpretive realms, and include such varied topics as information processing, image interpretation, and research techniques.

This roundtable's purpose was to survey recent efforts in studying visual issues in consumer behavior, including Web browsing and design, advertising interpretation, digital photography and visual tools in research. The session carries on from successful 'Researching Visual Consumption' roundtables in Atlanta in 2002 and Portland in 2004, and builds upon visual-related efforts such as the publication of the book *Persuasive Imagery: A Consumer Response Perspective* edited by Linda Scott and Rajiv Batra (2003), the growth of the ACR film festival, the University of Utah's workshops in visual methods, and a special issue in *Marketing Theory* on 'Aesthetics, Images and Vision' edited by the roundtable organizer (Schroeder, 2006). This session discussed research methods for studying visual consumption—with an emphasis on interpretation, representation, and interdisciplinary methods—as well as methodological and theoretical issues of aesthetics, images, and vision as it pertains to consumer behavior via interdisciplinary research examples and exemplars. We introduced key literature sources, and draw upon participant's own research to generate new insights into visual methods and topics in consumer research.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Workbench Issues in Transformative Consumer Research

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SESSION SUMMARY

The 19th century roots of the social sciences in the United States arose from the twin desires to solve social problems and guide public policies. Thus, the romantic call for transformative consumer research (Mick 2005) is neither new nor revolutionary but is a return to our origins. While the early days of the social sciences had social reformers and academic analysts working side by side, reformers were quickly expelled from the academy as the academic social scientists consolidated their power in professional associations (Greenwood 2004; Krause 1996). For example, Ross (1991) documents a long and troubling history of the social sciences removing theorists who are social critics, which significantly predates the well-publicized McCarthy purges. Thus, a pressing issue facing would-be transformative consumer researchers is whether our academy can absorb the potentially destabilizing and critical nature of transformative consumer research. Unlike traditional positivistic research that claims an apolitical (despite the philosophical problem of a “neutral” vantage point), transformative consumer research explicitly affirms the goal of changing and improving society. Such an approach is likely to challenge our traditional notions of research product and process.

The purpose of this special session is to explore the practical and demanding workbench issues of doing research aimed at social change. Three papers are presented that explore challenges from the perspective of the researcher, the local community, and the broader academic community. First, Jonathan Deschenes examines the often invisible and rarely discussed problem of the emotional and personal demands of studying raw and poignant social problems such as AIDS, poverty, or domestic violence. In our hurried rush to meet the call for transformative research, Jonathan raises a caution flag suggesting that as researchers we will likely face personal transformations and he explores some practical approaches that we might take. Second, Jean-Sebastien Marcoux offers reflections from his fieldwork on the 9/11 attack and the construction of memory at Ground Zero. He explores the transformative consumer researcher as located at the nexus of competing and often contradictory interest groups within the local community and discusses the accompanying moral and ethical dilemmas faced. Finally, Julie Ozanne, Bige Saatcioglu, and Canan Corus suggest that the paradigm of participatory action research (PAR) offers valuable lessons that can be applied to research aimed at social change. However, PAR advocates a radical rethinking of the role of researcher, the research process, and the knowledge output that is generated.

This session is a multi-paradigmatic approach to issues facing researchers who seek to do research for social change. The domain of transformative research provides a context in which we can break down paradigmatic barriers and engage in constructive debate and the exchange of ideas unified by our shared interest in social problems. This session is relevant to researchers who are interested in transformative consumer research in general and those researchers who are struggling with the specific challenges of researching difficult social problems.

Connie Pechmann is an ideal discussant because her research exemplifies how consumer theory can be fused with social practice. In her work on adolescents and cigarette smoking, she engages in theoretically-driven programs of behavioral change. She is also active in disseminating her work to stakeholders who can benefit

from her research and can offer important reflections on the research issues arising in this session.

“Behind Closed Doors: Reflecting on the Emotional Challenges of Doing Consumer Research on Painful Topics”

Jonathan Deschenes

Consumer researchers are exploring highly sensitive population segments, such as AIDS victims (Kates 2001), breast cancer patients (Pavia and Mason 2004), juvenile delinquents (Ozanne, Hill and Wright 1998), drug addicts (Hirschman 1992; Hirschman and McGriff 1995), compulsive buyers (O’Guinn and Faber 1989), and homeless women (Hill 1991). Increasingly, consumer researchers are urged to develop “consumer research for consumers” (Bazerman 2001) and to create programs that will help communities in return for their generous contributions to science (Moorman 2002; Murray and Ozanne 1991). Recently, the *Association for Consumer Research* led by his President and by a special task force, coined the expression *Transformative Consumer Research* (TCR), which essentially insists on developing research programs to improve the quality of life of consumers (Mick 2005, Mick 2006).

However, this call for “consumer-centered” research, which mainly focuses on problems experienced by consumers individually or collectively, ignores the emotional impact *felt by researchers* when performing research on emotionally-demanding population segments. Interacting with despairing, distressed, seriously ill, traumatized, or abused consumers is likely to affect the researcher deeply. During research on rape victims, Campbell (2002) noted that research team members began to feel unsafe after dusk, resented being alone in unknown places, and locked themselves in at home. In a study with battered women, Dunn (1991) reported frequent insomnia, gastrointestinal problems and headaches. Similarly, investigators studying dying people reported experiencing strong emotional turmoil as they reflected on their own mortality (Owens and Payne 1999).

These powerful reactions often arise when the researcher deeply identifies with participants (Alder and Alder 1987; Kleinman and Copp 1993) or when the trauma is overwhelming, which can cause vicarious traumatization (Hesse 2002). Moreover, the use of interpretive methodologies likely exacerbates this effect. Indeed, by creating contextualized, intimate, humanized relationships, this approach collapses the distance between the researcher and the researched (Hirschman 1986; Hudson and Ozanne 1988). Methods that increase the empathetic and experiential understanding of another person’s vivid and painful reality are likely to be more emotionally demanding (Margulies 1989).

Notwithstanding their importance, these emotions and other responses are often neglected or even negated in the research process. Despite the postmodern turn in research, which allegedly reintroduced the subjective accounts of researcher into the research process, a strong socially constructed attraction towards “objectivity” still exists in doing and reporting research (Campbell 2002; Pratt 1986; Rothman 1986). Qualitative researchers often deliberately try to compartmentalize this information to avoid the inclusion of emotions in their analysis (Kleinman and Copp 1993). However, recent theories of emotions (e.g. Damasio 1994) and reflections on fieldwork (e.g. Kleinman and Copp 1993) suggest that this compartmentalization process is hardly possible if not illusory.

Following Kleinman and Copp (1993) and Campbell (2002), I argue that exploring and disclosing these emotions can improve the overall research process at three intermingled levels: the research, the researcher, and the researched. Exploring is the reflexive stance put forth by anthropologists such as Fabian (1983) and Marcus and Fischer (1999). Disclosing is the confessional stance (Van Maanen 1988). Being aware of one's emotions can help identifying the emotionally-induced prejudices or biases that affect data collection and analysis (Kleinman and Copp 1993; Agar 1982). This level of awareness can also help pinpoint self-induced constraints or negative consequences that should be managed during research (e.g., systematic avoidance of highly stressful situations). Discussing one's emotions with informants can sometimes lead to unexpected or novel information and better mutual understanding as in the case of "empathic disagreement" (Gordon 1987). Moreover, a transparent attitude is an important step in the development of "collaborative research", a subject-centered approach that is important in the context of research with children and at-risk population segments (Curtis, Bryce, and Treloar 1999; Eiser and Twamley 1999). Also, disclosing emotions in publications can potentially have cathartic properties for other researchers by offering benchmark examples concerning painful experiences and their remedies. Finally, the analysis of one's emotions can lead to significant contributions to science. For example, Campbell's (2002) investigation of researchers' emotions allowed her to reconsider the global effect of rape by documenting the ripple effect of this trauma on secondary victims.

"Consumer Research in the Shadow of the Towers"

Jean-Sebastien Marcoux

As individuals, we do not typically plan for medical emergencies, accidents, illnesses (Mason and Pavia 1998), disasters (Ikeuchi, Fujihara and Dohi 1999), or other potentially disruptive events that strike us or the members of our family (Turley 1999). We do not cease to be consumers when we face difficult, not to say tragic, situations. As such, in recent years, the scope of consumer research has broadened so as to include crisis situations. Consumer research now better accounts for the disruptive character of consumption, not to say the construction of consumption *via* disruption.

Despite these recent advances, consumer researchers' understanding of *sensitive* issues remains limited, however. More work is needed on the ethical dimensions of consumer research dealing with these issues. From a transformative research perspective (Ozanne 2005), additional research on the impact of consumer research *per se* is also needed. This presentation explores some of the questions that arise when dealing with socially important and emotionally challenging research. It is grounded in a reflexive account of an ethnographic analysis conducted since March 2003 in New York City, on the construction and the commodification of memory in the aftermath of the 9/11.

This presentation aims to reflect on some of the emotional struggles experienced in the field. It discusses the difficulties inherent to the study of an event such as the 9/11 attack that has deeply, sometimes tragically, affected the life of informants. As such, it explores the researcher's stance when dealing with people who had different relation with the tragedy such as the tourists visiting Ground Zero, the New Yorkers who experienced the attack, and the members of the victims' families associations who directly suffered the loss of loved ones and who are particularly concerned by the issue of remembrance.

In attempting to avoid the "diary disease" problem described by Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), this presentation discusses some of the commitments of the researcher, as well as the moral and

ethical obligations that the researcher faces towards informants. It considers the positioning of the researcher in a field of multiple voices; a field where multiple voices are also competing ones. Indeed, the construction of memory in the aftermath of 9/11 is an ongoing process that is politically and ideologically charged. In the particular context of the construction of memory, a context where having a voice in the public sphere, asserting a presence in institutions such as the media and the museums may be determinant, consumer researchers like other social researchers become agents in the production of memory as far as they help giving legitimacy and a certain permanence to the view of people they work with. In contrast to other social researchers however, they are in a particular position. As far as they are associated with a marketplace that is at the same time (at least here) a primary resource and a part of the problem, consumer researchers face particular ethical questions. As such, this presentation will try to consider some of problems and contradictions of consumer research itself when it is conducted in a context such as post 9/11, where marketing, the commodification of the tragedy, and the aestheticization of consumption have been highly criticized.

This presentation can be situated along the line of a transformative research perspective as it was first sketched at ACR in San Antonio (Mick 2005; Ozanne 2005); a perspective that is concerned with the social implications of the research itself. It also draws on CCT research's interest in collective memory (Marcoux 2005). But it also attempts to repatriate some of the reflections of anthropologists and ethnographers who have been confronted with sensitive issues. A reflexive analysis of the struggle experienced on the field of Ground Zero does not only promise to fill in an important gap in consumer research, but may also help push transformative research in important directions.

"Participatory Action Research as Engaged Practice: Implications for Transformative Consumer Research"

Julie Ozanne, Bige Saatcioglu, and Canan Corus

Participatory action research (PAR) is a paradigm that evolved out of the experiences of social scientists working in developing countries in the 1970s. While engaged in field work, these researchers discovered that the positivistic methods that arose on university campuses of developed nations had little to do with the realities of working among the poor and disenfranchised (Hall 1997). What emerged independently yet concurrently was a form of engaged research practice in which the members of local communities became co-participants in doing research aimed at solving their social problems (Freire 1970, 1986).

PAR involves a diverse range of theories and methods. In this presentation, the original conceptualization of this approach is delineated (Gaventa and Horton 1981; Hall 1981; Tandon 1981). This approach arose in reaction to the class struggles in developing countries and involves studying research problems that arise in the local community and are identified by those people who are most disenfranchised. Like transformative consumer research, the goal of this research is to promote social change that will directly improve the lives of the people studied. The problems selected are often complex and thus are not as well structured as in conventional research (Small 1995). The researcher is conceived as a partner or facilitator who offers research help, but the research methods involve full participation by locals (Greenwood 2004). The local knowledge and folk theories of the participants are valued and believed to yield authentic and accurate social accounts. Moreover, it is assumed that when people are given ownership of the research they will be more invested in its use and implementation. Thus, the emancipatory potential of PAR arises in part from the ability of

participants to define their own social problems, to develop knowledge to address this problem (a process usually restricted to an elite few), and the subsequent raising of their consciousness and potential for agency (Greenwood, Whyte, and Harkavy 1993; Small 1995). The dichotomy between research and application is blurred when the research process itself becomes an empowering act.

The idealistic beginnings of PAR research met with the challenge of actually doing social change research, which spawned many new permutations. While different, these approaches still bear a family resemblance to the original formation. In this presentation, we will also delineate more contemporary versions of PAR research. For example, the desire for locals to have full participation in research projects met with the reality that people desire different levels of participation. This has led to the evolution of different models of the research relationship from a more researcher-led to a more collaboratively-managed model (Chisholm and Elden 1993). Similarly, different research models have emerged due to differences in the organizational settings examined and openness of the research process. Tightly organized settings often involve more shared values, clearer roles and goals, and formal procedures and a different research model emerges than the model that arises when studying more loosely organized groups that exhibit more diverse values, ambiguous roles and unclear goals, and fewer formal procedures. Feminist-informed PAR research has turned attention to social inequities based on gender that were unexplored in earlier versions (Macguire 1987, 2004).

The practical problems faced by PAR offer potential lessons to consumer researchers who seek to do transformative consumer research. For instance, a reoccurring theme in PAR research is the difficulty in managing the tensions between researcher roles as academic scholars and social activists (Cancian 1996; Crisp 2004). Consumer research that examines powerless groups and pressing social problems will undoubtedly unearth social injustices. Will we be content merely to document these inequities for other academicians to read? Will we erect ivory-tower barriers to engaging in action in a self-serving attempt to avoid these challenges as we cowardly reap the research wealth harvested from those people most in need of our help? If so, transformative research contexts will be reduced to fertile ground upon which academic researchers can build their publishing careers.

Or will we be brave enough to engage in social change and fight to defend a place in the academy for a scholar/activist as envisioned by PAR? This approach suggests some potential solutions. Such an approach offers a way to move beyond the tired dichotomies of basic research verses applied research and explore the potential of theoretically-informed programs that incorporate local knowledge. Moreover, the inclusion of the local participant helps to minimize the inherently exploitative relationship that exists among researchers and subjects whose human suffering may end up being commodified for the career profiteering of the academic (Brydon-Miller 2004). If we move beyond being only a ventriloquist for those we study, then new forms of knowledge might be envisioned to help the disenfranchised reclaim their own voice. If we embrace the assumption of PAR that the primary beneficiaries of our research should first and foremost be the people we research, then we are challenged to think beyond the traditional journal article to develop more democratic and accessible modes of knowledge dissemination and use.

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Available upon request

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

The Muscle Model of Self-Control Revisited: Does Exerting Self-Control Always Cause Depletion?

Sabrina Bruyneel, K.U.Leuven, Belgium / Carnegie Mellon University, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

All too often, consumers find themselves making decisions that go against their own self-interest. The self-control strength model (Muraven and Baumeister 2000) for instance implies that sequences of product choices will induce a state of depletion and shift the balance between affective and cognitive product features in the advantage of the former (Baumeister 2002; Bruyneel, Dewitte, Vohs, and Warlop 2006; Vohs and Faber in press). From a transformational point of view, a depletion state appears threatening for consumer welfare because depletion yields poor decision making.

The purpose of this special session is to present ongoing research that challenges this grim view on the depletion state, and to provide new insights on the nature of the depletion effect. Beyond its theoretical impact, such research has direct relevance to consumer research because it provides insights that may help to dampen the negative impact of the depletion state. The present papers fit into this stream of research in that they all provide important boundary conditions for the depletion effect and even demonstrate reversals of the effect. Thereby, they simultaneously provide consumers with strategies that may help them to cope with the depletion state.

The three papers in this set demonstrate that exerting self-control sometimes helps consumers to exert self-control again. In the first paper, Wan, Isen, and Sternthal found that high levels of positive affect reversed typical depletion effects. They showed that positive affect reminds people of the high standard in prior depleting circumstances, which stimulates them to perform well again. In neutral affective circumstances, prior depleting circumstances put people's focus on the resource expenditures, which reduces their willingness to put in much effort again. In the second paper, Mukhopadhyay, Sengupta, and Ramanathan use a meta-cognitive perspective to show that trait impulsiveness moderates the influence of previous exertion of self-control on subsequent ability to resist temptation. Specifically, they showed that while high impulsives are subject to a depletion effect following an initial exercise of self-control, low impulsives follow the reverse pattern such that an initial exercise of self-control actually bolsters future resistance to temptation. Finally, Geyskens, Bruyneel, and Dewitte found that depletion effects were reversed when the two subsequent self-control tasks involved similar response conflicts. In three studies, they showed that when adapted to a demanding situation, people's self-control performance decreased in situations when the subsequent self-control task involved a different response conflict (replicating the typical depletion effects) but improved when the subsequent self-control task involved a similar response conflict. Taken together, the three papers in this session constitute a significant step in the study of the process underlying the ego depletion phenomenon and the prevention of self-control loss.

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"The Influence of Positive Affect on Regulatory Depletion"

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Alice M. Isen, Cornell University

Brian Sternthal, Northwestern University

Regulatory depletion refers to the fact that a preliminary act of self-control undermines persistence on a subsequent task (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, and Tice 1998). This effect has been demonstrated in numerous studies (e.g., Baumeister et al. 1998; Muraven, Tice, and Baumeister 1998). Regulatory depletion theory explains this effect in terms of a self-control process that is akin to exercising a muscle: the self has a limited resource that is consumed in performing volitional regulatory activities; because all acts of self-regulation are thought to draw on the same resource pool, the use of a resource in performing one task undermines the immediate performance of a second task, even if the tasks are seemingly unrelated.

Recent research has extended this analysis of the regulatory depletion effects by identifying conditions under which depleted individuals activate the resources necessary to overcome the effects of regulatory depletion. Elimination of the depletion effect has been found when participants are offered the monetary incentive to perform better on the persistence task (Baumeister et al. 2005), informed that persistence would improve their performance on a target task, or believe that persistence is warranted because the issue requiring persistence is of substantial importance (Muraven and Slessareva 2003). The observation that people sometimes activate the resources necessary to overcome regulatory depletion and at other times fail to sustain their performance raises the question of when each of these outcomes is likely to occur.

One approach to addressing this question is to interpret the regulatory depletion effect in terms of a resource monitoring process (Baumeister 2000; Carver and Scheier 1998). This process entails keeping track of the resources allocated to various tasks, comparing this allocation to some standard, and adjusting the resource allocation to meet that standard. Resource monitoring interprets a regulatory depletion effect as a breakdown in the monitoring process. Rather than comparing the resource allocation to some standard, depleted individuals focus on their resource exertion, overestimate the exertion, and prematurely stop the activity (Vohs and Schmeichel 2003).

In the present research we examine the role of positive affect in moderating the regulatory depletion effect. Positive affect is a transitory favorable feeling that is thought to broaden the scope of inputs that individuals consider and enable integration of them in making a decision (Estrada, Isen, and Young 1997; Isen, Daubman, and Nowicki 1987). There is substantial evidence that positive affect, compared with a neutral control condition, increases the amount and variety of material that is brought to mind and brought

to bear on problems being solved (Isen and Daubman 1984; Kahn and Isen 1993; Lee and Sternthal 1999). It has been observed that positive affect prompts a consideration of a broader array of items in a choice set (Kahn and Isen 1993) and enhances individuals' ability to engage in comparison of objects from different categories (Roehm and Sternthal 2001).

Applied in the context of influencing the regulatory depletion effect, these findings suggest that individuals experiencing positive affect are likely to think broadly rather than confine their focus to the resources exerted on the persistence task. Moreover, this broad consideration of information is likely to involve comparison. If this occurs, those experiencing positive affect would monitor both the resources allocated to the persistence task and compare it with their standard for such performance even if the allocation and standard involved seemingly disparate categories. The effect of this monitoring process on persistence would depend on the standard that individuals activated to assess their resource allocation to the persistence task. A high standard will lead to greater persistence than a low standard.

Two studies were conducted to test the impact of positive affect on regulatory depletion. In both studies, we employed the two-task procedure typically used to investigate the regulatory depletion effect. Participants completed an initial regulatory task that was either depleting or not depleting. This was followed by a persistence task. The time participants spent on this latter task was the measure of persistence.

In Study 1, we tested the monitoring prediction by priming some participants with positive affect prior to performing the initial task and others with neutral affect. A depletion effect was observed among the neutral affect controls, which replicates the effect reported in the literature. This effect was not observed in the positive affect condition, an outcome that occurred because depleted participants in the positive affect condition persisted longer than did those in the control. We also found that when the initial self-regulatory task was non-depleting, those in the positive affect condition were less persistent than the controls. Consistent with our theorizing, positive affect prompted people to think broadly and activate the standard that was most accessible in determining their persistence. Thus, a depleting first task set a high standard and prompted greater persistence than in the control condition, whereas a non-depleting initial task set a low standard and resulted in less persistence for positive affect participants than in the control.

The purpose of Study 2 was to replicate the findings reported in Study 1, provide further evidence that positive affect would broaden the consideration to include a salient standard and examine whether respondents' perception of the time spent on the persistence task mediated the depletion effect. Study 2 replicated the previous findings. In addition, it showed that when positive affect participants in the non-depletion condition were provided with a standard that suggested they had spent substantial resources on the initial task, they didn't reduce their persistence in relation to controls. Moreover, support was found for the notion that participants' estimates of the time they had spent on the persistence task mediated the effect of the initial task on the persistence in performing the second task.

These findings suggest that the depletion effect involves a monitoring breakdown in which people overestimate the time spent on the persistence task undermining their persistence. Positive affect serves to enhance monitoring by broadening the consideration of cues to include a standard to guide their persistence. When the accessible cue sets a high standard, persistence is greater than when a lower standard is accessible.

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"Inoculations of Self-Control: Switching vs. Reinforcement Effects of Recalling Past Behavior"

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While much of consumer research has focused on stand-alone decisions and point-in-time behaviors, consumers go through life being exposed to strings of stimuli and making sequences of decisions. This research explores how consumers respond to a given temptation, specifically a tasty but unhealthy food item, contingent on having been faced with a similar temptation in the recent past.

When faced with temptation, knowledge of one's own past behavior may influence current behavior by either increasing or decreasing the likelihood of consistency. This research integrates three relevant areas: a) self-control and impulsivity; b) effects of past behavior; and c) the influence of unfulfilled goals, to propose

that the direction of this influence is moderated by the content of the cognitions that become accessible when past behavior is salient. Further, these cognitions are likely to differ depending on the extent to which conflicting forces (temptation vs. restraint) are salient in the original self-control situation. We propose and show that for certain individuals (impulsives), who may experience ambivalence in self-control situations, making a past behavior salient causes a switching effect (i.e., the consciousness of past resistance causes future succumbing), whereas other individuals (non-impulsives), who experience less conflict in such situations, exhibit behavioral consistency when past behavior is made salient.

Study 1 manipulated Time 1 cognitions (cold vs. hot) and delay between T1 and T2, with impulsivity as a measured variable. At T1, participants were exposed to a plate of tempting snacks and asked to write down all the thoughts they had regarding these snacks. Half the respondents were asked to write hot cognitions (e.g., relating to taste) while the other half wrote cold cognitions (e.g., uses for the snacks as non-food objects). All respondents were under strict instructions to not eat any of the snacks. Under these circumstances, hot cognitions, which enhance “temptingness”, should require participants to resist more actively as compared to cold cognitions, which render the snacks less appetitive. Accordingly, participants in the hot cognitions conditions should later have a greater sense of having resisted a past temptation.

After the T1 task, respondents were escorted to a different room and seated at separate tables, each with a covered box. In the no-delay condition, the experimenter lifted the box and revealed a bowl full of (50 identical) cheeseballs, and asked participants to help themselves while they waited. Exactly two minutes afterwards, the bowls were removed and a 30-minute long unrelated filler task administered. Research assistants counted the number of cheeseballs consumed by each participant. Following the filler, participants responded to a battery of personality measures. In contrast, respondents in the delay condition received the filler task as soon as they entered the second room, and only saw the bowls with cheeseballs afterwards.

Analysis of the number of cheeseballs eaten by condition revealed a significant three-way interaction, with no effects of impulsivity or cognitions in the no-delay condition—respondents ate few cheeseballs across conditions. This was expected, since the T1 instructions to resist would have remained salient across the short delay. More interestingly, in the long delay conditions, when given hot cognitions at T1, impulsives ate twice as many cheeseballs as non-impulsives; no differences were obtained in the cold cognitions conditions. Over a delay, therefore, the consciousness of having actively resisted a temptation in the past seems to undermine future resistance for impulsives, but bolsters it for non-impulsives.

Experiment 1 thus provides initial evidence that increased salience of past behavior has different effects for impulsives and non-impulsives. However, our conceptualization further argues that these effects are driven not because of having performed the past behavior per se, but because of the consciousness of that past behavior and the nature of cognitions that acquire increased salience as a result.

Experiment 2 therefore manipulated recall of past behavior, rather than the behavior itself. Participants were asked to recall a recent situation where they had been exposed to a tempting food item and had either succumbed to the temptation or resisted it. Then, as before, they were led into a different room and after a delay given the opportunity to eat cheeseballs. Results showed that impulsives were more likely to “switch”, i.e., eat more cheeseballs if they had recalled resisting (vs. succumbing to) the temptation, while non-impulsives were more likely to display consistency, and resist if

they recalled resisting, and succumb if they recalled succumbing. These patterns cannot easily be explained by other existing theories of self-control such as ego depletion (Muraven and Baumeister 2000) or the shopping momentum effect (Dhar, Huber, and Khan 2005). Rather, they suggest that a key difference between impulsives and non-impulsives is in the content of cognitions associated with recall of a past behavior. When recalling a past behavior, non-impulsives may spontaneously generate positive cognitions associated with that behavior, thus reinforcing the chances of performing the same behavior at a later point in time. Such a reinforcing process has much support in the literature on the effects of past behavior (cf. Albarracín and Wyer 2001). For impulsives, however, we propose that the presence of conflicting goals (temptation vs. restraint) yields somewhat different cognitions when a past behavior is recalled. In particular, drawing on the Zeigarnik effect (Zeigarnik 1967) which suggests that non-fulfilled goals tend to take on greater salience than fulfilled ones, we hypothesize that recalling a certain type of behavior (e.g., resisting in the past) actually increases the relative salience of counter-cognitions (e.g., the positive consequences of succumbing to temptation), thus causing them to switch.

Study 3 replicated study 2 findings, and, based on the conceptualization above, identified a boundary condition for the impulsives’ switching behavior. If the switching effect is driven by increased salience of counter-cognitions, this effect should be dampened if impulsives are explicitly required to recall behavior-congruent cognitions. On the other hand, such forced recall should not have any effect for non-impulsives, since this group spontaneously recalls behavior-congruent cognitions. Initial results provide good support for these predictions. As in study 2, when simply asked to recall either resisting or succumbing to a food-related temptation, non-impulsives subsequently displayed a reinforcement effect, while impulsives switched. However, when explicitly asked to recall behavior-congruent cognitions along with the behavior itself, a reinforcement effect obtained for both impulsives and non-impulsives. These results again support our conceptualization. Further data investigating these processes are being collected at the time of writing.

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“Getting Into It. Exerting Self-Control Enhances Self-Control Performance on Similar Tasks”

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The self-control strength model (Muraven and Baumeister 2000) states that exerting self-control taxes a limited resource that is akin to energy or strength, and thus brings people in a state of resource depletion. This state reduces people’s capacity to exert self-control in the next phase. Although the basic finding is undisputed, the nature of the scarce mental resource remains elusive.

Several moderators (e.g., the activation of beliefs (Martijn, Tenbult, Merckelbach, Dreezens, and de Vries 2002), motivation (Muraven and Slessareva 2003), implementation intentions (Webb and Sheeran 2003)) and mediators (e.g., subjective time perception (Vohs and Schmeichel 2003)) have been proposed that shed some light on the nature of the scarce mental resource. In this paper, we claim that depletion is a consequence of an adaptive strategy that helps people to cope with a demanding task.

We propose that depletion effects result from an individual's attempts to cope with a situation that triggers a response conflict. Cognitive control theory (e.g., Botvinick, Braver, Barch, Carter, and Cohen 2001; Miller and Cohen 2001) claims that people have a system that monitors for response conflicts. This system induces control processes to become actively involved in potentially challenging situations. According to the theory, the actual attempt to perform a difficult task leads to the recruitment of cognitive resources through the detection of conflict. Conflict indicates that current levels of control are insufficient to meet task demands, and thus signals a demand for greater control. Increased control helps people to successfully solve the response conflict at hand but reduces their flexibility in dealing with a new response conflict. Reduced flexibility may explain the depletion effect. The increased adaptation to the response conflict at hand allows us to predict that the typical depletion effect should reverse if the response conflict in both phases is similar. The contribution of this paper is twofold. The empirical contribution of this paper is showing that the depletion effect critically depends on the dissimilarity of the response conflict in phase 1 and phase 2. We predict that depletion effects will occur only in case response conflicts are dissimilar in the two consecutive phases, and will reverse in case response conflicts are similar in the two consecutive phases. The theoretical contribution consists of providing insight in the nature of depletion.

In the first study, we investigated whether continuing to exert self-control in the same domain either gradually reduces performance (consistent with the self-control strength model, Baumeister 2002) or enhances performance (consistent with the cognitive control model). To give both models a fair test, we used procedures that have been successfully used as depletion inductions (i.e., thought suppression and a Stroop task), and measured the evolution of performance within that task. We found that, as people engage longer in a given self-control task, they become increasingly better at fulfilling the task requirements of thought inhibition and response accuracy.

In the second study, we mimicked the two phase paradigm of the depletion literature, and tested the importance of the dissimilarity of the response conflict in the two tasks. We investigated whether the similarity between the two subsequent tasks moderates the direction of the depletion effect. We applied a response reversal task (e.g. Paus, Petrides, Evans, and Meyer 1993) in the second phase. In the first phase, participants engaged in a control task, a similar response reversal task (high similarity condition), or a thought suppression task (low similarity condition). The results show that, compared to the control condition, engagement in a typically depleting thought suppression task decreased self-control performance in a subsequent response reversal task (i.e., low similarity), replicating the typical self-control depletion effect. However, in the high similarity condition, engagement in a typically depleting response reversal task *enhanced* performance in a subsequent similar response reversal task (i.e., reversing the typical self-control depletion effect), compared to the control condition.

In the third study, we attempted to rule out a learning explanation and generalize to other self-control tasks. We asked half of the female participants to restrict their urge to consume sweets in a first

phase, which is assumed to be depleting (Baumeister et al. 1998, Study 1), and afterwards invited them to partake in a taste test (similar response conflict, condition 1) or a word anagram (dissimilar response mode, condition 2). People who inhibited their eating behavior in phase one performed worse on the anagram task (i.e., replicating the typical self-control depletion effect), but performed better on the taste test (i.e., reversing the typical self-control depletion effect).

Our data provide strong support for the cognitive control model. This suggests that the depletion effects are typical for dissimilar self-control tasks because the exertion of self-control in the first phase adjusts the control system to that particular response conflict. This adjustment hinders adjustment to subsequent dissimilar response conflicts and leads to worsened self-control performance in the second (dissimilar) self-control task. However, if the self-control tasks in both phases are similar, the adjustment to the response conflict of the self-control task in the first phase enhances self-control performance in the second self-control task. The exertion of self-control on a first task thus enhances self-control for subsequent similar tasks but hinders self-control for subsequent dissimilar tasks.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY
Measurement of Subjective Wellbeing

Jason Riis, New York University, USA
Joachim Vosgerau, Carnegie Mellon University, USA

“Measuring Cross-National Differences in Subjective Wellbeing”

Jason Riis, New York University
Daniel Kahneman, Princeton University

In light of studies showing that differences in life circumstances contribute relatively little to subjective well-being, large cross-national differences in life satisfaction are quite surprising. As evidence that these differences are not based on real differences in moment-to-moment experience, we appeal to the large discrepancy between subjective and objective national indicators of health. Analyses of these health data strongly suggest that national differences in life satisfaction (at least between wealthy, developed countries) are due to response style artifacts. We discuss a new, time-based measure of well-being that is less prone to response style artifacts.

“A New Method for Comparing Subjective Wellbeing Across Countries and its Correlation with Suicide”

Joachim Vosgerau, Carnegie Mellon
Hubert Gatignon, INSEAD
Ed Diener, University of Illinois–Urbana Champagne

Cross-national comparisons of subjective well-being (SWB) suffer from individual and national response biases (e.g. self-enhancement, positivity, or social desirability). Many researchers argue that meaningful comparisons across countries are therefore impossible. We demonstrate with simulated data that a new method, the differenced confirmatory factor analysis (dCFA), eliminates response biases as opposed to extant methods such as simple means or traditional CFA. Using two independent SWB datasets of 26 and 30 countries, we show that dCFA yields dramatically different country rankings, and that suicide rates correlate with SWB means.

“Personality, Culture, and Subjective Wellbeing”

Hans Baumgartner, Pennsylvania State University
Jan-Benedict E.M. Steenkamp, UNC–Chapel Hill

Although the study of subjective well-being (SWB) has produced many interesting findings about the personality and cultural correlates of SWB (e.g., Diener et al., 2003), certain weaknesses can be identified in previous research. First, SWB has often been assessed in a limited way using simplistic measures. Second, comparability of measures across cultures is often assumed rather than tested. Third, the multi-level structure of the data is usually ignored. We address these issues in the current paper and use primary data collected from over 13,000 respondents in 28 countries around the world to provide new insights into the personality and cultural determinants of SWB.

“A Critique of the Measurement of Happiness”

Dan Ariely, MIT
Uri Gneezy, University of San Diego
Moshe Hoffman, University of Chicago

Measuring happiness has become not only a topic of interest for psychologists, but a popular tool in public policy. After all, if policy is about maximizing happiness, what could be better than asking people about it directly? In this work we add some caution-

ary notes to this issue, suggesting that the interpretation of such happiness ratings might be premature, and sometimes misleading. To illustrate our point we conducted two types of studies: one addressing the question of using happiness scales, and the other addressing the construct of happiness more generally.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

The Role of Metacognition in Consumers' Judgments

Manoj Thomas, Cornell University, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

Metacognition refers to people's cognitions about their own thought processes. Over the past two decades psychologists have shown that our judgments and decisions are influenced not only by the available information, but also by the subjective ease or difficulty with which the information is processed. In this special session, we bring together three research papers that present hitherto unexplored aspects metacognition in consumers' judgments. The three papers in this session share two common features:

All the three papers demonstrate novel effects of metacognitive experiences that have *not* been shown in the extant literature. By demonstrating that metacognitive experiences influence consumers' emotional judgments, price evaluations and brand choice, the three papers, together, argue for a more pivotal role for metacognition research in consumer psychology.

All three papers present a series of experiments to uncover the underlying psychological mechanisms and thus offer new theoretical insights about metacognitive processes.

The first paper, by Rucker, Briñol and Petty, examines the effect of metacognitive experiences on emotional judgments. Rucker et al. suggest that subjective ease has the power to moderate consumers' emotional responses. Specifically, their experiments demonstrate that emotions are felt more strongly, and have a greater effect on consumer behavior, when it is easy to construe the emotion-inducing events. This paper, thus, not only uncovers a novel effect of subjective ease, but also offers new insights into the interplay of affect and cognition in consumer behavior.

The second paper by Thomas and Morwitz examines the effects of metacognition in judgments of numerical differences. Judgments of numerical differences are ubiquitous. For example, while comparing two products, people have to judge whether the price difference is small or large. While deciding whether to purchase a product on discount, people have to judge whether the difference between the regular price and sale price is small or large. This paper presents convincing empirical evidence for a counterintuitive hypothesis: People *perceive* the numerical difference to be larger when the difference is easier to compute than when it is difficult to compute, even when the arithmetic difference is not larger. A series of experiments reveal that this effect is on account of nonconscious attribution of the metacognitive experience induced by computational fluency to the analog distance between the numerical stimuli.

The domain of choice has always been a challenge for metacognition researchers. Little is known about the effects of processing fluency on brand choice. Huber (2004, p. 359) eloquently summarized the challenge: "The elegance of naïve theories (used for metacognitive inferences) seems to break down in the domain of choices..." The third paper by Chung and Mitchell takes on this challenge to identify conditions when perceptual fluency will influence choice from a limited set of brands. Their results indicate that perceptual fluency affects brand choice only under low motivation and opportunity conditions. Interestingly, fluency affects choice even when the evaluation of the brand is negative. Their results also suggest that attitudes formed toward the alternatives may not influence choice when the choice is based on metacognitive experiences.

The similarity of the theoretical constructs across the three papers will facilitate a coherent session. Yet, each paper addresses

a different substantive problem and thus makes unique contributions to advance our knowledge of metacognition.

"The Role of Ease in Consumers' Emotional Judgments"

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Richard E. Petty, Ohio State University

Human emotion has a long history in the study of consumer behavior. For example, earlier research focused on how emotional states influenced the amount of persuasion through various mechanisms (e.g., Petty et al. 1993). Petty et al. found that, when elaboration was low, placing consumers in a positive emotional state enhanced persuasion by serving as a simple cue; however, when elaboration was high, placing consumers in a positive mood facilitated persuasion by leading consumers to generate more positive thoughts. Given the profound role emotions play in the persuasion process, an important question that arises is what factors determine the degree to which consumers experience emotions?

The present research submits that one previously unexamined factor that may influence emotional judgments is the subjective sense of ease accompanying emotion provoking events. We argue that subjective ease has the power to moderate consumers' emotional reaction. Specifically, when it is easy to generate emotion provoking events, we hypothesize that emotions will be more strongly felt, and exert a greater influence, than when it is difficult to generate or process emotion provoking events. These predictions are borne out in several experiments.

Past Research

A growing body of research has documented that not only do consumers rely upon the content of the thoughts they generate, but they also rely upon the metacognitive experience of ease accompanying the generation of their thoughts. To illustrate, in one representative study, Wänke, Bohner and Jurkowsch (1997) instructed participants to imagine either 1 or 10 reasons to drive a BMW. While instructing participants to consider 10 reasons in favor of driving a BMW provided more positive information about the BMW, participants held more positive attitudes when they had only thought of a single reason to drive a BMW. Thus, this finding could not be explained by participants relying upon the content of their thoughts. Rather, this finding could be explained by the fact that imagining a single reason was presumably easier than imaging ten, and the perceived ease led to the perception there must be even more reasons to drive it. That is, consumers could reason, "if I can think of one reason, there must be many more," as opposed to, "if I have trouble thinking of ten, there must not be many more."

Current Research

Ease has been studied in a number of diverse domains including, but not limited to, persuasion, risk assessment, likelihood estimates, attitude strength, interpersonal closeness, stereotypes, and implicit attitudes (for reviews see Rolf, Schwarz, and Winkielman 2004; Schwarz 2004). Surprisingly, no prior research has examined how the experience of ease influences judgments of one's emotions. The present research examines whether subjective ease can influence consumers' emotional judgments. In experiment 1, we induced emotions by instructing participants to list emotional events. Specifically, all participants were asked to recall happy

events in their life. However, participants were asked to generate either few (2) or many (10) of those happy events. After the event recall, participants were asked how happy they felt. Finally, because past research has found people rely on ease under high degrees of elaboration (see Tormala et al. 2002) we assessed participants' need for cognition (Cacioppo and Petty 1982). As expected, high need for cognition participants reported feeling happier after generating few rather than many episodes of happiness, whereas low need for cognition participants reported feeling happier after generating many as opposed to few events. In short, Experiment 1 supported the proposition that consumers' emotional judgments were significantly influenced by the subjective sense of ease accompanying the generation of the emotional events. Consistent with prior research, this held for individuals who were high, as opposed to low, in need for cognition.

Experiment 2 replicated the findings of experiment 1, and sought to establish the effect of ease was not limited simply to the self-report of emotions, but could have consequences on outcomes previously found to be influenced by emotion. To enhance generalizability, experiment 2 also used a different manipulation of ease. Specifically, participants were asked to write about 4 times they felt either sad or happy. However, to induce a feeling of ease or difficulty, participants were instructed to write the events with either their dominant or non-dominant hands, respectively. This task has been shown to successfully manipulate subjective ease (e.g., Briñol and Petty 2003; Petrova and Cialdini, 2005). Finally, after completing the emotion induction task participants were asked to estimate the likelihood a number of events would happen to them (e.g., finding a good job after college). Prior research has clearly documented that participants' emotional states can influence the perceived likelihood of similarly valenced events (e.g., Desteno et al. 2000). Results of experiment 2 revealed that participants predicted that events related to happiness were more likely to occur when the emotion inducing task was easy compared to difficult. That is, emotions exerted a stronger influence on emotional outcomes when the emotion inducing events were physically easier to write.

Taken together, these findings suggest the experienced ease in generating affective information can increase the impact of that mental content on subsequent emotional judgments. That is, the easier it felt to generate thoughts about happy events (because few were requested), the greater participants' emotional reactions (provided participants' natural proclivity to think was high). The metacognitive experience not only affected self-reported emotions, but its effect extended to emotional consequences. In subsequent studies, we examined the implications of confidence and emotion for specific aspects of consumer behavior (e.g., consumers' receptivity to advertisements).

Contributions and Conclusions

The present experiments present a new perspective on how consumers reach emotional judgments and provide a new role for subjective ease in consumer behavior. Across different paradigms in which the ease of generating emotional thoughts was manipulated, we find the impact of emotional thoughts on affective judgments is greater when people have an easy, as opposed to difficult, time generating those emotional experiences. These studies provide new insights into the interplay of affect and cognition in consumer thinking, and new perspectives on understanding how consumers come to know their emotions.

“The Role of Subjective Ease in Price Comparisons”

Manoj Thomas, Cornell University

Vicki Morwitz, New York University

Numerical judgments often entail mental computations. These mental computations are not always easy. One factor that affects the ease of mental computation is the complexity of the multi-digit numbers. Mental computations are easier when the problem entails simple single-digit computations (e.g., 5.00–4.00) instead of complex multi-digit computations (e.g., 4.99–3.98). Will this computational complexity in anyway affect our numerical judgments? In the context of the given example, will the difference between 4.99 and 3.98 be perceived to be smaller than, larger than, or the same as, that between 5.00 and 4.00? More generally, how does the subjective ease or difficulty of mental computations affect our numerical judgments?

Although ease of processing has been shown to affect judgments of the probability of an event occurring (Tversky and Kahneman 1973), fame (Jacoby et al. 1989), judgments of familiarity (Whittlesea 1993), the implication of these psychological phenomena for numerical comparisons is not clear. This research started by investigating whether the subjective experience of ease of computation has any effect on judgments of numerical difference between two numbers. Our experiments unearthed an intriguing phenomenon: Computationally easier differences are perceived to be larger than computationally difficult differences, even when the arithmetic difference is not larger. With the aim of delineating the underlying psychological mechanisms, we then focused our attention of two research questions: (i) Why are computationally easier differences perceived to be larger? (ii) To what extent are people aware of the role of subjective experiences in their judgments?

The Association Between Distance And Fluency

Research in numerical cognition has revealed a strong association between analog distance and the ease of processing. This association, labeled as the distance effect (Dehaene 1997; Moyer and Landauer 1967), suggests that people take more time to process two numbers when the analog distance between the two numbers is small, irrespective of the absolute magnitudes of the numbers. For example, it has been observed that the response time to discriminate between 4 and 5 is larger than that to discriminate between 2 and 5 (Dehaene 1997). The distance effect is said to occur because mental representations of numerical stimuli become difficult when the numbers are close to each other. The distance effect has been shown to be an extremely robust phenomenon. “After experimenting on number comparison for more than ten years, I still have to find a single subject who compares 5 and 6 as quickly as he or she compares 2 and 9, without showing a distance effect,” articulated Dehaene (1997, p.74). The ubiquity of the distance effect suggests *an implicit association between numerical distance and fluency: fluent processing is associated with stimuli that are distant from each other*. If the processing is difficult, then this associative rule suggests that the stimuli are possibly close to each other and therefore not easily discriminable.

Misattribution of Fluency Induced by Computational Complexity

Past research has shown that although the human mind is very adept at detecting small changes in processing fluency, it is not so adept at identifying the actual source of fluency. Instead, it misattributes the experienced fluency to the factor made most salient by the judgment task. For example, fluency induced by repetition is attributed to fame (Jacoby et al. 1989), and fluency

created through an incidental noise mask is attributed to familiarity (Whittlesea, Jacoby and Girard 1990).

In this research, we suggest that the fluency induced by computational complexity is misattributed to the analog distance between numbers. Results from four experiments were found to support this hypothesis. In experiment 1, fluency and numerical distance was manipulated in a within-subjects design. Participants were shown 24 pairs of prices; each pair comprised of a regular price and a sale price. Participants were asked to evaluate the magnitude of the discount on a small-large semantic differential scale by computing the difference between the regular price and the sale price. The price stimuli differed from each other in the magnitude of the discount (small vs. large) as well as in the number complexity (difficult vs. easy). Consistent with our hypothesis and contrary to the rules of arithmetic, participants in our experiments perceived the discount magnitude to be larger when the difference was easier to compute (e.g., 5.00-4.00; difference 1.00) than when it was difficult to compute (e.g., 4.99-3.98; difference 1.01). This effect manifested across all levels of discounts as well as prices. Experiment 2 shows this effect is robust and manifests with judgments of price difference as well as judgments of weight difference. However, this effect manifests only when the judgment requires mental computations. When the participants did not have to do the mental computations to make the judgment, processing fluency had no effect on judgments (Experiment 3). Finally, the observed effect seems to be on account of non-conscious misattribution of the metacognitive experience. When the participants were explicitly warned that the computation is either easy or difficult, processing fluency had no effect on judgments (Experiment 4).

“Perceptual Fluency, Attitudes and Choice”

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In a series of studies we examine the relationship between perceptual fluency, attitudes and their accessibility and choice from a limited set of brands. We hypothesize that under these conditions, brand choice is a two-stage process. The first stage is a recognition stage where certain brands will “stand out” in the environment. The second stage is a choice stage, where consumers use information about the brands, which is stored in memory to make a choice.

Previous research indicates that objects with highly accessible attitudes “stand out” in the environment (Roskos-Ewoldsen and Fazio 1992) and that perceptual fluency will also cause this to happen (Jacoby, Kelley and Dywan 1989). Consequently, attitude accessibility and perceptual fluency are expected to influence the first stage. Previous research also indicates that beliefs, attitudes and their accessibility will influence the second stage (e.g., Fazio and Towles-Schwen 1999).

These conjectures are tested in a series of experiments. In all the experiments, the participants are provided with information about four hypothetical brands of personal music players that vary on five attributes so that there is a clear rank order of the brands on the attributes. One brand is evaluated as very positive, the second as slightly positive, the third slightly negative and the fourth very negative. Both the attribute information and the attitudes provide the same rank order. During the experiment, the participants form an attitude toward each brand.

In the first experiment, the perceptual fluency, attitude accessibility of the second best personal music player are manipulated and the participants are asked to select which brand they would purchase if they all had the same price under either high or low motivation and opportunity conditions. Under high motivation and opportunity conditions the participants are given as much time as

they want to make a decision and are told that if they select the best brand they are eligible to enter a drawing to win \$25. Under low motivation and opportunity conditions the participants were told to make a decision as quickly as possible.

Under high motivation and opportunity conditions only attitude accessibility had an influence on choice while under low motivation and opportunity conditions, both attitude accessibility and perceptual fluency were found to have independent influences on choice. The response times of the choice process were not measured in this experiment, so it is possible that the low motivation and opportunity condition included both the recognition stage and part of the choice stage in the choice process. In other words, the choice of the brand with the highly accessible attitude may be due to effects at both the recognition and choice stage.

To examine this possibility we conducted a second experiment, which is similar to the first, only the perceptual fluency and attitude accessibility of the third best brand, which has a negative attitude, are manipulated. In addition, the response times in the choice task were measured. As expected, neither attitude accessibility nor perceptual fluency affected choice under high motivation and opportunity conditions. However, under low motivation and opportunity conditions, perceptual fluency has a significant effect on choice while attitude accessibility has a marginally significant effect. A closer examination of the data indicates that with a median split on the response times used when reaching a decision, all the participants who selected the third best brand, which had a negative attitude made the decision quickly. In fact, all the participants who choose the third best brand did so within 1.1 seconds.

In a third experiment, we replicated the low motivation and opportunity conditions of the first experiment, however, we forced the participants to make a choice within 1.1 seconds. The results indicate a significant interaction between the effects of perceptual fluency and attitude accessibility on choice. Both high perceptual fluency and high attitude accessibility had significant effects on choice. However, these effects were not additive.

In summary, the results of our experiments indicate that the recognition stage lasts for approximately 1.1 secs and perceptual fluency and attitude accessibility affect this stage. If choices are based on this stage, perceptual fluency and attitude accessibility will affect choice regardless of the valence of the attitude. Attitudes, attitude accessibility and attribute information will influence the second stage. In our studies attitudes and attribute information provided the same rank order information of the brands, so only attitude accessibility had an effect on choice when the attitude was positive. These results indicate that even when attitudes are formed toward the alternatives, they do not influence choice when it is based on metacognitive processes.

Intending To Be Ethical: An Examination of Consumer Choice in Sweatshop Avoidance

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INTRODUCTION

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a theory of attitude-behavior relationships which links attitudes, subjective norms, behavioral intentions and behavior in a fixed causal sequence (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). The TRA has been criticized on the basis that it applies only to behaviors that are totally under volitional control. To address this concern Ajzen (1985) introduced the TPB that added a measure of perceived behavioral control to the existing TRA structure. This extended model has been widely applied in many behavioral domains often with a significantly improved predictive ability (Dabholkar 1994; Penz and Stottinger 2005). In their meta-analytic review of the TPB, Armitage and Conner (2001) found empirical evidence based on a database of 185 published studies that the TPB accounted for 39% of the variance in intention but only 27% in behavior. They further proposed that desire might act as an intermediary construct mediating the relationships between the TPB antecedents (attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control) and intention. Gollwizer (1990) proposed that beyond the motivational stage a second stage comprising planning be utilized to capture implementation intention that helps to progress desires and intention toward action.

In this study the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is used as a framework to examine consumers' intention to avoid purchasing sweatshop produced apparel. The research develops and tests a conceptual model that explains the motivational and implementation aspects of intention that convert attitudes, subjective norms and behavioural control into behaviour. We draw on existing research (Bagozzi 1992; Perugini and Conner 2000) that has identified volitional constructs but which in the main neglected to examine and establish their separate and distinct roles both as a precursor to intention and in converting intention toward behavior. Specifically, we aim to develop a conceptual model that examines the roles of desire, intention and plan to avoid sweatshop apparel within a TPB framework using a sample of 794 UK consumers to test its explanatory power.

SWEATSHOP APPAREL AND CONSUMER CHOICE

Research across many Western nations has confirmed the existence and continued growth of a group of consumers for whom ethical issues drive consumption behavior. US sales of fair trade products increased by 44% between 2001 and 2002 and UK consumers spent \$44.9 billion in line with their ethical values in 2004, an increase of 15% from 2003 (Williams, Taylor, and Howard 2005). While much of this development has been in the food sector research reveals that other product sectors, notably apparel, are exerting pressure for similar action with 30% increase in sales of ethical apparel in the UK from \$57 million in 2003 to \$75 million in 2004 (Williams et al. 2005). Although many companies have responded to consumer concerns through the introduction of codes of conduct on production practices, many campaigners and consumers see these as mere public relations exercises and unreliable as a guide to ethical decision-making (Shaw and Duff 2002). As yet consumer decision-making cues such as labeling are not

readily available in this sector. Consumers are further restrained by a lack of availability and choice, and even when ethical alternatives are available they have often been considered unfashionable and expensive (Shaw and Duff 2002). Thus, concerned consumers find themselves confronted by uncertainty in terms of information available to aid decision-making and significant compromises in making an ethical stance. It is hardly surprising that an intention-behavior gap has been reported in terms of a weak relationship between what consumers say, and what they do (Newholm 2005). Research exploring ethical issues in apparel choice is limited (Dickson 2001; Shaw and Duff 2002). Tomolillo and Shaw (2004) revealed that sweatshop labor is the most important ethical concern among consumers in apparel choice. Although generally neglected in ethical contexts, the TPB has been found to be pertinent in the ethical context of purchasing fair trade products where barriers to behavior such as availability have been found to be significant (Shaw, Shiu, and Clarke 2000; Shaw and Shiu 2003).

THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR AND MODIFICATIONS

The TPB has been widely applied and favorably received in the literature over the last two decades. However Bagozzi (1993) argued strongly that research is needed to understand the intervening processes linking attitudes and behavior and proposed a theory of volitional processes as the central mediators. Intention is undoubtedly an important precursor to action but its meaning and role need to be clarified. Nuttin (1987) argues that the meaning of intention relates to motivational functioning and volition. Events are intended in so far as an individual's will impacts their occurrence, and volition refers to motivational and cognitive processes that follow an overall plan to pursue an action (i.e., the processes that succeed intention). Nuttin's arguments have clearly been accepted and developed within a volitional framework for goal-directed behaviors (Bagozzi 1992; 1993). Indeed, it has been argued that the broader construct of volition rather than intention should be used in the prediction and understanding of behavior; intention as used within the TPB framework is viewed not to concede enough importance to what having an intention actually means (Perugini and Conner 2000), and as too narrow to encompass both an action plan and the channeling of motivation to act (Bagozzi 1992; 1993; Perugini and Conner 2000). Although these latter studies have used a goal-directed approach, the current research is eschewing a goal orientation for the following reasons. First, the definition of goals is inextricably complex and involves the identification of intermediate and terminal or higher-order goals (Bagozzi and Warshaw 1990; Perugini and Conner 2000). This may be operationally feasible in contexts where goals are initiated, successfully or unsuccessfully attempted and terminated. In the context of ethical consumption, however, an attempt to define intermediate and higher order goals (and the level of abstraction of these higher order goals) would be problematic at best. Previous research has shown that concerns with ethical issues in the context of consumption are inextricably interrelated (Shaw and Clarke 1999) and while ethical consumers may strive to achieve a particular goal through

the performance of several behaviors, they may also aim to achieve several goals through the performance of a single behavior. For example, by purchasing fair trade coffee one may aim to help developing world producers to get a better deal for their produce. Alternatively, one may aim to support more equitable trading initiatives, or both. Finally, the newer models of goal-directed behavior (MGB) have been subject to limited empirical testing while the TPB has been the subject of research application for several decades. We recognize the contribution of new frameworks as helping to improve both our understanding of the links between the model's theoretical constructs and the explanatory ability of the models, and as highlighting the TPB's lack of attention to the processes that take place between the formation of an intention to act and actual behavior. As such, we seek to deepen the theoretical framework of the TPB through a modified framework that will improve understanding of how intentions are translated into behaviors.

While previous research has highlighted the existence of different aspects of volition as distinct from intention, research examining the role of these volitional stages in decision-making is limited. Perugini and Conner (2000) measure volitional stages but present them as one construct of volition. In order to understand the motivational stages underlying decisions to avoid sweatshop apparel, the previously identified constructs of desire and plan (Perugini and Conner 2000), are postulated as conceptually distinct and pertinent to our understanding of the motivation and action aspects of intention. Previous research has argued that desire is distinct from intention within the MGB (Bagozzi 1992) and plan has been found to play a separate role from intention within the TPB (Jones et al. 2001; Sniehotta, Scholze, and Schwarzer 2005). Such research suggests the pertinence of these motivation and volition stages in addressing the intention-behavior gap often found in ethical consumption contexts. Thus, we hypothesize:

- H1a:* The constructs of desire, intention and plan are conceptually distinct.
- H1b:* The TPB constructs of attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavior control, intention and the additional constructs of desire and plan are conceptually distinct.

The TPB has been successfully utilized in similar behavioral contexts, thus it is expected that the components of the model will operate according to the theory within this study. These relationships are specified in the following three hypotheses:

- H2a:* The more positive the consumer attitude toward avoiding the purchase of sweatshop apparel, the stronger the intention to avoid the purchase of sweatshop apparel.
- H2b:* The more the consumer perceives a normative pressure from important others with regard to the decision to avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel, the stronger the intention to avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel.
- H2c:* The more control over avoiding purchasing sweatshop apparel the consumer perceives, the stronger the intention to avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel.

Desire

In the MGB, Perugini and Bagozzi (2001, 80) state that "desires provide the direct impetus for intentions and transform the motivational content to act." Desire has been conceptualized by Perugini and Bagozzi (2004, 71) as "a state of mind whereby an agent has a personal motivation to perform an action or to achieve a goal." Although a goal-directed approach is not adopted here, we

adopt measures of desire and hypothesize that desire will partially mediate the effects of attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control on intention. We hypothesize these effects as partial, as the antecedents to intention specified within the TPB are well established. As such, we support the role of desire as an addition to the TPB relationships outlined in hypotheses 2a, 2b and 2c but further the following hypotheses H3a to H3e.

- H3a:* The stronger the attitude of the consumer to avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel, the stronger the desire to avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel.
- H3b:* The more consumers perceive a normative pressure from important others with regard to the decision to avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel, the stronger the desire will be to actually avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel.
- H3c:* The stronger the level of perceived behavioral control towards avoiding purchasing sweatshop apparel the stronger the desire to avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel.
- H3d:* The stronger the consumer has a desire to avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel, the stronger their intention to avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel.
- H3e:* The effect of attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control on intention is reduced when the mediating role of desire is included in the model.

Plan

Research has argued that in addition to an individual's direct statement of his/her intention, which refers to the directive function of volition, there are also action orientated aspects of volition following the formation of an intention that are important motivators to behavior (Perugini and Conner 2000; Jones et al. 2001; Sniehotta et al. 2005). This volitional stage following intention is plan. The above authors conceptualize plan as cognitive effort and argue that intentions are more likely to convert into behaviors when they are operationalized through a plan to act. This is to be differentiated from intention to act, as plan is reflective of actual effort/steps expended to undertake the behavior. Thus, once an intention is formed to avoid the purchase of sweatshop apparel the next volitional stage for an individual is the performance of steps (plans) orientated towards the behavior. At the plan stage of volition we argue that attitude is already formed and, thus, a commitment with respect to the behavior has been produced. Further, the influence of others is reduced as one's motivation towards the behavior moves closer to action, and all reasoning with regards to perceived barriers has taken place and been resolved. We, therefore, hypothesize that attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control will not directly impact plan, but together with desire, their relationships with plan are fully mediated through intention.

- H4:* The effect of attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and desire on plan is fully mediated through intention.

METHODOLOGY

To satisfy the aim of this research, subscribers to the UK Ethical Consumer magazine were purposively selected as the target population for our study. The main questionnaire was developed to measure the components of the TPB and motivation and volitional stages using 7-point Likert-scales. Direct measures of the TPB components (attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral

control) were captured in accordance to Ajzen (1985). Measures of desire are similar to Perugini and Bagozzi (2001). Measures of plan were based on Perugini and Conner (2000) and Sniehotta et al. (2005) reflecting actual moves taken to enact the behavior. Questionnaire measures are detailed in table 1. Questionnaires detailing the purpose of the study with a prepaid envelope were inserted into the April/ May 2003 issue of the Ethical Consumer magazine and mailed to 4,500 UK subscribers. In total 794 useable questionnaires were returned within the specified four week period, representing a response rate of 20%. In the sample, 33% of respondents were male and 67% female; the average age was 43 years; and 84% were educated to degree level or higher. SPSS was used to generate descriptive statistics and to conduct reliability analyses of measurement scales via Cronbach's alpha. Examinations of hypotheses and models were undertaken via structural equation modeling (SEM) using AMOS 6.0.

RESULTS

Scale Reliability and Validity. In order to assess the reliability and validity of the volitional constructs (desire, intention, and plan), a measurement model was assessed via confirmatory factor analysis. This model revealed an excellent fit ($\chi^2(6)=17.24, p<.01$, goodness of fit index or GFI=.99, Adjusted GFI or AGFI=.98, CFI=1.00, TLI=.99, IFI=1.00, RMSEA=.049 and AIC=47.244) according to the usual conventions (Hair et al. 1998; Hu and Bentler 1999). All standardized regression paths are above .7 (range .75-.96) and are significant at $p<.001$. Given the general absence of cross-loadings, convergent validity is supported. In terms of construct reliability, the average variance extracted (AVE) for each of the constructs is above the recommended level of .5 with construct reliability above .7. Discriminant validity was assessed following Fornell and Larcker's (1981) procedure by determining if the squared correlation between each pair of constructs was less than the average of the AVE for each of the constructs. This is true for all pairs of constructs in the model. These results fully support hypothesis 1a.

To address hypothesis 1b, a measurement model comprising the TPB and the additional motivational and volitional constructs (desire and plan) was assessed via confirmatory factor analysis. This model also provided an excellent fit ($\chi^2(161)=414.735, p<.001$, GFI=.95, AGFI=.93, CFI=.98, TLI=.97, IFI=.98, RMSEA=.045 and AIC=554.735). Standardized regression paths are all above .7 (with the exception of one subjective norm item with .613) and are all significant at $p<.001$. Given the absence of cross-loadings, convergent validity is supported. In terms of construct reliability, the AVE for each of the constructs (except subjective norm) is above .5 with construct reliability above .7 (see Table 1). The subjective norm construct yielded an AVE of .28 and construct reliability of .44. Discriminant validity is fully supported for all pairs of constructs in the model. Thus, hypothesis 1b is fully supported.

TPB Hypothesis Tests via SEM. To assess the TPB model, a SEM analysis was conducted. Table 2 outlines the path loadings and p -values. All paths are significant ($p<.001$). The model possesses good fit with $\chi^2(38)=129.634, p<.001$, GFI=.97, AGFI=.95, CFI=.98, TLI=.98, IFI=.98, RMSEA=.055 and AIC=185.634. The explanatory power (R^2) of the TPB in this behavioral context is adequate ($R^2=.331$). These results fully support hypotheses 2a, 2b and 2c, thus, we can conclude that although the TPB is acceptable in this behavioral context the explanatory power is limited.

The Mediating Role of Desire. To determine mediating relationships within the model Baron and Kenny (1986) and Holmbeck (1997) outline that four conditions must hold. Thus, to establish if

the construct desire mediates the relationship between the TPB antecedents (attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control) and intention the following must be satisfied: 1) the predictor variables (attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control) significantly impact the mediator (desire) in the expected direction; 2) the mediator (desire) significantly impacts the dependent construct (intention) in the expected direction; 3) the predictor variables (attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control) significantly impact the dependent construct (intention) in the expected direction; and 4) after controlling for the effects of the mediator (desire), the impact of the predictor variables (attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control) on the dependent construct (intention) is not significantly different from zero (for full mediation) or significantly reduced (for partial mediation). This is examine via three models (see table 3).

An examination of the fully mediated model (see Table 3 model 1) shows that attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control significantly impact desire, and that desire significantly impacts intention. Furthermore, the regression weights for these three antecedents are all significantly positive as expected, thus, conditions 1 and 2 are satisfied and hypotheses 3a, 3b, 3c and 3d are supported. The amount of variance in intention captured is 28%. The fit of this model is adequate.

Condition 3 is examined via model 2. Table 3 shows that this condition is also satisfied with regression weights in the expected direction, and 33% of the variance in intention captured. Regarding condition 4, results of model 3 show that the effects of attitude on intention are fully mediated by the variable desire. However, desire partially mediates the effects of subjective norm on intention and no mediation effect is observed between perceived behavioral control and intention. Given these results, hypothesis 3e is generally supported.

Examining the Mediating Role of Intention. To consider the mediating effect of intention on the relationships between attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, desire and plan three models are examined. Model 1 (Table 4) represents the model fully mediated by intention. Given that in model 3 (Table 3), the resultant model from previous analysis is valid, and that intention significantly impacts plan in the expected direction, conditions 1 and 2 of the procedure are satisfied.

The results of model 2 (Table 4) show that, without the mediator (intention), only the TPB antecedent perceived behavioral control significantly impacts plan, and that desire significantly impacts plan in the expected direction. Hence, condition 3 is satisfied.

Examining the model (model 3 table 4) where intention is assumed to have no mediation role, Table 4 shows that model 3 when compared to model 1 did not yield significant chi-square difference test, and that the regression path from desire to plan is no longer significant at $p<.05$; further the R^2 for plan remains unchanged. It can, therefore, be concluded that intention fully mediates the effects of its antecedents (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and desire) on plan. Therefore, model 1 in Table 4 is the final and most parsimonious model for this study. Thus, hypothesis 4 is fully supported. The final model for this behavioral context can be represented in Figure 1 and a summary of results is outlined in Table 5.

DISCUSSION

Previous research has criticized the TPB for the lack of attention given to understanding the motivational aspects of intention. While contributions have been made in highlighting the volitional aspects of intention (Perugini and Conner 2000), this

TABLE 1
Scale Means, Standard Deviations, and Reliability of Constructs in the Measurement Model (n=794)

Construct	Mean (SD)	Alpha (correlation)	Construct reliability	A.V.E
Desire I want to avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel. I have a strong desire to avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel.	11.29 (1.56)	.81 (.72***)	.89	.80
BI How likely are you to avoid purchasing an item of sweatshop apparel the next time you shop for apparel. I will avoid purchasing an item of sweatshop apparel the next time I shop for apparel.	8.42 (2.96)	.86 (.76***)	.72	.56
Plan I have made plans to avoid sweatshop apparel. I have taken steps to enable me to avoid sweatshop apparel.	7.56 (3.69)	.93 (.87***)	.78	.64
ATT Good–Bad Positive–Negative Beneficial–Harmful Favorable–Unfavorable	10.56 (2.87)	.92	.94	.81
SN People who are important to me would think I should/ should not avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel. People who are important to me would approve/ disapprove of my avoiding purchasing sweatshop apparel.	2.11 (2.39)	.61 (.44***)	.44	.28
PBC If I wanted to I could easily avoid purchasing sweatshop apparel from now on. There are likely to be little to no barriers for me in avoiding purchasing sweatshop apparel. Avoiding purchasing sweatshop apparel is easy/difficult.	-2.50 (5.28)	.92	.77	.52

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

TABLE 2
Path Loadings for TPB Model

Path	β	C.R.	P
ATT → BI	.36	5.15	***
SN → BI	.24	3.52	***
PBC → BI	.35	12.08	***

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

research has failed to explore these volitional constructs as distinct motivational stages. The theoretical contribution of the current research is novel in empirically testing the links between the constructs desire, intention and plan, with results revealing significant findings enriching the TPB framework.

Desire was found to be distinct from intention and pertinent in fully mediating the effect of attitude and partially mediating the

effect of subjective norm on intention. This suggests that attitude does not directly impact intention but rather required the motivational stage of desire; reflective of a personal motivation to act. In the context of avoiding sweatshop apparel this personal motivation is important and can be energized by emotive feelings surrounding the issue, resulting in a strong desire to act. Thus, a desire to avoid sweatshop apparel informed by an attitude that sweatshop apparel

TABLE 3
Results of Analysis of Mediating Effects for Desire

Fit	χ^2	d.f.	χ^2_{diff}	d.f. _{diff}	CFI	GFI	TLI	RMSEA	AIC
Model 1	354.16	58			.95	.94	.94	.08	420.163
Model 2	129.63	38			.98	.97	.98	.06	185.634
Model 3	162.66	55	191.50 ***	3	.98	.97	.98	.05	234.663

	model 1 fully mediated	model 2 PV affects DV	model 3 no mediation
ATT → Desire	.50 (.40)***		.51 (.40)***
SN → Desire	.16 (.16)***		.14 (.15)**
PBC → Desire	.05 (.11)**		.03 (.07) p<.10
ATT → BI		.36 *** (.18)	.00 (.00)
SN → BI		.24 *** (.17)	.16 (.11)*
PBC → BI		.35 *** (.47)	.33 (.43)***
Desire → BI	.85 (.53)***		.71 (.45)***
R ²			
Desire	.22		.21
BI	.28	.33	.48

*** p<.001; ** p<.01, * p<.05

Notes: Paths not in parentheses are unstandardized and paths in parentheses are standardized.
PV=predictor variable; DV=dependent variable.

is negatively valued is necessary before forming into an intention. Perugini and Bagozzi (2004) through the concept of temporal framing suggest that desire resides at a mental level where practical consideration of behavioral enactment has not yet been considered. Therefore, the positive attitudinal aspects of avoiding sweatshop apparel must be desired before they move to an intention to act. This highlights a time oriented distinction between desire and intention. Similarly, the role of important others can serve to impact personal motivation to act in terms of desire by positively supporting personal motivation or through negatively influencing desire to avoid sweatshop apparel. In terms of perceived behavioral control, which is not mediated through desire, we argue that consideration of perceived difficulties occur closer to the temporal framing of the behavior at the point of intention. The explanatory ability of this enriched framework increases greatly from $R^2 = .33$ to $R^2 = .48$ with the addition of the mediating construct of desire.

The existence of a gap between attitude and behavior has been the subject of academic debate both within the TPB literature and elsewhere (Armitage and Conner 2001; Newholm 2005). The current research findings highlight the significance of plan as a volitional stage toward behavior, with results revealing the impact of attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and desire on plan as fully mediated through intention. Previous research has highlighted the requirement for some level of effort to be expended to achieve a behavior (Bagozzi 1993; Heider 1958). In the context of the current research where there are difficulties in avoiding the purchase of sweatshop apparel the need to take steps towards enacting the behavior beyond the formation of an intention is reasonable. For example, outlets and brands may need to be

researched and their accessibility assessed. This further enrichment of the TPB framework through the addition of plan resulted in $R^2 = .49$ for intention, a large improvement on the traditional TPB model, and $R^2 = .53$ for plan.

The significant contribution of this enriched framework is particularly apparent in contexts where there may be barriers to behavior, such as found in addictive behaviors (e.g., smoking) and in behaviors where conflict may exist, either with self or significant others (e.g., lifestyle changes, sustainable behaviors). We would recommend that future research test the applicability of the derived model in different behavioral contexts. Further, the findings of the current research highlight a significant deepening of the TPB framework. Further research is required to fully assess the impact of desire and plan as explanatory motivational and volitional constructs to behavior. It is suggested that such research should include actual behavior so the links between these constructs and actual behavior can be fully assessed.

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TABLE 4
Results of Analysis of Mediation effects for Desire and Intention

	model 1 fully mediated	model 2 PV affects DV	model 3 no mediation						
ATT → Desire	.51 (.40)***	.51 (.40)***	.51 (.40)***						
SN → Desire	.14 (.15)**	.14 (.15)**	.14 (.15)**						
PBC → Desire	.03 (.07) <i>p</i> <.10	.03 (.06)	.03 (.07) <i>p</i> <.10						
ATT → BI									
SN → BI	.16 (.11)*		.16 (.11)*						
PBC → BI	.32 (.44)***		.33 (.44)***						
Desire → BI	.71 (.46)***		.71 (.45)***						
ATT → Plan		.09 (.04)	.09 (.04)						
SN → Plan		.17 (.08) <i>p</i> <.10	.02 (.01)						
PBC → Plan		.30 (.30)***	.02 (.02)						
Desire → Plan		.76 (.37)***	.15 (.07) <i>p</i> <.10						
BI → Plan	.96 (.73)***		.87 (.67)***						
R ²									
Desire	.21	.22	.21						
BI	.50		.49						
Plan	.53	.30	.53						
Fit	χ^2	d.f.	χ^2_{diff}	d.f. _{diff}	CFI	GFI	TLI	RMSEA	AIC
Model 1	211.11	80			.98	.97	.98	.05	291.112
Model 2	168.20	55			.98	.97	.98	.05	240.203
Model 3	204.33	76	6.78 <i>p</i> >.20	4	.98	.97	.98	.05	292.328

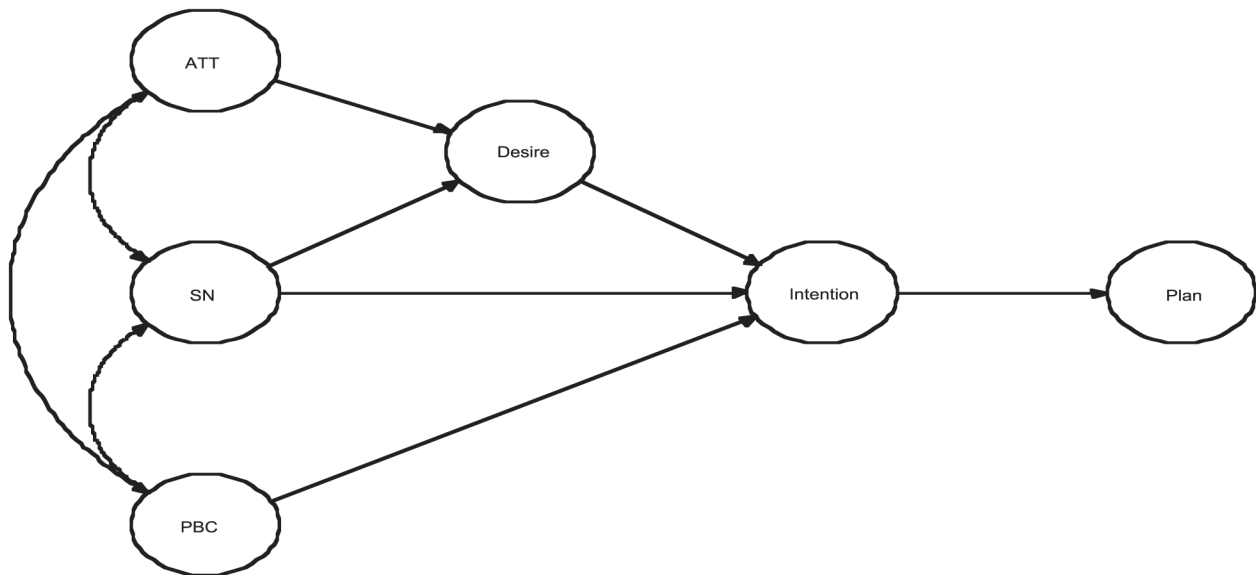
*** *p*<.001; ** *p*<.01, * *p*<.05

Note: BI=intention; ATT=attitude; SN=subjective norm; PBC=perceived behavioral control

TABLE 5
Summary of Hypotheses and Conclusions

Hypothesis	Decision	Conclusion
1a	Fully supported	Reliability and discriminant validity of volitional components desire, intention and plan fully supported.
1b	Fully supported	Reliability and discriminant validity of TPB antecedents and volitional components desire, intention and plan fully supported.
2a, b, c	Fully supported	TPB antecedents all significantly impact intention in the expected direction. Thus, the TPB is potentially valid in this behavioral context.
3a, b, c	Fully Supported	TPB antecedents all significantly impact desire in the expected direction.
3d	Fully supported	Desire significantly impacts intention in the expected direction.
3e	Only Partially supported	Desire fully mediates the effects of attitude on intention, partially mediates the effects of subjective norm on intention, with no evidence of mediating effect on the relationship between perceived behavioral control and intention.
4	Fully supported	Intention fully mediates the effects of attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and desire on plan.

FIGURE 1
Final Empirically Validated Model



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HOOLIGAN'S HOLIDAY: Rethinking Deviant Consumer Behavior and Marketing

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INTRODUCTION

Consumers navigate a variety of behaviors every day that range from what might be considered normal (i.e., purchasing a new dress from a retail outlet), to questionable or possibly inappropriate (i.e., purchasing a new dress, wearing it once with its tags still attached, and then returning it to the retail outlet), to downright illegal (i.e., stuffing the dress into a bag and walking out of the retail outlet without paying for it). The examples used here are acquisition-based, and much of the literature on deviant consumer behavior deals with deviant forms of acquisition, but deviant behaviors are as multifaceted and complex as otherwise “normal” consumer behaviors which range from acquisition to consumption to disposal. Some of these behaviors are perfectly legal but frowned upon by the society at large such as adorning one’s body with a tattoo or smoking a cigarette. Some are illegal but considered somewhat acceptable by the social body at large as anyone who has ever said “if you’re within ten miles of the speed limit, the cops won’t stop you” can bear witness to. Given that most definitions of deviant consumer behavior consider it to involve those behaviors that violate certain accepted norms and given that those accepted norms may be rather fluid depending upon a variety of elements and circumstances, what then is deviant consumer behavior?

The purpose of this paper is to attempt to answer this question through an exploration of a typology of consumer behavior that accounts for a variety of behavior types—normal, deviant, or otherwise—that consumers engage in on a daily basis. By developing such a typology, I hope to provide marketers with a tool by which to study and understand many of these behaviors that are considered deviant as well as other behaviors not considered to be deviant. The more we understand these behaviors, the better prepared we are to de-market certain behaviors that we find untenable and unacceptable. Furthermore, the more we understand why and how consumers behave in certain deviant situations the more we may be able to explain how consumers behave in less than deviant environments. But first, I turn my attention to the question at hand.

WHAT IS DEVIANT CONSUMER BEHAVIOR?

Before tackling the question offered in the above heading, it is first prudent to develop an understanding of what constitutes a general definition of deviant behavior. Erickson (1962) describes deviant behavior as “an alien element in society” and a “vagrant form of human activity, moving outside the more orderly currents of social life” (307), and Sarason (1972) refers to it as personal maladaptations. Heckert and Heckert (2002) report that “others have restricted [the notion of] deviance to violations of social norms that are important enough to elicit a strong reaction” (451). Merton (1949) regards deviance as “a symptom of dissociation between culturally prescribed aspirations and socially structured avenues for realizing those aspirations” (128). The common theme between these and the many other conceptualizations of deviance that dot the landscape of the sociology and psychology literature is that deviant behavior is that which is considered to be different from “normal” behavior by the society at large.

Deviance and Consumer Behavior

In keeping with this thematic approach to deviance, Mills and Bonoma (1979) define deviant consumer behavior as “behavior in a retail store that society considers inappropriate or in conflict with

a previously accepted societal norm” (347). Labeling such behaviors as aberrant consumer behavior, Fullerton and Punj (1993) assert that these behaviors are generally held in disrepute by both marketers and consumers. Fullerton and Punj (1997) further explore the phenomenon—labeling it as consumer misbehavior—suggesting that it disrupts the expected order of consumption situations.

Deviant consumer behavior manifests itself in one or more of three major categories which include the destruction of property, the victimization of other consumers and/or marketers, and material loss (Fullerton and Punj 1993); although, some deviant behaviors may also fall into a category of non-material loss or change such as a consumer-driven alteration of brand identity or the purchase and subsequent return of an article of clothing after wearing it once. Activities that fall within the former categories include illegal market transactions, misuse of product, compulsive buying habits, credit misuse, shoplifting, and a host of others (Budden and Griffen 1996). Though such activities appear to have received little attention from consumer researchers (Babin and Griffen 1995), a number of studies in recent years have explored several facets of deviant consumer behavior, most of it dealing with shoplifting.

But even with all this work, these and other researchers do not fully answer the question at hand: what is deviant consumer behavior? A behavior such as shoplifting is considered deviant because it violates societal norms of product acquisition (Cox, Cox, and Moschis 1990; Kraut 1976; Tonglet 2001); but is it truly deviant in the sense that it is an abnormal means of acquisition? In 1993, retail outlets lost nearly \$30 billion in revenues as a result of shoplifting (Fullerton and Punj 1993), enough to be classified “as one of the developed world’s leading industries” (Babin and Griffen 1995, 668). Furthermore, the sheer number of people engaging in such behavior exceeds what we might reasonably think. Klemke (1982) suggests that as much as 60 percent of the population has engaged in shoplifting at one time or another, and Baumer and Rosenbaum (1984) indicate that more than 200 million individual shoplifting incidents occur on an annual basis, a number that is certain to have increased in the two-plus decades since their particular study. Numbers aside, the truly extraordinary aspect of shoplifting is that it is typically enacted by amateurs who steal for consumption rather than for profit and that these amateurs are mostly ordinary people with no criminal record (Cox, et al. 1990) who are motivated to steal for much the same reasons that people perform normal shopping activities... “the acquisition of goods at minimum cost” (Kraut 1976, 365). I ask again, with so many people engaging in it, is shoplifting a truly deviant consumer behavior as we have traditionally defined deviant consumer behavior or is it simply an alternative means of acquisition?

What we are exploring with shoplifting and other illicit examples of consumer acquisition is actually criminal behavior, and current definitions of deviance in consumer behavior do not account for this distinction, making it too vague and too confining at the same time. Deviance does not simply describe criminal behaviors. Granted, criminal behaviors do violate the accepted norms of the social entity, but as suggested earlier, there are consumer behaviors that violate the societal norms or expectations without breaking any laws such as the individual who wears outrageously mismatched and out-of-fashion clothing to anything other than a costume party or even the individual that steps outside to smoke a

cigarette during his or her lunch break. These are the behaviors that Erickson (1962) refers to when he defines deviancy as the alien element in a society.

Some marketing examples of non-criminal consumer behavior that may not be considered “normal” by the general populace include participation in the mountain man retreat (Belk and Costa 1998), the formation and development of certain brand communities (Muniz and O’Guinn 2001; Muniz and Schau 2005) and consumption subcultures (Schouten and McAlexander 1995), the hedonic consumption of skydiving (Celsi, Rose, and Leigh 1993), and even public nudity (Shrum and Kilburn 1996) or strip-club attendance (Frank 2002). The possible range of consumer behaviors of interest to marketers is limitless. Hence, the range of potential deviant consumer behaviors is also limitless; yet, with the vague and confining definitions that have come before, we are, perhaps, limiting our own ability to understand consumer behavior and the notion of deviance.

Shifting the Paradigm

The current paradigm in the study of consumer behavior contains four basic questions that may limit our ability to understand and counteract such behaviors. First of all, the notion of what is or is not a deviant behavior is vague and begs the following question: *what are the generally accepted norms of conduct in consumption situations, how are they defined, and who defines them?* In conjunction with this vague notion of deviance, the existing definitions of deviant consumer behavior also provide a rather limiting viewpoint on what constitutes deviance by focusing on criminal or destructive activities in consumption environments. With that in mind, the following question arises: *is it only criminal behavior that we find deviant in marketing or are there other non-criminal behaviors that fall within that deviant range?* There is also an apparently moralistic assumption that deviant behaviors are wrong, bad, or otherwise undesirable; and therefore, many social scientists seek to explore such behaviors through ethical decision-making processes as they relate to the individual consumer’s notion of what is right and what is wrong. *But what if the consideration of what is right and wrong do not even enter the consumer’s thought processes during the perpetration of acts that are considered deviant by the dominant culture, or what if morality is not part of the equation at all?* Finally, Durkheim (1893, 1897) has pointed out that crime and deviance are not only normal aspects of human behavior but also reasonably healthy and, in fact, necessary for the continued innovation found in social entities. He claims that crime itself serves as a protective function of society by which the collective conscious is recognized, reaffirmed, and celebrated and that deviance promotes innovation and progress. With that in mind, *do we automatically wish to eradicate behavior considered to be deviant or do we seek to study, learn, and innovate from it?*

It seems, then, that with these questions surrounding the current paradigm, it may be time to shift the paradigm to something that accounts for all consumer behaviors and not just deviant consumer behaviors. In other words, I suggest that we discard the question contained within the opening heading of this section. Instead of asking *what is deviant consumer behavior?*, we should be asking *what are the types of consumer behaviors that exist in the marketplace?* To that end, I propose that marketing discard the notion of aberrant, undesirable, unethical, or otherwise deviant behavior and all that the notion entails and, instead, seek a definition of such behaviors that explores whether or not the behaviors are in agreement or disagreement with the institutionalized and cultural norms of a particular society. In the next section, I propose a new typology of consumer behavior that is predicated upon these two dimensions.

A TYPOLOGY OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Within any given social entity—be it on a national scale, a neighborhood scale, or a familial scale—there are a set of cultural norms and expectations to which the entity’s members are expected to adhere. Furthermore, there are also sets of institutionalized norms (i.e., laws, covenants, rules, etc.) that work to maintain civilization or, at least, some semblance of civilization within the social body. The framework that follows has as its two dimensions the cultural norms and the institutionalized norms of a given social entity.

Institutional and Cultural Norms

According to Durkheim (1897), “no living being can be happy or even exist unless his needs are sufficiently proportioned to his means” (246). In order to achieve this state of happiness, this equilibrium of means and needs, the living being must have regulations or restraints placed on the unlimited desires that may plague him or her, tempering the insatiability that may haunt them. An unlimited desire by definition is insatiable and an “inextinguishable thirst is constantly renewed torture” (247). It is Durkheim’s contention that this regulation of desire is provided by a society which alone has the authority—granted to it by the individual—and the “power necessary to stipulate law and to set the point beyond which the passions must not go” (249). When this regulation of the individual is disrupted for economic, cultural, or individual reasons, the individual or the culture may find itself in a state of anomie.

Merton (1949) also interprets this state of social instability as anomie but refers to it as a sense of normlessness. He begins under the premise that there are two elements of social and cultural structures that are paramount to the understanding of how deviant behavior develops within a society. First of all, there is the set of cultural goals, purposes, and interests “held out as legitimate objectives for all or for diversely located members of society” (126). In short, the culture defines the “what” that is to be achieved and is acceptable for the stability and continuation of that particular culture or social entity. Second, the methods for achieving those goals are also defined by the culture as “every social group invariably couples its cultural objectives with regulations, rooted in the mores or institutions, of allowable procedures for moving toward these objectives” (126). In other words, the institution—or authority to use Durkheim’s term—is responsible for formalizing certain rules and regulations that govern acceptable behavior by its constituents.

It is when these two elements of the social entity are at odds with one another that conditions of anomie exist. If we divest, for a moment, the first of these two elements, we are left then with the dimension of institutionalized norms which I have defined here as *the formal rules and regulations intended to protect the institution as well as the individual from certain behaviors and to protect the institutional and individual right to engage in certain behaviors.* These are behaviors that have been codified in some way, be it by the state or by the group, in a formalized and normative manner in order to define what is and what is not acceptable for the stability of the individual social unit. To that end, an isolated behavior either meets or violates the rules and regulations set up and enforced by the dominant institution be it at the level of national, state, or local government or at the level of the individual marketing institution such as a retail store or other servicescape.

For instance, the institutionalized norms within many national economies define monetary exchange, trade, barter, and gift-giving as acceptable means of acquiring goods and these norms are intended to protect the institution and the individual’s right to expect these forms of acquisition in exchange situations. Acquisi-

FIGURE 1
Typology of behavior based upon cultural and institutional norms

CULTURAL NORMS		
INSTITUTIONAL NORMS	Meets Cultural Expectations	Violates Cultural Expectations
Meets Institutional Norms	Abiding	Carnavalesque
Violates Institutional Norms	Anomic	Aberrant

tion behaviors that violate these norms include such behaviors as shoplifting, fraud, illegal downloading, bribery and others. These institutionalized norms also govern the “how” of consumption and disposal of consumed items as well as what is consumed. An individual’s behavior either acts in accordance with these institutionalized norms or they violate them.

With the institutional dimension, we divested ourselves of the cultural aspect of the typology. However, institutions do not exist in a vacuum and many of the regulations they carry are driven by cultural expectations of what is “normal” or “deviant” or “unacceptable” behavior. As Merton (1949) contends, the dominant culture drives the goals, purposes, and interests that are considered to be legitimate within the cultural domain. The dominant culture defines what is acceptable or “official” (Bakhtin 1936) in regards to the motivations or end results of behavior. To that end, the cultural norms are defined here as *the informal expectations a culture places upon the individual and the institution as to what are or are not viewed as officially acceptable motivating elements (goals, purposes, and other interests) for behavior.*

As an example, the cultural norms of decency require that the acquisition of explicit sexual activity through monetary means is unacceptable. We shouldn’t reduce sex and sexual activity to an economic commodity. Throughout the United States, behavior that involves the exchange of sexual favors for money violates institutionalized norms, but in some locations and in some situations, this exchange is not in violation of the institutionalized norm for that particular social entity (i.e., institutionalized prostitution in Pahrump, Nevada or the X-rated film industry in California). However, these behaviors may still carry with them a cultural snubbing as do such behaviors as purchasing an item and returning it after one use, having multiple visible tattoos and body piercings, dying one’s hair a vibrant green, or some other culturally frowned upon though not necessarily illegal behavior.

The Framework

What these two dimensions provide marketers is a framework in which to view behaviors from a non-moralistic viewpoint, one that sets aside ethical and/or legal concerns and simply attempts to place the behavior within its institutional and cultural context. In each case, the particular behavior either violates or abides by the established cultural or institutional norms under the auspices of a particular social entity. In the case of the institutional norms, the behavior either violates or does not violate in a fairly clear-cut manner. An individual steals or does not steal; speeds or does not speed; wears a shirt and shoes into the convenience store or does not; so on and so forth. But in the case of the cultural norms, the particular dimension may be more of a spectrum where we have some behaviors that are not quite unacceptable but aren’t exactly

acceptable either. Other behaviors, depending upon the situation or contextual elements surrounding them, may float along the spectrum. Regardless, as shown in Figure 1, the dimensions provide a set of four particular types of behaviors which can be assessed by marketers and other institutions.

First, the framework identifies an *Abiding Behavior* which includes all those behaviors that do not violate any institutional rules nor do they violate any cultural norms either. An example of abiding behavior, in American culture, is the purchase of a popular CD from a music store where the purchase fits with the institutional rules of acquisition and the CD is a culturally acceptable product to acquire. When a behavior violates the institutional norms but does not violate cultural norms, I identify this as an *Anomic Behavior*. An example of an anomic behavior is the theft of the popular CD from the music store. Again, the CD is a culturally acceptable product for acquisition and consumption; however, the institutional rules governing that acquisition have been broken.

Carnavalesque Behavior occurs when the institutional rules have not been violated, but the cultural norms of what is acceptable have been circumnavigated in some manner. An example of a carnivalesque behavior is the purchase of a CD preaching racial intolerance and bigotry from a website. The purchase, again, does not violate the institutionalized norms of acquisition; however, that which has been purchased may not fall within the realm of the culturally acceptable. Finally, we have *Aberrant Behavior*, those behaviors that violate both institutional and cultural norms. For instance, aberrant behavior may include the illicit download of a graphically hard-core pornographic CD from the internet where both the acquisition and the product violate institutional and cultural norms. These behavior types will be explored in further detail in following discussion.

DISCUSSION OF BEHAVIOR TYPES

In this section, I discuss in a bit more detail the various categories developed within the framework. Since much of what has been discussed in terms of consumer behavior in the marketing literature is, within this framework, abiding behavior, the discussion here will be limited to the remaining three categories. To begin with, I will start with anomic behavior.

Anomic Behavior

Anomic behavior includes many of the behaviors marketers have considered aberrant, deviant, or otherwise unacceptable. Shoplifting is an anomic behavior because it clearly defies institutional norms; however, it does not necessarily violate cultural norms of what to acquire and consume. For instance, an adolescent boy finds a new CD by his girlfriend’s favorite artist and, wanting to impress her with a bit of a gift, slips the CD into his coat pocket and leaves

FIGURE 2

Research questions based upon consideration of norms and the participation in the behavior

CONSIDERATION OF NORMS		
ANOMIC BEHAVIOR	Agrees with Norms	Disagrees with Norms
Engages in Behavior	What drives the individual to perform the anomic behavior when he or she supports the institutional or cultural norms?	What can marketers do to either change the behavior of the individual or their consideration of the norm in question?
Does Not Engage in Behavior	What can marketers learn from individuals such as these in order to prevent the behaviors in individuals who do not share this philosophy?	What keeps the individual from engaging in the anomic behavior when he or she does not support the institutional or cultural norms?

the record store without paying for it. He is definitely stealing, but he is still acquiring a culturally acceptable product to enjoy in a culturally acceptable manner. The means have been violated, but the ends have not necessarily seen any violation.

As marketers, parents, and members of “civilized” culture, we can look at such an example and cry ethical-decision making processes from the mountaintops, pulling the Multidimensional Ethics Scale (MES) developed by Reidenbach and Robin (1991) out of our collective back pockets in order to better understand how the adolescent in question set aside culturally defined morality and ethical considerations in order to walk out of the record store with the CD hidden in his pocket. But it may be that the individual did not even consider the ethical ramifications in this case. He simply wanted to impress his girlfriend with a gift of her favorite musical artist and may not have had the money to purchase the CD. In retrospect, we can judge such behaviors on the moral equity, relativism, and contractualism dimensions put forth by Reidenbach and Robin (1991); and, the individual may judge the behavior along such dimensions after the fact as well. But while engaging in the act, it is possible that the teenage boy thought more about the *thanks* from a grateful girlfriend that he would receive after the gift had been given.

Within this and other quadrants of this particular typology, we can further implant individual perception into the institutional/cultural context of these behaviors. Instead of simply having a two dimensional construct, we can actually imbed an additional two-dimensional construct within each quadrant of the typology that may lead us to the truly interesting research questions available to us. For instance, as marketers, we may wish to investigate why individuals engage in many of the behaviors we consider anomic. An appropriate set of considerations may include whether or not the individual agrees with the norms established by the institution and whether or not the individual engages in the particular behavior. Figure 2 provides a cross section of possible questions that come out of such a typology from the perspective of the consumer.

Given the questions found in Figure 2, ethical decision making processes on the part of the consumer may indeed be at play, but we may also find other processes within the consideration of such questions which override or push aside the notion of consumer ethics. Perhaps it is simply fear of punishment that keeps the individual who disagrees with the norms from engaging in the behavior, and perhaps the individual who agrees with the norms but engages in the anomic behavior anyway is guided by motivations of defiance or, possibly, ritualistic behavior in association with some group.

The inclusion of the framework of the individual entity within the context of a particular behavior is possible in each of the identified categories in the overall framework, providing us, ultimately, with a four by four framework. However, for parsimony’s sake, we may wish to simply work with one internally constructed framework within each behavioral category. In addition, we may want to develop a host of individual-centric frameworks that can then be utilized in our examination of anomic or other behaviors. This individual-centric framework need not be relegated to the individual consumer either. It may be centered upon a particular product, service, marketer, community, subculture, and so forth.

Carnavalesque Behavior

I named this category carnival because it involves behavior that does not violate institutionally sanctioned rules and regulations but does involve behavior that steps outside of “official” culture. Bakhtin (1936) first proposed his theory of the carnival in his examination of popular humor and folk culture in the novels of Francois Rabelais, a theory that accounted for the differences between the life endorsed by social order and a life full of the repressed pleasures of those individuals subordinate to the social order. The carnival is characterized by laughter, excessiveness, bad taste, offensiveness, degradation, and a host of other traits that sit just outside of the orderly life of polite culture. It is an arena that offers “a completely different, nonofficial, extraecclesiastical and extrapolitical aspect of the world, of man, and of human relations” where the folk build “a second world and a life outside officialdom” (6).

As such, we can use the Bakhtinian notion of carnival to explore a variety of behaviors that fall outside the bounds of official or culturally acceptable notions of behavior. For instance, Bakhtin (1936) identifies three distinct forms of folk culture that are involved in the carnival. First of all, there are the ritual spectacles—carnival pageants, comic shows of the marketplace, and other such activities—that may be considered “temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order” where individuals can suspend “all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions” (10). The brand communities established with the Burning Man festival (Kozinets 2002) or the Harley Davidson gatherings (Schouten and McAlexander 1995) may be examples of carnival culture, as are, possibly, attendance at strip clubs, vacations in Las Vegas, or going to a Mötley Crüe concert.

Carnival, according to Bakhtin (1936), also involves comic verbal compositions or those parodies of the established social order that found their way into the folk tales. A great deal of today’s

popular culture may involve the comic verbal composition involved in this parody, and may in fact be a driving motivation for individuals' desire to view or otherwise participate in such activities. A look at modern television gives us a veritable cascade of parodic and comic spectacles that seem to defy explanation such as many programs found on MTV, reality programming, and a host of others. Finally, we also find the various curses, oaths, and popular blazons of the carnivalesque, what Bakhtin (1936) identifies as the third form of folk culture inherent within the carnival, those various genres of billingsgate that exist as part of informal or popular culture. Marketers tap into the carnival desires inherent within individuals a great deal in the advertising that is developed to sell a variety of products. Just about any beer commercial provides an excellent glimpse into the carnivalesque and the festive spectacle, as do certain shampoo commercials that unpack carnivalesque orgasms for women and an "edge in the dating game" (AXE) for men. A good bit of advertising also utilizes and disseminates popular forms of language in terms of slang phrases and other blazons or slogans such as "What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas."

Marketing has repeatedly tapped into the carnivalesque desires of consumers in order to sell products and services, but consumers often engage in carnivalesque behaviors on their own, driving forward their own "unofficial" agendas in an attempt to live outside of the official world, even for a short time. As we did with the Anomic Behavior quadrant, we can create a second two-by-two matrix where the individual either agrees or disagrees with the cultural norms and either engages or does not engage in the behavior. From this, we can pull a variety of research questions such as what prompts individuals who typically agree with the cultural norms to occasionally step outside of them to engage in a particular behavior? Is it social pressure, age, lifestyle, or something completely different that motivates such behaviors? Another question of interest may involve how an individual who does not engage in the behavior yet disagrees with the social norms actually keeps from engaging in the behavior. Additionally, how does the social animal deal with and tolerate individuals who disagree with the cultural norms and engage in the carnivalesque behavior? These and many other questions can provide fodder for future research on a variety of different topics in a host of different contexts.

Aberrant Behavior

Behaviors that violate both cultural and institutional norms are defined here as aberrant and include a whole host of behaviors that affect marketers and consumers alike, and marketing has done little to actually examine aberrant consumer behavior under the definition proposed here. An example of an aberrant consumer behavior is the purchase and consumption of illicit drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine, and ecstasy. We might better understand the difficulties in de-marketing such activities if we better understand the motivating factors for participating in drug use. In some cases, it may simply be a ritualistic activity associated with the particular subculture to which the individual belongs; or it may be indicative of something more stringent within the individual.

Another example is the solicitation of prostitution. In this case, as in the case of the drug use, we may want to, as marketers, explore exactly why it is that the behavior is aberrant. Why does the culture consider the activity to be illegal and culturally unacceptable? If we understand better the "why" from the cultural perspective, we may be able to better understand the "why" of the individual perspective or, at least, how we might start to ease the tension between the two.

In this case, we need to explore both anomic and carnivalesque theories to help us understand aberrant consumer behavior. In so doing, we may be able to gain insight into aberrant behaviors, but

also into non-aberrant behaviors. An individual who engages in marijuana usage may not be all that different from an individual who engages in alcohol usage. In fact, given that moderate alcohol use is a culturally acceptable (and even culturally expected) behavior and not necessarily institutionally inappropriate, questions arise in terms of why it is exactly that marijuana is institutionally sanctioned given its similarity to alcohol. Marketing may be able to help explain this difference or, possibly, help to change or confirm public policy on the matter.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this paper was to provide a framework for the categorization and study of the variety of consumer behaviors considered deviant or otherwise undesirable, removing the ethical and moral considerations from that categorization. The paper accomplishes this goal by looking at behavior under two dimensions. On the one hand, behavior either conforms to the institutionalized norms established by a society to maintain notions of civilization and order. On the other hand, behavior exists somewhere along the spectrum of cultural acceptability, meaning that it either conforms to what is considered culturally acceptable or it exists in an unofficial world of some measure of violation of that acceptability. Together, the two dimensions provide us with the categories of abiding, anomic, carnivalesque, and aberrant behaviors.

A secondary purpose of this paper was to open up marketer's eyes to the untapped plethora of research possibilities inherent within consumer behavior. What possesses individuals to choose shoplifting over actual purchase? What are all the legitimate payment methods acceptable within a given culture? What drives an individual to engage in behaviors that are not necessarily culturally acceptable but do not violate institutional norms? How can we as marketers understand, foresee, and adapt to the changing cultural and institutional norms that envelope behavior on so many different levels? As marketers, we can't close ourselves off to the variety of possibilities for research into and understanding of consumer behaviors because of a moral or ethical stance against certain behaviors. As social scientists, as hard as it may be to accomplish, we have to set aside our moral perceptions of activities and behaviors that consumers engage in so that we may have a richer understanding of our consumers and of marketing within the context of consumer culture.

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Consumer Vigilantism

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Consumer communal activities in the marketplace have received considerable research attention (e.g., Kates 2002; Kozinets and Handelman 2004; Muniz and Schau 2003). As a generalization, this research focused on issues of consumer resistance and emancipatory potentialities of such activities. What remains unexplored is the possibility that some consumer communal activities are concerned with maintaining and defending the prevalent symbolic order, rather than challenging and subverting it. The paper engages the concept of vigilantism to explore this possibility. Toward this end, it examines some activities, carried out by the Louis Vuitton brand community. The paper suggests that these activities are aimed at preventing the crime of counterfeiting but also at policing and reinforcing certain social symbolic boundaries.

The socio-historical studies on vigilantism define this social phenomenon as voluntary activities by private individuals, undertaken without explicit sanction of authorities and motivated by desire to defend an existing social order 'from some form of attack or subversion' (Sederberg 1978). Vigilantism is said to occur when there is a (perceived) lack or weakness in the ability of the officialdom to respond to an activity, which vigilantes see as a serious problem (Johnston 1996). More generally, social situations in which there exists some threat to important values appear particularly conducive to the emergence of vigilante activity (Brown 1975).

The notion of consumer vigilantism emerged during a netnographic study into activities of brand communities. The case presented here is a part of the study conducted in the internet-based community devoted to the Louis Vuitton brand in the period from November 2003-May 2005. This research follows the guidelines of Kozinets' (2002) netnography, but is less participatory. A number of data sources were accessed and generated during the study period, including magazine articles, government reports, press releases, court reports and field notes. Given that social activities are dialectically inseparable doings and sayings (Schatzki 2002), the data collection and analysis focused on practical as well as discursive aspects of communal activities. The data was analyzed iteratively, allowing persistent themes to emerge, then moving back and forth between these themes and the literature to develop an understanding of the themes and to propose a possible interpretation of the observed phenomenon.

To explain the core issue of the vigilantism in the community, it is essential to consider, first, what the Louis Vuitton brand is, and, second, the relation between the notions of *counterfeit* and *fake*. The Louis Vuitton brand (LV hereafter) is an iconic brand (Holt 2004). It is a symbol of status, affluence and glamour (Twitchell 2002), in Holt's (2004) terminology, LV embodies a cultural myth, an aspirational story of life of luxury and leisure, associated with the brand's famous patrons, many among them past and present royals and celebrities. As with any iconic brand, LV is a matter of high emotional and financial investment for many LV community participants. Being the symbol that it is, LV is among the most counterfeited brands (*Business Week* 2005). Even so, *fakes* rather than *counterfeits* are the issue for the community. To present the issue of fakes as it appears in the community, the paper draws on Baudrillard's (1993) orders of simulacra to outline three orders of fakes: counterfeit (direct copy of original), production (imitation of a look) and simulation ('a real without reality'—the Louis Vuitton brand as a representative symbol of luxury). These orders are

explicated to suggest that the first two orders contribute to an enactment and maintenance of the original, and all orders are problematic to some extent for the community.

The LV community takes the issue of fakes seriously, because they feel fakes "ruin" their LV experience and make them vulnerable to criticism about paying high prices for purses. Against these feelings, the community believe that "LV corporate" does not do enough to fight fakes, and worse, inadvertently promote faking, in particular by advertising LV as 'must-have' fashion item, targeting youth and increasing prices. Still, when it comes to the activities directed at others, the community adopts the discourse of the social threat of terrorism, one of the normative anti-counterfeiting arguments. This discourse mobilizes the community, and it makes protecting the brand, their own status, and community at large a moral imperative.

Four sets of vigilante-type of activities emerged from the data: educating, patrolling, responding and self-policing. *Educating* mainly involves distributing information about "what is real what is not," as well as edifying the public about counterfeits. The latter is directed at relatives, friends and colleagues, and occasionally strangers. *Patrolling* refers to observation of vendors and other consumers, both celebrities and average people. It also involves monitoring and reporting incidents of "fake attacks" in certain places and in media. *Responding* is taking actions against vendors of fakes. This includes reporting to authorities, approaching potential buyers with warning, and publicly exposing vendors. *Self-policing* is monitoring own community, which includes self-censorship in order to prevent any unwitting assistance to counterfeiters or promotion of fakes. Significantly, self-policing also involves unmasking fakes among "the LV lovers and supporters" themselves to assure that all participants are fitting or proper LV owners.

In summary, vigilantism as revealed in the context of the LV community, includes acting as if with a law enforcement agency and encompasses the notion of surveillance. Vigilante activity appear to arise from the perception that the participants and the brand are threatened by fakes, while authorities fail to deal with the threat.

Conceived as polemic, the paper concludes by pointing out three issues that arise from framing some activities of the LV brand community as consumer vigilantism. The first has to do with the perception of inadequate institutional protection of products' aesthetic features against the background of increasing value of aesthetics in the marketplace (Postrel 2003). The second concerns the issue of anxiety about social status and cultural boundaries, associated with *fakes*. The case evidences that one response to a (perceived) threat of symbolic instability is to defend boundaries through acts of vigilantism (cf. Holt 1998). The third is the question about the nature of consumer collective power. Specifically, whereas previous research has conceived it largely as positive, affording emancipatory potentialities, here it is at least ambivalent.

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46 / *Consumer Vigilantism*

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A Room with a Viewpoint: Using Normative Appeals to Motivate Energy Conservation in a Hotel Setting

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Recently, many consumer researchers have noted that very little research has been conducted on the factors that influence consumers' prosocial behaviors, and even less on pro-environmental behaviors. This paper seeks to fill this gap in the literature while also making theoretical contributions to consumer behavior by examining the extent to which a variety of different types of consumer identities might differentially motivate adherence to the implicit social roles or explicit descriptive norms associated with such identities. In these studies, we manipulated the message hotel guests see in signs in their rooms asking them to participate in the hotel's environmental conservation program by reusing their towels.

We conducted study 1 with two major purposes in mind. The first was to test the effectiveness of one of the more commonly used towel reuse messages—a cause-related marketing message that promised a donation to an environmental protection organization on the condition that guests chose to participate in the program—versus a similar message that better utilized the norm of reciprocity by informing the guests that the hotel had already donated to such an organization on their behalf. We suggested that rather than making a beneficial action contingent on the guests' behavior, a more psychologically effective strategy utilizing the norm of reciprocity would be to have the hotel provide the beneficial action first on behalf of its guests and then ask the guests to return the favor by participating in the towel reuse program. This hypothesis was supported by the finding that the reciprocation message yielded higher towel reuse rates than the cooperation-based cause-related marketing message. In addition to demonstrating the sequence of actions that most effectively utilizes the norm of reciprocity, these findings add to the research literature on when incentives fail to motivate the intended target behavior.

The second purpose of study 1 was to attempt to disentangle a potential confound in previous research investigating social identity and norm adherence. Specifically, when researchers have found that individuals adhere to the norms of important reference groups that are relevant to their self-concept, there are two potential mechanisms for this effect. On the one hand, learning the descriptive norms of an important social group could activate the social identity associated with that group and cause individuals to follow the explicit descriptive norm of that group. Yet, it is also possible that simply activating a given important social identity inclines individuals to behave in line with the social roles that are commonly and implicitly associated with such a social category. We hypothesized and found that the messages that activated either of the two important social identities but that contained no explicit descriptive normative information would motivate towel reuse to a lesser extent that would a message conveying an explicit descriptive norm of an unimportant (but situationally relevant) social identity. The results of study 1 suggested that in order to optimize social identity effects, it is necessary to ensure that an important social identity is not only salient but that the norms associated with the identity are known and also salient. In addition, study 1 revealed that descriptive normative information, even if not associated with an impor-

tant social identity but rather is associated with those who have been in the same situation as the target individual, is a powerful social influence on that individual's behavior.

The primary purpose of study 2 was to investigate the extent to which the descriptive norms of different types of reference groups might differentially encourage guests to participate in the towel recycling program. We argue that, although the meaningfulness of a given reference group identity is certainly an important factor in determining the degree to which a consumer will follow that group's norms, both the perceived uniqueness and the perceived diagnosticity of that reference group identity are other important factors. Consistent with predictions, but contrary to previous conceptualizations, we found that the appeal conveying the descriptive norm of that particular room's previous occupants yielded a higher compliance rate than the other three descriptive norm appeals, even though individuals considered this group to be comparatively much less meaningful to their personal identities than the other groups. Finally, all of the descriptive norm appeals as a group did better than the traditional environmental appeal, which makes salient guests' identities as environmentalists but does not communicate an explicit descriptive norm. Both theoretical and pragmatic implications are discussed.

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“Uh-oh, Where Is Our Brand Headed?” Exploring the Role of Risk in Brand Change

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INTRODUCTION

Imagine your reactions to the news that one of your favorite singers is recording a new album in a style that is very different from the kind of music you usually enjoy. Perhaps you would feel uncertain and concerned that the record would flop or that the artist would lose its appeal to you? Like artists, certain brands have the power to engage consumers, who rely on them for reassurance and their symbolic meanings. When such a brand seems to be changing, for example upon introducing a product that challenges established brand meanings, how do consumers respond? Uncertainty, concern, and expectations of loss might figure in this situation as well. These reactions are all related to perceptions of risk. This perspective on risk is somewhat different from the one traditionally embraced in consumer research, where risk is typically studied as an input to purchase decisions. The interpretive study presented in this paper offers observations on consumer responses to brand change that acknowledge the relevance of risk beyond the immediate setting of a purchase decision. Leveraging the risk concept in a new context, drawing on a broader literature, is shown to unlock new insights and implications for brand change and our understanding of consumers with high interest in a brand (“brand enthusiasts”). It aligns with current work to explore complications to emotional-branding strategies designed to forge strong consumer ties to a brand (Aaker, Fournier, and Brasel 2004; Thompson, Rindfleisch, and Arsel 2006). The purpose of the paper is thus twofold: (1) to show how perceptions of risk can imbue consumer responses to brand change, and (2) to outline some implications of recognizing such risk perceptions for the theory and practice of brand meaning management. The intent is not to argue that risk should obliterate or supersede other important constructs in this area. Rather, the essential point is that the concept of risk can provide an additional lens through which we can view consumer responses to brand change and discover things we might miss without it.

BACKGROUND

Brands certainly differ in their importance to people. However, some brands become very important to their followers. They can evoke commitment, attachment, and strong feelings from consumers individually (e.g., Fournier 1998) and within groups or communities (e.g., McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig 2002; Muñiz and O’Guinn 2001). Contemporary accounts of consumer culture have firmly established the role of commercial objects in creating and communicating a sense of self (Arnould and Thompson 2005; Belk 1988). Brands are tools for social identification and identity construction, partly because they provide consistency in a turbulent world (Elliott & Wattanasuwan 1998). What happens when cherished brands take actions that challenge this consistency?

The impetus for this paper comes from an ongoing study of consumer responses to brand extensions. Examining naturally occurring comments from brand enthusiasts, I noticed how many of them expressed uncertainty, danger, and feelings of impending loss (cf. Sjödin 2006). These reactions are characteristic for perceptions of risk, which has been defined as “subjective expectations of loss” (Peter and Ryan 1976; Stone and Grønhaug 1993). From previous research, we do know that brand owners and enthusiasts may react negatively when entrenched brand meanings become challenged (e.g., Brown, Kozinets, and Sherry 2003; Muñiz and O’Guinn 2001). However, risk has not been considered in such investiga-

tions. Moreover, research on brand extensions show that consumers often are skeptical towards new products if they lack a fit with the brand (Aaker and Keller 1990; Kirmani, Bridges, and Sood 2001) and that a risky purchase situation increases preference for the norm (Campbell and Goodstein 2001). However, this line of research has not explored risk beyond its role in purchase decisions (see also DelVecchio and Smith 2005). This is unfortunate, as the risk literature can offer original insights relevant to our understanding of brand enthusiasts, long-term brand loyalty, and brand management. These insights are applicable to predict and promote (or hold back) consumer acceptance of brand change. They should also supplement recent reports on the ramifications of emotional branding and close consumer-brand bonds (e.g., Aaker et al. 2004; Thompson et al. 2006).

RISK AND BRAND CHANGE

Consumer and marketing research holds a massive, ever-growing, literature on risk and its influence on decisions and choices by consumers. As noted in comprehensive reviews by Conchar et al. (2004) and Mitchell (1999) definitions of perceived risk are manifold and varied. Still, most consumer behavior applications seem to converge on a handful of key tenets. First, consumers perceive risk when they cannot be sure of a desired outcome. In other words, risk involves two components: uncertainty and unfavorable consequences. Second, existing research links risk very closely to decisions or choices, typically regarding a product purchase. Third, different types of loss contribute to overall perceived risk. Jacoby and Kaplan (1972) mention financial, performance, physical, psychological, and social loss. Roselius (1971) mentions time loss. Fourth, consumers normally strive to reduce risk. Research has identified brand loyalty as one important strategy to reduce perceived risk in a purchase (Roselius 1971). Fifth, risk is considered a cognitive construct, studied from an information-processing view.

Within marketing, the agreement on these tenets has been surprisingly stable over the decades (cf. Mitchell 1999). In contrast, the social sciences more broadly provide alternative viewpoints. Many accounts situate risk within the conditions of contemporary society, with “an intensifying sense of uncertainty, complexity, ambivalence and disorder, a growing distrust of social institutions and traditional authorities and an increasing awareness of the threats inherent in everyday life” (Lupton 1999, 12). In these views, risk has emerged as a key concept to understand and deal with many different aspects of existence in this turbulence. Moreover, socio-cultural views highlight the cultural aspects of risk: risk is a label assigned to phenomena by people, in a social context. This implies that risk has more uses than as an input to a decision. For instance, people can invoke the concept to define appropriate behavior or to assign blame (Douglas 1966; Lupton 1999). Correspondingly, consumer cultural theory emphasizes that consumers are social actors and that purchase decisions are but one class of relevant behaviors to consider in consumer research (Arnould and Thompson 2005). Altogether, these perspectives suggest that the concept of risk could be fruitfully employed to further the understanding of brand change. The present study investigates how risk imbues consumer responses to a brand extension perceived to challenge traditional brand meanings.

RESEARCH APPROACH

The starting point for my investigation was to consider consumer responses to a controversial brand initiative. Specifically, I studied opinions towards a brand extension, as expressed in an internet discussion forum (cf. Brown, Kozinets, and Sherry 2003; Kozinets (2002). These opinions were collected in a public newsgroup for discussions among internet users interested in Porsche. They all concern the introduction of the first sports utility vehicle (SUV) in the company's portfolio: Porsche Cayenne. For many people, this model constituted a significant departure from history and expectations. This case was chosen to allow enough consumer involvement for opinions towards the initiative to be articulated. Messages were consciously selected to give a novel understanding rather than to generalize across populations, akin to purposeful sampling (Kozinets 2002). I searched the newsgroup for comments on the Cayenne, made between June 1998, when the company first announced its plans, and December 2002, when the car reached the public. Messages expressing notions of risk were retrieved. In this assessment, I employed the aforementioned operationalization of risk as subjective expectations of loss (Peter and Ryan 1976; Stone and Grønhaug 1993), as this was broad enough to suit the purposes of the research. Drawing on standard qualitative procedures (Spiggle 1994), I explored emerging themes through multiple iterations and comparison with literature. Through repeated readings of the messages, I examined the expressions of risk in consumer opinions towards brand change.

FINDINGS

The following sections detail the various expressions of risk that appear in the consumer comments. All comments are presented with idiosyncratic spelling and punctuation retained.

Risk is present beyond single transactions

The comments on Porsche Cayenne show that risk should be a relevant concept even outside the setting of an imminent purchase. The informants discuss Porsche and the new car independently of any concrete purchase decision. Still, notions of risk (again, as subjective expectations of loss), figure in the posts:

Porsche recently had a marketing theme that said, "Porsche, not something to everyone, but everything to someone." That is why they are great. If they lose the ability to separate their cars from all the other cars on the market, they essentially lose "Porsche". I love Porsche and don't ever want to see that happen. Without Porsche, I may not be the autoenthusiast that I am. And I cannot imagine life like that. (posted by "Barry," alt.autos.porsche, July 2001)

This expressive quote talks about the risk of "Porsche" getting lost. It also connects concerns over the future of the brand with the risk of a less enjoyable life for the poster. Risk for the company is intertwined with risk for the enthusiast. This link exists because the brand is a part of the poster's life, regardless of whether he is about to purchase a new car or not. Rather, it is a relationship to the cars and brand of Porsche that is the basis for anxiety, beyond any single transaction with the company. Risk is relevant throughout the whole consumption process instead of merely at the purchase itself (Brunel and Pichon 2004); possibly even independent of any one purchase at all. Subsequent sections offer further details on this expanded view of risk.

Consumers worry about their brands: Brand risk

The data shows how consumers are concerned about risk pertaining to the company they depend on. Under the broad heading

of *Brand risk*, three types of risk can be discerned, each affecting the Porsche company. Firstly, some posters draw attention to potential economic problems that they associate with the brand extension, such as insufficient demand, poor profitability, or financial instability. Such comments might be said to express an *Initiative risk*:

I honestly don't see where they got the idea that the world needed another SUV and wanted it from Stuttgart. This project has just sucked away resources from the areas the company is already strong in, to an area where there's nothing but risk for the company. (posted by "D.J.," alt.autos.porsche, January 2002)

It's an abomination. I predict the biggest flop in automotive history. (posted by "DMD," alt.autos.porsche, April 2002)

Other messages cover perceived threats to the public reputation and image of the company brand. The data contain numerous comments on the risk that other people's perceptions of the brand will change. These express *Image risk*:

I just think in a few years time everyone, will be saying "Ahhhh the Cayenne, what a mistake, why did they build that? It's not a real Porsche, etc, etc". Porsche have a heritage and an important image to think of. Something like this could ruin it. (posted by "Jim O," alt.autos.porsche, December 2002)

Years down the track, when you think of buying a new sports car, the Porsche name might not be as "illustrious" as it once was due to cashing in on the SUV craze... (posted by "Dan," alt.autos.porsche, August 2001)

Finally, *Integrity risk* captures fears that the extension violates a company essence or identity. The concern over the company "selling out" or disgracing the name does not depend on what other people will think about this (as in *Image risk*), but is more about principles and values:

Even my 81-one year old grand father could drive one, is that a positive thing????? Porsche shouldn't sell their soul, but it is happening in every new model they come up with..... (posted by "Adam Larsen," alt.autos.porsche, January 2002)

This isn't a Porsche vs. VW question, it's a VW vs. dressed up VW question. It's also a disgrace to the Porsche family name and an insult to me as a Porsche owner. (posted by "D.P.," alt.autos.porsche, October 1998)

Consumers worry about their future with the brand: Relationship risk

In the previous section, consumers were shown to care about the risks facing a brand. The data examined also expresses risks that pertain more directly to the consumers themselves and their relationships with the brand. Mainstream literature on perceived risk recognizes the "performance risk" of a product not working properly or delivering functionally (e.g., Jacoby and Kaplan 1972). The present study suggests a need for a broader conceptualization such as *Relationship risk*, as new brand initiatives can make consumers wonder if the brand will be able to satisfy relevant needs in the future. These needs could be functional, as well as intangible, aesthetic, or hedonic:

Right now Porsche has pulled engineers from doing what they do best at Porsche (race and build those cars for their custom-

ers) to working on this truck so they can serve “the masses”. I don’t need another car built by a company to serve the masses. (posted by “Barry,” alt.autos.porsche, July 2001)

[It] seems that it is a more of a Volvo Turbo Wagon on steroids; with a spiritless morphing of some select Porsche ‘accents’ or ‘styling cues’ just to gussy it up for the consumerati. (posted by “noid,” alt.autos.porsche, March 2002)

The messages also express fears that the Image risk facing the brand will spill over and affect the consumer’s relationship with the brand, as their social needs will be less well served:

Man I hope they don’t produce those. I kinda like the idea of people knowing that when I say Porsche I own a sportscar! Porsche= Sportscar (posted by “JKL,” alt.autos.porsche, July 2001)

Consumers invest mental and material resources in relationships with brands, partly because they expect certain benefits. The comments illustrate how doubts about a brand’s ability to keep delivering these benefits introduce risk into the relationship. Such risk can also come from the threat of the brand taking on characteristics that are in conflict with the beliefs, values, or self-image of the consumer. Consumers who perceive the risk of subjective loss as too great may need to reframe their relationship to the brand. The following quote illustrates how substantial redefinitions can be triggered:

In my opinion, it’s disgusting that porsche would consider producing a truck. God, I hate those dam SUV’s enough already. How humiliating... .. If I’m ever in the market for a new performance car, Porsche will be automatically removed from consideration because of a stupid move like this. (posted by “Ultraforce,” alt.autos.porsche, February 2002)

These meaning-based risks bear some resemblance to the classic outline of social and psychological risks that Jacoby and Kaplan (1972) have put forward. The crucial distinction is that they consider only the purchase decision, explicitly discussing unfamiliar brands. In contrast, the notions that emerge in my study reflect the role of well-known brands in market relationships, identity work, and symbolic consumption (Arnould and Thompson 2005).

Using risk to make sense of brand disorder

What is the function of risk in consumer reasoning? The findings on Brand risk and Relationship risk indicate that consumers put the concept to further uses than only to inform purchase decisions. Consider also these quotes from posters in the Porsche newsgroup:

I (happy 996 owner) would not be CAUGHT DEAD in a Porsche SUV. That is even more pretentious and stupid than the Mercedes SUV. How many North Shore moms can get them and how fast?? (posted by “DanKing,” alt.autos.porsche, October 1998)

I still hold out a shred of hope that Porsche will have second thoughts and at least not market a version as a Porsche. What a gaffe! What a blunder! (posted by “S T Jones,” alt.autos.porsche, November 1998)

Here, risk seems to be invoked mainly to vent annoyance. Complaining can serve an intrapsychic function of catharsis, ex-

pressing frustration and reducing negative emotions (Kowalski 1996). When a new initiative threatens to upset the existing brand order, people are troubled and risk could provide a tool for getting things off one’s chest. This suggests that risk can be helpful in making sense of the unfamiliar. Risk is a label often assigned to phenomena that violate norms or expectations (Douglas 1966) and it has been described as “the cultural response to transgression: the outcome of breaking a taboo, crossing a boundary, committing a sin” (Lupton 1999, 45). Consumers may also use risk discourses for self-exploration: to try out perspectives, prepare for the future, and dampen potential realization of loss. Social comparison is a related function, as complaints prompt information about what other people think and feel (Kowalski 1996). By using risk to discuss and give meaning to threatening events, people may regain a sense of control and deal with negative feelings (Lupton 1999).

Using risk as a rhetorical resource

Another emergent use of risk is as a key argument in consumer-to-consumer recommendations and viewpoints. It provides a rationalized vocabulary, which can impress and persuade. Consider the quote below, leveraging risk to argue in favor of the Cayenne:

I don’t disagree with you, but Porsche is getting more and more obscure in the upper echelons of racing. MB and BMW are fielding very serious cars (as is Audi) because they have the capital to play in that arena. If BMW irons out its “8 problems” it might very well give Porsche everything it can handle in its own back yard. Porsche needs more cashflow to sustain its racing heritage. If the Beemers begin beating Porsche with consistency, it will hurt Porsche sales in the long run, making it more and more difficult to stay at the top. (posted by “Mike,” alt.autos.porsche, July 2001)

This kind of risk-fuelled word of mouth may be driven by conviction, when consumers feel obliged to persuade others that their view of the brand future is right. The quote also illustrates how some commentators, although a minority, draw attention to risks that the company might weaken without new initiatives. Regardless of viewpoint, risk can provide an opportunity for self-presentation, conveying impressions of desired attributes on an audience (Kowalski 1996). By discussing risks, consumers can appear faithful to “original” brand values, or just display expertise:

“SUV’s” are the single most profitable vehicle on the market today... or were. The day of the SUV is starting to drift into oblivion... cross-wagons are the new suburban rage. Therefore, Porsche/VW better get their SUV versions to market soon and they better be something extra special, because everybody and their brother already has one. The tide is beginning to shift. (posted by “Mike,” alt.autos.porsche, July 2001)

DISCUSSION

This study is exploratory in nature, with the aim to stimulate interest and provoke thought, primarily on brand change and secondarily on the role of risk in consumer research. A specific limitation to acknowledge is that the data originates from a brand that has a more devoted following than the average brand. It should also be noted that the study deals with a brand initiative that is planned and pre-announced, so that consumer comments are based on anticipation rather than actual outcomes. Nonetheless, the study demonstrates the value in expanding the traditional view of risk in consumer research to inform our understanding of brands.

In sum, the consumer data presented makes risk a visible element in responses to brand change. A basic belief in consumer culture theory (Arnould and Thompson 2005), is that research should cover more behaviors than choice and purchases. To this end, the present study adds to current initiatives to broaden consumer research on risk (Thompson 2005). The study also calls for recognition that risk can take on shapes different from the ones prevalent in existing research. Such new shapes were discussed under two major headings: Brand risk (with sub-headings of Initiative risk, Image risk, and Integrity risk) and Relationship risk. The traditional view holds that consumers often attempt to reduce perceived risk in a purchase by being loyal to a brand (Roselius 1971). The present study suggests that such loyalty, while reducing some risks, may in fact bring on new facets of risk. Finally, the findings reflect the role of risk as an organizing construct in sensemaking and debate. Overall, the study contributes to an emerging body of knowledge on the complications of strong consumer-brand linkages (e.g., Aaker et al. 2004; Thompson et al. 2006), by examining how such bonds can create resistance to brand change and by positioning risk as a pivotal concern to brand enthusiasts.

Taking a step back, one might ask whether comments can express risk even in cases when their explicit content primarily deals with negative consequences for the brand rather than direct effects for the commentators. The question is justified as most consumer research on risk is focused on consumers who experience risk because they themselves face unfavorable consequences. On the other hand, some previous research implies that consumers can indeed experience risk also when the unfavorable consequences pertain to other people and entities, such as the environment (Ekström and Askegaard 2000), a member of the family (Stone and Grønhaug 1993), or other people who are important to the person (Frewer, Scholderer, and Bredahl 2003). Like empathy responses, such vicarious experiences indicate that enthusiasts actually could take on expectations of loss for a brand as their own (cf., Escalas and Stern 2003). Risks pertaining to brands may be relevant to enthusiasts in a similar way that risks pertaining to sports teams are relevant to dedicated fans, or even how risks pertaining to children are relevant to their parents, to extend the metaphor of a brand as a relationship partner (Fournier 1998). The more consumers identify with a brand, the more they might be expected to experience risks in a personal manner. Conversely, low personal stakes could facilitate meaningful distinctions between risks facing consumers themselves and risks facing the brands. Such distinctions are difficult to make within the scope of the present study, with the data it draws on, but could perhaps be explored in future research.

Recognizing how risk perceptions can imbue consumer responses to controversial brand initiatives has practical and theoretical implications relating to brand meaning management. For instance, the risk perspective highlights why brand change so easily meets with protests: People judge risks of action worse than risks of non-action, due to an "omission bias" (Baron 2004). Even if consumers judge the fit between a brand and a new initiative as acceptable, other factors could contribute to feelings of risk. Such factors could be the scale of the new initiative (e.g., the size of investment relative to the current business), decision irreversibility, salience of similar initiatives that have failed, or alignment with moral values. The outcome of a change initiative is thus dependent on how perceptions of Brand risk and Relationship risk are managed, primarily through communication.

One might argue that general consumer audiences have other things on their minds than risk factors and that marketers may be wise not to draw attention to them. However, marketers are not in

full control of risk perceptions. The study findings clearly show how brand enthusiasts themselves generate and circulate risk-imbued accounts of brand change. The significance of risk is problematic for managers who are looking to secure support and advocacy from a loyal core of consumers. Brand enthusiasts might easily identify risks as the ones discussed in this paper, whereas they see direct benefits accrue to others, such as shareholders and new consumer segments. Researchers have repeatedly shown that marketers do not have a monopoly on the making of the symbolic meanings of brands. Consumers are highly involved in the exploration and co-creation of brand meanings (e.g., Arnould and Thompson 2005; Brown et al. 2003). The opinions about Porsche Cayenne illustrate how consumers can use highly rationalized arguments, cast in a language often associated with business management, in the construction of a brand story. Thus, it becomes even clearer how consumers can take on roles as "unofficial officials", as they assume not only a task (in terms of creating brand meaning), but also a rhetoric (in terms of a risk vocabulary), traditionally assigned to company managers. The findings thus contribute to the literature on brand meaning management by showing how risk is mobilized as a resource in an argument over values (cf. Thompson 2005). Designating the Cayenne as a risk allows "genuine" Porsche ideals and idealists to be valorized. Heritage is respected and celebrated by assigning blame to an allegedly unwise or greedy management. If engaged consumers feel disfranchised in relation to corporate power in general and the particular company management in particular, they may at least restore some pride by challenging current practices. Disputing the wisdom of a decision may then be a more potent approach than only invoking feelings about what the brand is about. Where personal beliefs appear subjective, irrational, and unconvincing, risk appears objective, rational, and compelling.

The practical influence of vocal consumers can be considerable, as word of mouth diffuses to a wider audience. Managers would be wise to consider the arousing property of risk and to seek out and diagnose brand enthusiast beliefs in internet discussions or other community fora. If risky initiatives stir brand enthusiasts to widespread expressions of their concerns, this might set off a downward spiral for the brand. Even if "pessimists" are few, their influence might be considerable if risk-imbued opinions are transmitted through the media and internet to more mainstream consumers (cf. Thompson et al. 2006). However, addressing risk perceptions head on is probably tricky. Refutations of unfavorable consumer claims have been found to easily backfire and increase the salience of the claims (e.g., Skurnik et al. 2005). Ignoring risk perceptions might be an effective strategy for broad marketing communications, but are there better options when dealing with brand enthusiasts? Inviting citizens to participate in dialog before decisions has been a strategy widely discussed in the risk literature (cf., Arvai 2003; Tuler 2000). Can risk be neutralized or even presented as a strength rather than a weakness, perhaps by exploiting the potential for pleasure and progress in risk-taking (cf. Arnould and Price 1993; Celsi et al 1993; Lupton 1999)? Future investigations should examine the consequences of different communication strategies for risk perceptions relating to brands.

Risk is a perennial construct in the social sciences. Accordingly, it is multifaceted and definitions are manifold (cf. Conchar et al. 2004; Lupton 1999; Mitchell 1999). This study used a broad definition, which admittedly leaves open the possibility of overlaps between risk and other constructs in consumer research. Efforts to systematically juxtapose them and probe the boundaries might generate additional insight into the significance of risk for an expanded range of consumer behaviors.

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The Moderating Effect of Brand Commitment on Consumer Response to Logo Shape Redesign

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In a given year, one in 50 companies will change its name and logo for a variety of reasons (Speath 1990). Logos may need to be changed due to changes in the company name, adoption of new strategies, reorganizations or novelty. Not all logo changes are embraced by a brand's customers. In 2003, Apple Computer announced a change to their logo from a monochromatically red color to a brushed silver hue. Within hours of Apple's announcement, there were over 200 signatures on an online petition demanding a return to the old logo treatment (Kahney 2003). On the other hand, Pepsi's 1991 logo change was accepted by consumers with little resistance. These examples of logo change beg the obvious question, why are some logo changes met with consumer resistance and others are not?

Our research explores this issue, specifically consumer response to one aspect of logo redesign: shape. Past logo research has developed a typology of logo elements and examined how some of these elements (such as color) affect underlying brand attitudes. However, consumer brand attitude in response to logo redesign has not been addressed by researchers (Henderson and Cote 1998, Gorn, Chattopadhyay, Yi and Dahl 1997 and Tavassoli 2001).

Brand commitment has been shown to play a critical role in determining resistance to various actions such as brand transgressions and outside attacks on the brand. The more committed an individual is toward a brand, the more likely they will resist information that attacks that brand (Ahluwalia, Unnava, and Burnkrant 2000). When faced with negative information regarding a brand, consumers committed to the brand counter-argued negative information about the brand (Ahluwalia, Unnava, and Burnkrant 2000). Consumers who counterargue negative information are defense motivated (Ratneshwar and Chaiken 1991), defined as the use of heuristics to protect vested interests, attitudinal commitments, or other preferences (Koslow 2002). Thus a strongly committed consumer of a brand, because of defense motivation, is more likely to resist information that attacks or undermines the meaning of the brand. This counter argumentation occurs to protect one's brand, which defines their self-image. What occurs when committed consumers are faced with a change to a core element of their self-defining brand's meaning—brand logo (Bennett 1995)? Changes to a logo have the potential of changing the meaning of the brand to a consumer, which may impact the consumer's self-image.

We posit that reaction to change in logo shape is a function of the degree of change (from incremental to considerable) and the level of commitment (from strong to weak) a consumer has towards the underlying brand. Two experimental studies featured modified brand logos and measured consumer response to the redesign and consumer commitment to the underlying brand. Study one used athletic shoes as stimuli and study two featured brands of bottled water. The second study was designed to extend generalizability by replicating the effects in study one for brands from another product category. Study two also considered a number of potential covariates and tested a mediation hypothesis (defined and discussed as part of study two).

In these studies, we find that consumers who are strongly committed to a brand have a more negative attitude toward the brand (as logo redesign increases) whereas consumers less committed to a brand will have a more positive attitude toward the brand.

Additionally, in Study 2 we find that logo evaluation mediates the moderating effect of brand commitment on brand attitude.

We believe this research makes several contributions to brand commitment and brand management literature as well as to the practices of brand managers. First, brand commitment has been found to have several positive benefits to brands, such as counter arguing negative information (Ahluwalia, Unnava, and Burnkrant 2000) or minimizing brand dilution (Ahluwalia, Unnava, and Burnkrant 2001). However, this research indicates that changes to logo design can result in a more negative brand attitude for strongly committed consumers than for weakly committed consumers. Second, this research indicates that logo redesign can significantly impact brand attitude even when there are only incremental changes to logo shape. Therefore, brand management research should give more attention to the effects of changes in brand logos on brand attitude and evaluation and those factors that influence the reaction to these brand dimensions. Third, these findings have substantial implications for brand managers. Specifically, brand managers should recognize that their loyal customers may have the strongest reaction to changes in brand logo redesign, and it is not a positive response. To avoid alienating committed customers brand managers should consider the response of their customers, both strongly and weakly committed, prior to making such changes.

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The Effects of Perceived Congruity Between Origin, Brand and Product on the Purchase Intention of a Branded Product of Origin

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ABSTRACT

Attitude toward geographical origin is considered an influential factor of individual evaluations in the COO literature. However, a model controlling for the effects of attitude toward the product category, the brand, the geographical origin and the corresponding perceived congruity factors (product category x origin, brand x origin, product category x brand), demonstrates no effect of origin attitude on the purchase intention of a branded product of origin. In the case of congruity between brand, origin and the product category, a dominant effect of brand attitude is observed. This effect decreases in the case of incongruity, and perceived congruity factors are then included in the evaluation, alongside brand attitude. Our empirical application is replicated over two food product categories.

INTRODUCTION

Because of competition between international firms on the global market, many firms seek to reduce cost production by a relocation of their manufactures in less developed countries and by an enlargement of their procurement sources. However, in sectors like food, geographical origin is becoming a key factor in consumer purchase because of many crises shook, reinforced by regulation of Geographical Indication and TRIPS Agreement.¹ Academic research on Country of Origin (COO) effects on consumers' evaluation and behavior has increased steadily over the last two decades and, at the same time, reference to geographical origin has been used as a factor of differentiation and added value by a growing number of food manufacturers (national and regional brands) and retailers (private brands). Marketing literature has shown that geographical origin (GO) effects² can rival the effects of price, brand equity and product attributes because it enhances attribute perception, perceived quality and it is supposed to transfer the image of and attitude toward the region to the promoted branded products (Han 1989; Maheswaran 1994; Gürhan-Canli and Maheswaran 2000).

An interesting result emerging from this area of research concerns the role of the perceived congruity between the branded product and its geographical origin (Maheswaran 1994; Gürhan-Canli and Maheswaran 2000; Häubl and Elrod 1999). Perceived congruity has been demonstrated to have a positive impact on consumer evaluation, and the extent of this effect might be greater than the effects of brand or origin. The element of prime importance in GO management could, then, be the perceived congruity between branded product x origin rather than the GO itself. For instance, a positive attitude toward a Swiss raclette cheese could be due less to the attitude toward the raclette cheese or toward its Swiss origin than to an interaction between Switzerland and raclette cheese, expressed through perceived congruity.

However, theoretical and methodological variations make any comparison of these effects difficult. Firstly, the concept of product (or brand) x origin congruity has been diversely considered, thereby making comparisons difficult. Sometimes it is implicitly considered, through a simple statistical interaction term between a product (or brand) indicator and an origin indicator (Han and Terpstra 1988; Cordell 1992), with the limitation that the theoretical content of this interaction term remains unclear, specifically in the perspective of information processing by consumers. In other research, this interaction is explicitly considered in terms of congruity, but diversely conceptualized and measured. For instance, in Häubl and Elrod (1999), brand x origin congruity is an objective binary indicator corresponding to the fact that the product was manufactured (or not) in the country of the brand. Secondly, experimental designs are implemented using, alternatively, products (Roth and Romeo 1992), brands (Jo, Nakamoto, and Nelson 2003) or branded products (Ettenson 1993; Cordell 1992; Häubl and Elrod 1999) as the unit of evaluation by individuals. We might then suspect that, depending on the design of the research, confounds effects may exist between what is due to the brand, to the product, to the origin and to the corresponding congruity terms. For instance, in a model explaining the purchase intention for Swiss Valdor raclette cheese, it is possible, without an effective control for the brand effect, to attribute (at least partially) to the attitude toward Switzerland what is actually due to the Valdor brand or to the perceived congruity between Switzerland and Valdor. It is also possible, without an effective control for the product category, to attribute to the Valdor brand what is actually due to the "raclette cheese" product category, or to a perceived congruity between "raclette cheese" and Valdor. Thirdly, most research on geographical origin uses statistical methods (Anova, Multiple regression, Conjoint analysis, Logit; Johansson, Douglas, and Nonaka 1985; Han and Terpstra 1988; Maheswaran 1994; Okechuku 1994; Häubl and Elrod 1999; Gürhan-Canli and Maheswaran 2000), which do not allow to control for measurement error and its negative impacts on the estimation of coefficients and hypothesis testing, as underlined by Steenkamp and Baumgartner (2000).

In this perspective, we propose to analyze and compare the effects of attitude toward the product category, the brand, the geographical origin and the corresponding perceived congruity factors (product category x origin, brand x origin, product category x brand) on the evaluation (intention to purchase) of a branded product of origin, *i.e.* an alternative defined using three pieces of information: the product category, the brand and the geographical origin. Measurement error will be taken into account by means of a multi-item measurement process and structural equation modeling. Our empirical application involves two experiments in the domain of food consumption in France, identically replicated in the Tomme cheese and the Cassoulet canned meat product categories. Varying the origin, we manipulated both the perceived congruity between origin and product category (logical/illogical) and the perceived congruity between brand and product category (logical/illogical). Due to practical constraints, brand x origin perceived congruity was not manipulated (once origin x product and brand x product congruity is manipulated, there is no degree of freedom to manipulate brand x origin perceived congruity), but only controlled for.

¹Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights: a specific section of the WTO Agreement of 1994, addressing intellectual property.

²This general term covers "country", but also "region", or even more specialized areas of production, like the French concept of "terroir".

THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS

Several meta-analyses have attempted to synthesize the COO findings (Bilkey and Nes 1982; Peterson and Jolibert 1995; Samiee 1994; Verlegh and Steenkamp 1999) and show that, despite considerable research in the field, the origin effect is still not very well understood. There are divergences relating to the magnitude of this effect (Verlegh and Steenkamp 1999); the nature of its influence (Chao 1993; Hong and Wyer 1998; Obermiller and Spangenberg 1989); the strength of the origin effect on brand, price and other extrinsic and intrinsic attributes (Ahmed and d'Astou 1993; Johansson et al. 1985, Okechuku 1994); and the dependant variables affected by origin (perceived quality, attitude and intention to purchase).

The COO literature is also characterized by results contingent to the product category (Ahmed and d'Astou 1993; Han 1989; Kaynak and Cavusgil 1983; Roth and Romeo 1992) and to the consumers, due to ethnocentrism and stereotype effects (Agrawal and Kamakura 1999; Cordell 1992; Erickson, Johansson, and Chao 1984; Maheswaran 1994; Samiee 1994).

With the rise of global manufacturing strategies, the COO literature has focused on the effects of the brand name x origin interactions, and various effects have been characterized including the "conjoint effect" (Ahmed and d'Astou 1993; Cordell 1992; Han and Terpstra 1988; Kaynak and Cavusgil 1983; Okechuku 1994), the "shielding effect" (Jo et al. 2003; Johansson and Nebenzahl 1986; Nebenzahl and Jaffe 1996) and the "congruity effect" (Häubl and Elrod 1999). The concept of perceived congruity is based on the cognitive consistency theory that suggests a link between consumers' attitudes and the consistency between objects, persons, brands and individual beliefs (Sirgy 1982). Cognitive psychology considers that information about objects is stored in cognitive categories and that consumers' evaluations depend on the effect associated with the category to which the object belongs (Medin and Smith 1984; Mervis and Rosh 1981). This assimilation process depends on the product category schema congruity (Sujan and Bettman 1989). Roth and Romeo (1992) showed that the perceived match between the product and the geographical origin plays an important role in purchasing behavior. If brands and product categories are conceptualized as cognitive categories in the consumer's memory (Broniarczyk and Alba 1994), the perceived similarity or congruity (also called "perceived fit") facilitates both the categorization process and the transfer of attitudes from these cognitive categories to the branded product. The role of the perceived fit in the success of brand extension has been underlined in a number of studies (Aaker and Keller 1990; Broniarczyk and Alba 1994).

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Combining findings from COO and brand extension literature, we can propose that the evaluation of a branded product of origin is influenced by product category, geographical origin and brand attitudes, as well as by the perceived congruity terms between product category, origin and brand.

Effects of Attitude Toward Product, Brand and Origin

Figure 1 shows that brand, product and origin attitudes have positive effects on the evaluation of a branded product of origin. Purchase intention was chosen in this research as a good synthesis of individuals' evaluations and also because it represents a good proxy for consumer behavior (Chandon, Morwitz, and Reinartz 2005). As such, it is frequently used in COO and brand research (Roth and Romeo 1992; Czellar 2003). We propose, then, the three following hypotheses (Figure 1):

H1a: Attitude toward the product has a direct positive influence on the purchase intention for the branded product of origin.

H1b: Attitude toward the brand has a direct positive influence on the purchase intention for the branded product of origin.

H1c: Attitude toward the origin has a direct positive influence on the purchase intention for the branded product of origin.

Effects of Perceived Congruity Between Product, Brand and Origin

Figure 1 shows that three congruity factors can influence the evaluation of a branded product of origin. The first, perceived congruity of origin x product category (H2a hypothesis), has traditionally been examined in the COO literature where authors have studied the impact of origin in conjunction with product categories, but without controlling for the brand. For instance, Han (1989) has studied the impact of Korea and USA national images in the car and TV categories. Maheswaran (1994), controlling for consumer expertise, has studied the impact of COO in the micro-computer (Germany vs. Thailand) and stereo system (Japan vs. South Korea) categories. We propose then:

H2a: The perceived congruity between origin and product category has a direct positive impact on the purchase intention for the branded product of origin.

The second, perceived congruity of origin x brand (H2b hypothesis) has also been examined in the COO literature, but without controlling for the product category (Keller 1993; Leclerc, Schmitt and Dubé 1994; Häubl and Elrod 1999). For instance, Häubl and Elrod studied the impact of the congruity between the brand name (4 brands) and the country of production (France, Germany, Slovenia) in the alpine skiing category. We propose then:

H2b: The perceived congruity between origin and brand has a direct positive impact on the purchase intention for the branded product of origin.

The third, perceived congruity of product category x brand (H2c hypothesis) has been extensively studied in the brand extension literature, but has not been included in the COO literature, at least as a controlled factor. This form of congruity, the so-called "perceived fit" between the original brand and the extension category, has proved to be a central factor in explaining the success of brand extensions (Aaker and Keller 1990; Czellar 2003). We propose then:

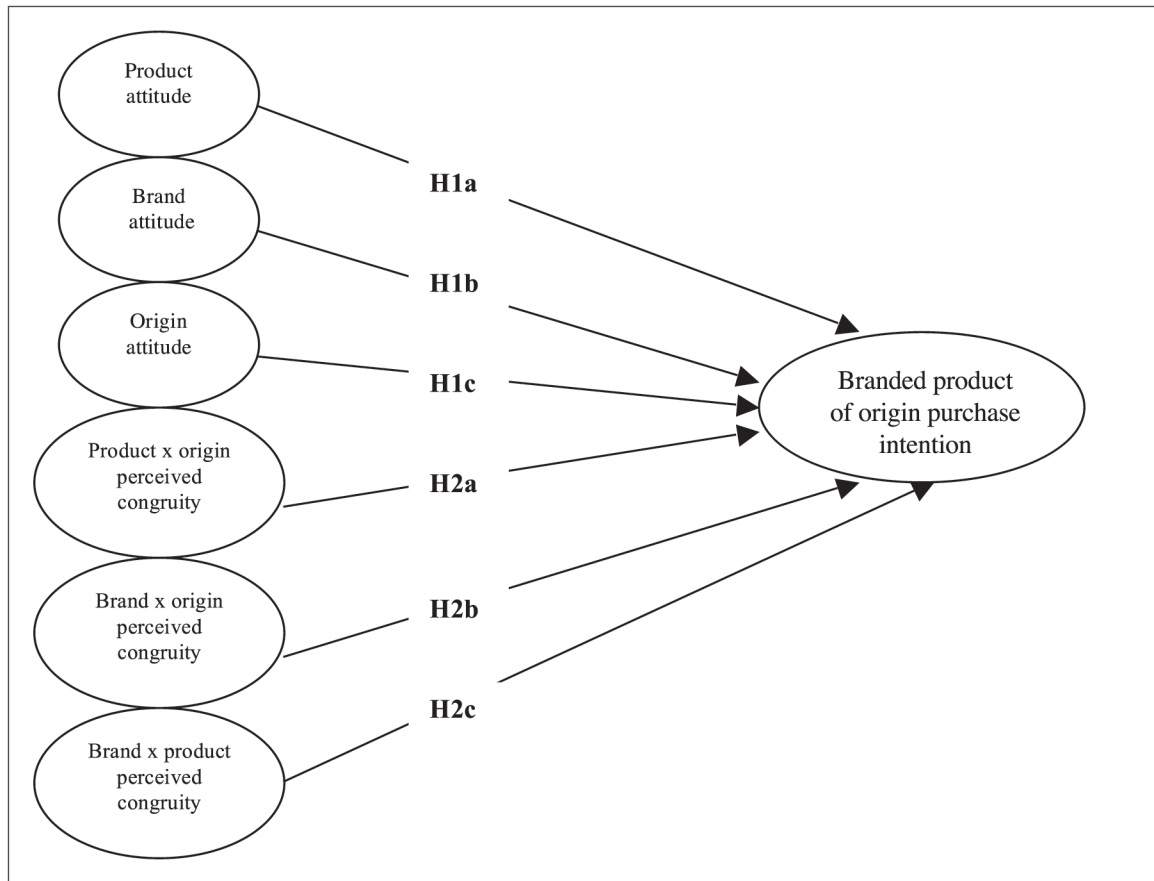
H2c: The perceived congruity between brand and product category has a direct positive impact on the purchase intention for the branded product of origin.

METHODOLOGY

Our experiment is applied to food consumption, a domain where product categories, brands and geographical origins play important roles in the strategy of firms. Consequently, individuals are used to evaluate alternatives representing combinations of these three components, thereby conferring a reasonable degree of realism on the task of the participants.

Because we studied French food products in France, geographical origin was studied at the regional level, as suggested by

FIGURE 1
Conceptual Model and Research Hypothesis



Van Ittersum, Candel and Meulenberg (2003). Although origin is generally understood at the national level in the COO literature (Japan, United States, ...), the cognitive category used by consumers to deal with origin can sometimes be more specific: a region or even a smaller area of "terroir", depending on the product category being evaluated (Askegaard and Ger, 1998). This is typically the case in the food and beverage sectors, where the evaluation can be enhanced or discounted as a function of the region of origin. Although the French region of Savoie (eastern-France) has a positive impact on the evaluation of "Gruyere" or "Tomme" cheese categories, it can also demonstrate a null or even a negative impact on the category of "rosé" wines. Moreover, in a number of product categories, there are sometimes greater differences between regions in the same country than between regions in different countries. In the "Tomme" cheese category, there is a greater degree of similarity between Romandie (western Switzerland) and Savoie (eastern France) than between Savoie and the Pyrennées (south-west France), even though these three mountainous regions all manufacture "Tomme cheese".

Construct Measurement

The variable used to explain the purchase intention of a branded product of origin was measured on a five-point Likert scale as the likelihood of purchasing the branded product of origin on the next shopping trip (Punj and Hillyer 2004; "If I need xxx, I will probably buy xxx"; "The next time I will need xxx, I will certainly buy xxx").

To make measurement scale effects as constant as possible when testing hypotheses H1a, H1b, H1c and to make comparisons

easier, attitudes toward brand, product category and geographical origin were all measured using the same Broniarczyk and Alba (1994) 3-item scale ("I like", "I appreciate", "I'm favorable", on a 5-point Likert scale). For the same reasons, when testing hypotheses H2a, H2b, H2c hypotheses, perceived congruity (product x origin, brand x origin, product x brand) was measured using the same Aaker and Keller (1990) 3-item scale ("logical \leftrightarrow illogical", "natural \leftrightarrow not natural", "coherent \leftrightarrow not coherent", on a 5-point differential semantic). Involvement and subjective expertise were also measured, to be used as controlled factors (Zachkowsky, 1985).

The form started with judgment toward the category (involvement, expertise), then we successively measured product, geographical origin and brand attitudes, then perceived congruities and finally purchase intentions.

Selection of Product Categories, Origins and Brands

We implemented the same experiment across two food sectors, cheese and canned meat, which were selected as moderate vs. low involvement food categories on the basis of a pilot study carried out on a convenient sample of 193 French consumers. To make the evaluation more specific and concrete, we selected the product variety "Tomme"³ in the cheese sector and the product variety "Cassoulet"⁴ in the canned meat sector.

³Tomme is a variety of cheese manufactured in mountainous areas.

⁴Cassoulet is a typical meal composed of a meat and bean stew, sausage, duck cutlets and conserve of duck, produced in the region of Toulouse (south-west France).

TABLE 1
Psychometric properties (CFA*)

	Composite reliability	Shared variance	Root shared variance
Intention to purchase	0.91	0.84	0.92
Attitude toward the product	0.94	0.84	0.92
Attitude toward the brand	0.93	0.81	0.90
Attitude toward the origin	0.93	0.81	0.90
Origin x product category perceived congruity	0.94	0.84	0.92
Brand x origin perceived congruity	0.96	0.89	0.94
Brand x product category perceived congruity	0.96	0.88	0.94
Product category involvement	0.92	0.79	0.89
Product category subjective expertise	0.90	0.75	0.86

* Indicators are those obtained in the worst estimation condition (experimental cell), with a RMSEA of 0.049

To manipulate the perceived congruity of geographical origin x product category (logical vs. illogical), two geographical origins were selected in each product category: “Savoie” (logical) and “Alsace” (illogical) for the Tomme cheese category; “Toulouse” (logical) and “Auvergne” (illogical) for the Cassoulet canned meat category.

In order to manipulate the brand x product category perceived congruity (logical vs. illogical), we had to select well-known, familiar and realistic choice alternatives. For each product category, a list of 20 national brands was presented to three agro-food experts who had to class them as congruent or not congruent with the category, or possibly “unknown”. On this basis, we selected the brands “Riches Monts” and “Bridel” in the Tomme product category and the brands “William Saurin” and “Fleury Michon” in the Cassoulet product category as logical vs. illogical respectively. As these national brands are not specifically associated with one of the selected origins, we maintain the independence of the origin and the brand factors, and this is also the reason why it was not possible to manipulate the brand x origin perceived congruity.

Experimental Design and Sample

Our experimental design, in each product category, is a 2 x 2 intra-subject full orthogonal design, where each participant had to evaluate 4 branded products of origin (one per experimental condition), for instance a Tomme cheese manufactured in Savoie (logical origin) by the brand Riches Monts (logical brand). This design was identically replicated over the two product categories, on similar samples comprising 360 individuals each. Working on two product categories was also a means of controlling, a posteriori, the average level of involvement, which is higher in France for cheese than for canned meat. To diversify the two samples (Tomme/Cassoulet), the forms were managed identically across three geographically-contrasting areas in France (North, Paris, South) because food and origin perception could vary as a function of this factor. For each

stratum (a product category x geographic area of interview), the same quotas were imposed on age and gender. Forms were managed face to face using the data collector methodology (Bitner, Booms, and Tetreault 1990; Gwinner, Bremler, and Bitner 1998).

Construct Validity

For simplicity, measurement quality is presented after having pooled the two product categories ($n=720$) successively for each of the 8 experimental conditions. All scales demonstrate satisfying reliability: all Cronbach coefficients are greater than 0.8 and no item had to be deleted. Trait validity was established on the basis of EFA and then CFA, for each construct taken in isolation, then two by two, three by three and finally for all constructs taken together (Anderson, Gerbing, and Hunter 1987). CFA estimations were performed under Lisrel, using the maximum likelihood procedure because of its robustness for large sample sizes. The goodness-of-fit indices are satisfactory: RMSEA vary between 0.038 and 0.049 (associated π values are all greater than 0.76), AGFI vary between 0.91 and 0.93, SRMR between 0.025 and 0.028, NFI between 0.96 and 0.97 and CFI between 0.98 and 0.99.

All constructs exhibit a good degree of convergent validity: standardized factor loadings are highly significant, reliability coefficients range between 0.90 and 0.96, mean variance indicators (Fornell & Larker, 1981) are greater than 0.75, which can be considered as a satisfying result (Table 1). Finally, root mean variance indicators are all greater than their corresponding inter-construct correlations, demonstrating a satisfying degree of discriminant validity.

Manipulation Checks

Table 2 shows that involvement is greater for Tomme cheese than for Cassoulet canned meat ($p<0.0001$): on average Tomme appears to be a category with moderate involvement (3.3/5), and Cassoulet a category demonstrating low involvement (2.2/5). In

TABLE 2
Checks of manipulated and controlled factors (*)

<i>Controlled factor</i>	Tomme cheese		Cassoulet canned meat	
Product involvement	3.3		2.2	
<i>Manipulated factor</i>	Tomme cheese		Cassoulet canned meat	
Experimental condition \mathbb{L}	Logical origin “ Savoie”	Illogical origin “ Alsace”	Logical origin “ Toulouse”	Illogical origin “ Auvergne”
Product x origin perceived congruity	4.6	2.5	4.4	2.4
Experimental condition \mathbb{L}	Logical brand “ Riches Monts”	Illogical brand “ Bridel”	Logical brand “ William Saurin”	Illogical brand “ Fleury Michon”
Brand x product perceived congruity	3.9	3.3	4.2	3.5

* Construct scores equal the means (/5) of their items

both categories, the average perceived congruity between origin and product category decreases in the product x origin illogical condition ($p < 0.0001$). Similarly, perceived congruity between brand and product category decreases in the brand x product illogical condition ($p < 0.0001$). We can conclude, then, that our manipulations were effective. Moreover, in the two product categories, the two brands (logical/illogical), but also the two origins (logical/illogical) obtained similar levels of attitudes (no statistical differences).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Structural Model Estimation and Hypotheses Testing

In order to validate our hypotheses, we tested the structural model representing the whole set of hypotheses developed in the theoretical section (Figure 1). This model explains the purchase intention of the branded product of origin, as a function of product category, brand and origin attitudes as well as the three perceived congruity factors (product x origin, brand x origin, product x brand). Age, gender, subjective expertise and involvement were also initially included in the model to control for their effects on purchase intention, but were later abandoned because they were not statistically significant. The model was successively estimated in the 2 x 4=8 experimental conditions (1 to 4 in the Tomme cheese category and 1' to 4' in the Cassoulet-Canned meat category; Table 3), using here the bootstrap estimation procedure (200 replications; $n=360$). On the basis of indicators of fit, the hypothesized model fits the data reasonably well, in all conditions (Appendix 1). Research hypotheses were then tested on the basis of the standardized direct coefficients (Table 3).

Attitude toward the product and attitude toward the origin have no significant direct effect on the purchase intention of a branded product of origin, in any of the 8 experimental conditions: H1a and H1c hypotheses must, then, be rejected.

Conversely, there is a significant (moderate to strong) effect of attitude toward the brand in all experimental conditions, meaning that H1b is strongly validated. In both product categories, this effect is greater when the brand is logical vs. illogical and/or when the origin is logical vs. illogical. Then, it is in the case of complete congruity (conditions 1 and 1') that attitude toward the brand has its strongest effect. In these two conditions, it is the sole factor influencing purchase intention of the branded product of origin and

the corresponding R^2 for purchase intention is at its maximum. Moreover, for every experimental condition, the impact of brand attitude is higher in the low involvement category (Cassoulet canned meat) than in the moderate involvement category (Tomme cheese), a result coherent with the literature on involvement (Petty, Unnava, and Strathman 1991).

In both categories, the effect of origin x product category perceived congruity is significant only in the origin x product category illogical conditions. H2a hypothesis is only validated in the 3, 4 and 3', 4' conditions: when individuals have doubts about the origin x product congruity, they include this factor in their global evaluation.

In the moderate involvement category (Tomme cheese), brand x origin perceived congruity has a significant impact only when the origin is not logical with respect to the product category (conditions 3 and 4), where H2b is validated. In the low involvement category (Cassoulet canned meat), this effect is significant only when the brand is not logical with respect to the product category (conditions 2 and 4) where H2b is validated.

In the moderate involvement category, the effect of brand x product perceived congruity (the so-called “fit” in the brand extension literature) is significant only in the case of the illogical brand x product condition (conditions 2 and 4), where H2c is validated. This result conforms to the brand extension literature where, typically, a brand is extended to a new product category and individuals, having doubts about brand x product congruity, include the perceived brand x product congruity (the perceived fit) in their global evaluation. The same result is observed in the low involvement category, but limited to the logical origin (condition 2'), where H2c is validated.

Discussion

Over the 8 experimental conditions, brand attitude demonstrates an important and systematic effect on purchase intention. This impact increases in the low involvement category and when the experimental conditions are “logical”, and we can conclude that brand attitude plays a “default” role. When the brand and origin are perceived as congruent with the product category (conditions 1, 1'), brand attitude is the unique factor influencing the purchase intention in our model. In the case of low involvement, the explained variance reaches 64 %, which is the maximum over all experimental conditions.

TABLE 3
Standardized coefficients (*)

Origin x product category congruity →	Tomme cheese Moderate involvement				Cassoulet canned meat Low involvement			
	Logical origin “ Savoie”		Illogical origin “Alsace”		Logical origin “Toulouse”		Illogical origin “Auvergne”	
Brand x product category congruity →	n1 Logical Riches Mont	n2 Illogical Bridel	N3 Logical Riches Mont	n4 Illogical Bridel	n1’ Logical William Saurin	n2’ Illogical Fleury Michon	n3’ Logical William Saurin	N4’ Illogical Fleury Michon
Attitude toward the product (H1a)								
Attitude toward the brand (H1b)	0.51	0.33	0.23	0.16	0.66	0.45	0.44	0.29
Attitude toward the origin (H1c)								
Origin x product perceived congruity (H2a)			0.22	0.29			0.12	0.16
Brand x origin perceived congruity (H2b)			0.21	0.14		0.16		0.14
Brand x product perceived congruity (H2c)		0.32		0.14		0.13		
R ² (purchase int. , %)	33	31	21	24	43	33	32	24
Only significant coefficients are presented (at the 1% risk level).								

At the same time, attitudes toward the product or toward the origin have no impact at all. This result contradicts the COO marketing literature, which observes significant effects (Erickson, Jacobson, and Johansson 1992; Ettenson 1993; Tse and Gorn 1993). It can, however, be explained by the fact that, contrary to previous research, we controlled for brand, product and origin attitudes and also for the three perceived congruity factors with, as a consequence, limited possibilities to confound the effect of attitude toward the origin with those due to product or brand attitude, or to the origin x brand or the origin x product perceived congruity. The “direct” effect of origin attitude is then mechanically discounted. Peterson and Jolibert (1995), in their meta-analysis have also underlined the weakness of COO effects, at least partially attributed to method effects. This result is also coherent with Han and Terpstra (1988) who suggest that strong brands are less sensitive to COO effects.

As suggested by Thakor and Kohli (1996), we can also demonstrate that geographic origin has a greater potential impact through its perceived congruity with the brand or product category, than directly as a potential source of positive attitude, as proposed in earlier research on COO effects. However, these effects seem to work only in cases where individuals have doubts about the brand x origin or the product category x origin perceived congruity. The

more the object under evaluation is a combination of congruent pieces of information concerning the product, brand and origin, the simpler the evaluation process (conditions 1, 1’), centered solely on the attitude toward brand. These results are coherent with Lee (1995), Chakravarti and Janiszewski (2003) who observed that, confronted by a new and dissonant alternative, individuals focus on the most salient attribute, the perceived congruity in our experiment. Moreover, we observe that the impact of perceived congruity increases in the case of a moderate involvement product category compared to a low involvement category. For the low involvement condition, the evaluation process is always dominated by brand attitude, whereas for the moderate involvement condition, this role can become minor compared to perceived congruity, in the case of illogical conditions (typically the # 3 and 4 conditions).

CONCLUSION

Although the brand literature has concentrated on the brand x product fit, we must conclude after this empirical study that a new line of research could focus more deeply on the perceived congruity between brand (or product category) and Geographic Origin.

However, our empirical investigation is limited to the food product area, and new systematic comparisons should be implemented in other sectors such as fashion, sport items, cars, electron-

ics. Moreover, product category x GO congruity was a manipulated factor and it is possible that participants perceived the main intentions of the experiment, stimulating and overestimating the impact of product category x GO congruity.

Our empirical results help us to refine the use of GO in the management of a branded product with, of course, the limitations of the food product category. First of all, although GO represents a great potential in branded product evaluation, this is through its potential interactions with the brand (and product category) rather than in its own right. Then, referring to the attitude toward a well-evaluated GO is not sufficient to increase the branded product evaluation. It is the brand x origin perceived congruity that makes the effect positive in the evaluation and this congruity effect can be more important than the effect of the brand attitude itself. This result can still be reinforced by the moderating role of product x origin perceived congruity in the evaluation process. When it is low, the effect of attitude toward the brand decreases and brand x origin plays a genuinely dominant role in the evaluation of the branded product.

Therefore, our results open the door for strategies specifically designed for small or medium-sized firms, which do not have the financial means to develop a strong positive brand attitude. If geographical origin involves collective image and attitude strategies, our results show that these firms have interest to manage carefully their own brand x origin perceived congruity. We can also underline that strong international brands can bear on their attitude as a main factor of evaluation, but at the same time must pay attention to be perceived as congruent as possible with the product category and its associate geographical origin, if any. The lack of congruity can involve a risk that consumers use perceived congruity as a factor of evaluation, at the benefit of a local brand having a greater brand x origin perceived congruity.

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APPENDIX 1
Structural model estimation

	Tomme Cheese Moderate involvement				Cassoulet Canned meat Low involvement			
	Logical origin " Savoie"		Illogical origin " Alsace"		Logical origin " Toulouse"		Illogical origin " Auvergne"	
Brand x product category congruity →	n1 Logical Riches Mont	N2 Illogical Bridel	n3 Logical Riches Mont	n4 Illogical Bridel	n1' Logical William Saurin	n2' Illogical Fleury Michon	n3' Logical William Saurin	n4' Illogical Fleury Michon
Chi ² /ddl	2.64	2.12	1.78	2.03	2.18	1.85	1.57	1.86
RMSEA	0.068	0.056	0.047	0.054	0.057	0.049	0.040	0.049
SRMR	0.027	0.029	0.023	0.027	0.028	0.028	0.027	0.027
AGFI	0.865	0.889	0.906	0.891	0.886	0.895	0.914	0.902
GFI	0.904	0.921	0.934	0.923	0.919	0.924	0.939	0.930
NFI	0.948	0.959	0.966	0.962	0.957	0.964	0.968	0.963
CFI	0.967	0.978	0.985	0.980	0.976	0.983	0.988	0.982

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Self-Brand Connections and Brand Resonance: The Role of Gender and Consumer Emotions

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The fundamental premise of the Self-Brand Connections (SBC) construct is that when brand associations are used to construct one's self or to communicate one's self to others, a strong connection is formed between the brand and the consumer's self identity (Escalas, 2004). In a similar manner, brand resonance suggests a profound consumer brand relationship that is based on loyalty, attachment, and an enduring sense of communal kinship or affiliation. This relationship is so strong that members of that brand community are willing to make investments of their personal resources to remain connected to the brand (Keller 2001).

First, it is predicted that brand resonance should be significantly related to Self-Brand Connections and that respondents should respond in a similar manner to both constructs. Second, as a test of the SBC construct, it is expected that consumer fans who identify with a specific in-group organization (the home team) will report significantly higher SBCs and stronger brand resonance scores than those who support the out-group or rival team. Third, no gender differences are expected to occur in response to a gender neutral brand like college football. More specifically, females will resonate and connect with a brand only when that brand is perceived as gender relevant. Fourth, brand resonance and self-brand connections are especially capable of building deep attachments and evoking strong emotions (Keller 2003; Escalas 1996). Emotions are known to influence consumer attitudes (Edell and Burke 1987). Accordingly, it is hypothesized that the effects that self-brand connections and brand resonance may have on attitudes will be mediated by the emotions that consumers express.

Method

Subjects and Procedure

Subjects were 183 University of Michigan undergraduates (male=104; female=79) who were asked to give their opinions about the upcoming biggest rivalry football game against Ohio State. In one condition (In-Group Perspective, U-M), subjects read an enticing narrative relating the highlights of his/her experience as a home team fan while attending the famous Michigan vs. Ohio State football game. The second version (OSU fan) maintained the identical structure, relating the game experience from the Buckeye perspective. Subjects were first asked to identify themselves as either a U-M or an OSU fan. Subjects then responded to questions about their emotional reactions to the upcoming football game. This was followed by a series of questions about loyalty and attachment to the respective teams (U-M and OSU). These 16 measures were, in fact, measures of self-brand connections (Escalas and Bettman 2003) and brand resonance (Keller 2003). A pre-test confirmed that college football is a gender neutral brand, and the WNBA represents a female gendered brand.

Measures

Self-brand Connections measures were taken from Escalas and Bettman (2003) and *brand resonance* measures were selected from Keller (2003). *Emotional Responses* were measured by 1-9 point semantic differential scales (Cronbach's $\alpha=.96$): negative/positive, not exciting/exciting; not thrilling/thrilling; not confident of victory/confident of victory. Attitudes ($\alpha=.96$) to the upcoming

game were measured using 1-9 semantic differential scales: unfavorable/favorable, negative/positive, dislike/like, very bad/very good. Behavioral intentions measures were: very unlikely/likely to attend, unwilling/willing to attend, no desire/strong desire ($\alpha=.86$).

Results and Discussion

These results provided several new insights into the Self-brand Connections construct. First, it was confirmed that gender had no significant effect on SBC when the target brand is equally popular between male and female respondents. This was a necessary test to provide more validity to the notion that females will exhibit stronger self-brand connections towards products that 'match' their own gender. Thus, women, compared to their male counterparts, should report higher levels of self-brand connections as well as stronger brand resonance when the brand is perceived as a female-gendered brand such as the WNBA. However, when the target brand was football, with a non-female gendered identity, women no longer demonstrated stronger self-brand connections. This finding suggests that the WNBA may have a leading role to play in connecting with the aspirations of young women today. In order for the WNBA to continue to build a strong brand community among its target audience, special care should always be exercised when selecting the most appropriate female role models who could effectively resonate with the values and ideals of its gendered audience (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1990).

Second, this study showed for the first time in the extant literature the close relationship between SBC and brand resonance. This is particularly interesting given the crucial role that brand resonance plays in customer relationship management and the development of sustainable brand equity between customers and the brand (Keller, 2001). A principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation revealed that all the measures of SBC and Brand Resonance loaded on a single factor with eigenvalue=12.63, accounting for 84% of the total variance (Cronbach $\alpha=.98$). The items comprising SBC and brand resonance were used to create two distinct variables, respectively. To understand the fit between these two constructs, Confirmatory Factor Analysis using Amos (Arbuckle, 1997) was conducted with all the items of SBC and brand resonance representing one single factor. The chi-square for this model was significant (indicating a poor fit): χ^2 (104, N=180)=620, $p<.000$; NFI=.89, Bollen's (1989) Incremental Fit Index (IFI)=.91, CFI=.91, RMSEA=.160.

Third, emotions played a spectacular role in mediating the influence of SBC (and brand resonance) on consumer attitude. This intriguing relationship to emotions has never been explored before. Given the dominant role that emotions and passion play in the consumption and experience of sports, this insightful revelation of the link between emotions, brand resonance and self-brand connection offers exciting opportunities for future research. Moreover, since females have been shown to score significantly higher than men in the expression of emotions (Diener, Sandvik & Larsen, 1985), the appropriate role of gender should be included in future studies on affect, brand resonance, and self-connections in human behavior and particularly in our efforts to enhance the consumers' experience of sport, entertainment, or any other delivered service.

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Gettysburg Co-Constructed: Producing and Consuming Narratives in an American Battlefield

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

During the American Civil War, more than 600,000 people were killed while the country was divided by blood and hatred. Today, after 140 year from its ending, the Civil War is still present in the American memory as one of its most defining moments. What is more, vestiges of the big fratricide are located among a plethora of cultural expressions including more than 50,000 publications, hundreds of round tables, courses and seminars, movies, television series and documentaries, museum exhibitions, and battle reenactments. Through what process certain events of the past become meaningful cultural narratives feeding the collective imagination and the associated consumption practices? While established marketing knowledge sets the consumption experience apart from production, it is argued that the creation and development of experiential products are an outcome of a co-constructive process between marketers and consumers. The purpose of this paper is to shed light into the co-constructive nature of experiential products. Viewing cultural narratives as mutually constructed outcomes between producers and consumers who interact in the marketplace offers a new theoretical insight into experiential consumption and contributes to the evolving body of Consumer Culture Theory.

Theoretical insight into the production of cultural narratives is offered by narrative theory whose major premise is that life comes to us in the form of stories. The theoretical framework used in this study adopts a constructivist perspective according to which narratives are not natural phenomena, but human inventions. Narratives are constructed through the interaction of two parties: the storyteller and the listener. On the one hand, the storyteller or the narrator relates the story to his or her audience in a particular medium. On the other hand, listeners of a story play an active role into the construction of the experiential product by actively following the narrative. The final narrative outcome and the quality of the consumption experience will be determined by examining the contributions of both producers and consumers. The American Civil War can be seen as a narrative text where this theory can be further developed.

Ethnographic research was conducted at Gettysburg, a small town in south-central Pennsylvania, where one the most bloody battles of the American Civil War took place from July 1st to July 3rd of 1863. Fieldwork was carried out during the summer of 2002 and data collection methods included personal semi-structured personal interviews, photo-elicitation, and observation. Overall, fieldwork resulted in a total of 76 interviews where the voices of 125 informants was recorded, 238 photographs, and hundreds of hours of observation. Transcribed interviews offered 430 pages of verbal data.

The findings provide theoretical insight into the co-constructed nature of the Gettysburg narrative. On the production side, service providers are responsible for staging the servicescape in both substantive and communicative ways. The Gettysburg storyscape is substantively staged through its landscape and through a large number of monuments, museums, buildings, and "authentic" artifacts. Communicative staging is being achieved through the interpretation of the stupendous battle by numerous agents. Private businesses offer their own versions of the story. Nothing provides a more detailed and colorful story though than a battlefield tour. Tour guides invent and offer a plethora of narrative constructions

based on the material they have read and investigated in the national archives. One of the major concerns of the guides is their contact with diverse audience and the subsequent need to adapt their presentation to the visitors' background. Thus, during a battlefield tour, guides' presentation becomes a balancing act that struggles to consider the multiple audiences and adjust accordingly.

On the consumption side, visitors' active participation is subsumed under their effort to follow the narrative. In doing so, consumers at Gettysburg use their prior familiarity with history and they struggle to fill narrative gaps. In order to achieve a deeper understanding, they re-contextualize their new experiences and they use their narrative imagination in order to come closer to what it feels like to live in the story.

The present paper contributes to Consumer Culture Theory by illustrating a theoretical account for understanding dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings. In contrast to established knowledge that keeps production separate from consumption, an alternative approach looks at consumption experiences and cultural meanings as products of interaction between producers and consumers. This research supplements and advances the ongoing discussion on consumer agency and the co-construction of experiences by using narrative theory to illustrate the way in which national stories are collectively shaped through the interaction of multiple parties. The narrative of the American Civil War is used as an experiential product and the Gettysburg storyscape is used as the context where interactions between service providers and consumers are studied. According to this account, marketers are responsible for staging the storyscape in both substantive and communicative ways. On their side, consumers use their prior familiarity with the story, they fill narrative gaps, they re-contextualize their narrative experience, and they use their imagination in order to come closer to what it feels like to live in the story.

This paper provides theoretical insight into the market-mediated consumer imagination. As an increasing consumer research attention is paid on imagery elicitation in experiential settings, a co-constructive approach emphasizes the role of stories in sparking consumer imagination. Rooted within the mental imagery theory is the notion that decontextualized static images mirroring the external reality are passively formed in consumer's mind and are subsequently used in information processing to improve decision-making and enhance purchase outcomes. In contrast, it is theorized in the current work that consumer imagination is an experience with a narrative structure including actors, events, and plots with beginning, middle, and end. It is shown that consumer imagination is a multi-sensory, holistic, and dynamic experience within which consumers actively produce narrative understandings. It is also suggested that imagination as an experience is located at the intersection of the service providers' effort to stage the servicescape in a narrative way and consumers' active participation in completing, re-shaping, and (re)living the narrative.

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Representing Consumer Research: A Novel Approach

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ABSTRACT

Twenty years ago, Belk contended that marketing and consumer research can learn more from a reasonably good novel than a garden variety piece of contemporary social science. In the decades since this declaration, copious scholars have derived many significant insights from the literary canon. Consumer researchers' pursuit of matters literary, however, has not extended to the next logical step—the novelization of their findings. Despite the advent of “experimental” modes of representation, such as poetry, performance and painting, the preeminent cultural form of the century just past remains beyond the professorial pale. This paper considers our reluctance to write the Great CB Novel and posits four possible reasons for researchers' apparent reticence. It examines some of the problems encountered by would-be novelists, argues that the pleasures of novel writing far exceed the pains, which are indubitably acute, and maintains that marketing and consumer researchers must not only cull novels for academic insights but compose novels with academic insights.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, consumer research has been enlivened by the rise of heterodox representational practices. The traditional academic article is being supplemented by videography (Belk 1998), poetry (Sherry and Schouten 2002), performance art (Thompson 1999), stereoscopy (Holbrook 1997) and more besides (Stern 1998). The ACR Film Festival, to cite perhaps the most celebrated example, is now a firm fixture on the conference calendar and, although it may be some time before moving images replace the written word in the great scholarly scheme of things, the Association's consecration of the event bears witness to the broadening of our field's representational repertoire. The weird, as Russell Belk (1984) famously anticipated, have not only turned professional, they are auteurs to boot.

Admirable though the advent of Sherry's (2003) “sixth moment” undoubtedly is (see also Denzin 1997), there remains one representational form that has yet to be wholeheartedly embraced. And that is the novel. There are, of course, many fine examples of creative writing in marketing and consumer research. Schau (2000), Sherry (1998), Holbrook (1998), Aherne (2003) and several others have published “novelistic” pieces. Jack Trout (2003), of “positioning” fame, has penned a novella on best marketing practice. John Schouten is known to be working on a full-length work of fiction and if, as legend has it, everyone has a novel in them, then many unpublished manuscripts are presumably gathering dust in academics' drawers and filing cabinets. Yet all things considered, it is disappointing that there are so few published novels by marketing and consumer researchers.

The causes of this scholarly lacuna are doubtless many and varied. However, four factors undeniably loom large. The first of these is payback. Few professional rewards accrue to novel writers. Novels do not secure tenure, or promotion, and if anything may inhibit the pursuit of professional preferment in a supposedly “scientific” discipline. The same, to be sure, is true of movie making, composing poems and stand-up comedy, but the sheer amount of time that novel writing requires invariably invites questions about the best use of B-school employees' temporal resources and intellectual energies.¹

¹Three years appears to be the norm for first-time novelists (see Doughy 2006).

The second issue is technical. Comparatively few marketing and consumer researchers are trained in creative writing and very few doctoral programs include courses on writing skills (even though, as Mick (2005) rightly notes, writing is a core academic competency).² Experienced writers, what is more, are inadvertently hampered by their professional prowess, insofar as the skills necessary for fiction—plot, character, dialogue, drama—are very different from those demanded by conventional academic articles. Every consumer researcher may well have a novel in them, but unless it's written in a different register, the novel within is likely to be an abortion.

Competition is the third factor. The world is not short of novelists—quite the opposite, in fact (Zaid 2003)—nor is it short of novelists who write about marketing matters and consumer society generally. As Brown (2005) observes, one of the most striking latter-day literary trends is the rise of “mart-lit.” That is, novels written about branding, marketing and consumerist issues. Recent examples include Sophie Kinsella's (2004, 2005) mega-selling *Shopaholic* series, William Gibson's (2004) extravagant excursus on guerrilla marketing, and Don DeLillo's (2004) proctological ruminations on the anti-globalization movement. Our discipline's would-be novelists, in other words, are up against full-time professionals and are liable to suffer by comparison.

The fourth and in certain respects most important factor is good old-fashioned business. The book trade, by and large, is chary of novelized scholarship.³ Such works are difficult to categorize, as a rule, and appropriate in-store placement isn't easily determined (fiction section? non-fiction shelves? business and management boondocks?). Given the avalanche of incoming titles and inevitably limited display space, chain bookstore buyers tend to be skeptical and, unless substantial promotional support is forthcoming from the publisher, it's difficult to get decent distribution. Granted, aspiring authors can embrace the self-publishing option—low-cost websites like Xlibris, Lulu et al make this an attractive alternative—but this invites institutional opprobrium, as per point one above.

Institutional opprobrium, however, hasn't stopped economists (Brunger 1993), psychoanalysts (Kristeva 2006), cultural theorists (Berger 1997), computer scientists (Papadimitriou 2003) and consciousness researchers (Lloyd 2004) writing novels about their specialty. The management literature too is studded with fairy tales (Denning 2004), leadership fables (Rovira and Trias de Bes 2004), corporate satires (Barry 2006) and organizational parables (Goldratt 2004). Precedents exist, in short, and perhaps it is time for marketing and consumer researchers to step up to the literary plate. The present author has done so and, in an attempt to encourage others to do likewise, the remainder of this article will consist of the first chapter of *The Marketing Code*, followed by a brief discussion of some salient scholarly issues.

THE MARKETING CODE

The room buzzed with anticipation as the speaker strode toward the imposing podium. Conservatively dressed and carefully coiffed, she looked much like any other middle-aged marketing professor. Only the smart Paul Costello suit betrayed her country of origin, as did a tiny twist of emerald ribbon on her Irish linen lapel.

²If, as John Fowles (1990) avers, “creative writing” is a euphemism for “imitative writing,” then most marketing and consumer researchers are indeed trained in creative writing.

³I speak from personal experience, sadly.

To all intents and purposes, she was indistinguishable from the three previous presenters, Professor Bland, Professor Boring, Professor Blowhard.

Professor Emer Aherne was different in one important respect. Unlike the earlier presenters, she had rehearsed and polished and buffed up her speech. She didn't believe in inarticulacy, considering it a sign of professional weakness. She was an educator, someone who earned her living from standing and delivering. She regarded ums, ahs, ers, and analogous stuttering utterances as an affront, an indicator of the presenter's scholarly laxity, of their failure to appreciate that conference papers are professors' moments of truth, the instant when the intellectual sale is made.

Nor did Emer Aherne believe in beginning with banal bromides of the nice-to-be-here, thank-you-for-coming, you're-a-winnerful-winnerful-audience variety. She subscribed to the showbiz notion of starting with a bang and building things up from there. This was true of all her presentations, but it was especially true of the one she had rehearsed so assiduously. Not only did it deal with an important aspect of the Entertainment Economy, but it was being delivered in the quintessence of showbusiness, Las Vegas.

She stood silently behind the podium, waited for the room to settle and, fixing the audience with an imperious stare, proceeded to give them rhetorical hell.

"Tahiti. The beach. A lone figure strolls disconsolately along the shoreline. It is Dan Brown, a jobbing musician whose career is going nowhere. Several years in and he's sold next to nothing, apart from a theme song for the Atlanta Olympics. It's time to try something new, possibly related to his passion for art history. Turning back to his hotel, he stumbles over a tattered blockbuster novel, devoured and discarded by a departed holidaymaker. It's *The Doomsday Conspiracy* by Sidney Sheldon. Brown starts reading. Engrossed, he can't put it down. He swallows it whole and, in a moment of inspiration, Dan decides, 'I can do that'. And do that he does.

"His first conspiracy-propelled thriller, *Digital Fortress*, is published in 1998. No one notices. His second and third novels, *Angels & Demons* and *Deception Point*, follow *Digital Fortress* to paperback Palukaville. The music business pattern is starting to repeat itself.

"Dan moves to Doubleday. He writes *The Da Vinci Code*. Expectations are low, since its irreligious stance is deemed inappropriate in the post-9/11 climate. But his editor, Jason Kaufman, can't put Brown's manuscript down. Nor can Kaufman's editorial colleagues. Nor can Barnes & Noble's chief fiction buyer, Sessalee Hensley. Collectively, they take a chance on the risky property, even though the market signals are discouraging. A record number of Advance Reader Copies is produced in order to build some much-needed buzz. Barnes & Noble, facing fierce price competition from supermarket chains, especially on brand name blockbusters by Grisham and King, backs the no-name author to the hilt. *The Da Vinci Code* is released on 18th March 2003 and, thanks to the pre-publication marketing campaign, shoots straight to the top of the *New York Times* bestseller list.

"Beginning as it means to go on, the book barnstorms bestseller lists worldwide. Brown's back catalogue follows suit. Special editions are issued. Books about the book sell like hot cakes, even the *Da Vinci Diet Book*. Grail trails around the locations mentioned in the bestseller are promptly pulled together and prove extremely popular, much to the clergy's dismay. A big-budget, Ron Howard-helmed movie, starring Tom Hanks as Professor Robert Langdon, is put into production. Meanwhile, Dan the Man has gone into hiding, writing his next thrilling novel, a sequel to *The Da Vinci Code* called *The Solomon Key*. The world awaits. Agog."

In the bowels of the auditorium, a member of the hitherto somnolent audience sat up, intrigued by what he was hearing. Barton Brady II glanced at his associate, Yasmin Buonarroti, and raised an inquiring eyebrow. Yasmin replied with a slight frown. It was difficult to make out what the presenter was saying, due to her impenetrable Irish accent and quickfire delivery. But the slick slides more than compensated.

Images of Dan Brown, interspersed with video clips of his TV appearances scrolled impressively across the screen. And just when the sight of Dan's doe-like stare was becoming unbearable, the slide show segued into shots of Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*, the Louvre's glass pyramid, Saint Sulpice Church, Chateau Vilette, Westminster Abbey, and Rosslyn Chapel, the key locations in Brown's better than best-selling thriller. These were followed by video inserts of Dan's fans taking the tie-in tours of Paris, vox-pop interviews with exasperated church officials, who daily deal with hordes of loud-mouthed, Coke-chugging, plaid-clad Langdon-lovers, whose enthusiasm is surpassed only by their ignorance.

PowerPoint this wasn't.

It was a shame there were so few people in the audience. A lot of time and effort had obviously gone into Professor Aherne's presentation. But it was the final day of the American Marketing Association conference and the majority of delegates were making their weary way to McCarran. Having delivered their own words of wisdom and paid sycophantic obeisance to those in power—principally Professor Kate Phillips, the guru of gurus, who had deigned to attend the bacchanal—most conference-goers didn't feel the need to listen to yet another yawn-inducing speech. Only Barton Brady, Yasmin Buonarroti and a smattering of die-hard delegates, all with later planes to catch, were in the Bordeaux Room of the Paris Hotel & Casino for the turbo-charged presentation. You'd have thought a title like "The Marketing Code: How Brown's Bestseller Holds the Key to Business Success" would have packed them in. However, the dead zone scheduling, plus the raging hangovers of hard-partying marketing professors, militated against it. The Las Vegas Strip has a lot to answer for, as indeed the delegates would, once they got home to their unforgiving partners.

Brady glanced again at his associate, who sat across the aisle of the unspeakably ostentatious conference room, where vast paintings of Versailles Palace and the Tuileries Gardens dominated the side walls and where the chandelier was bigger—and brighter—than most of the audience. He raised both eyebrows querulously. Yasmin responded with a 'not sure' shake of the head.

"So, what are the secrets of Dan Brown's staggering marketing success?" Professor Aherne went on. "Are there lessons for others and, if so, what are they?"

The audience, such as it was, looked up expectantly.

"Well, it seems to me that there are four crucial factors. The first of these is entertainment. Entertainment is the key ingredient here. For all its alleged literary faults, *The Da Vinci Code* is a rattling good read, a veritable roller coaster-ride. It is a wonderful, unforgettable, page-turning, thrills-and-spills filled story. It epitomizes today's Entertainment Economy, our fast-moving, hit-driven, fad-fuelled world of show-stopping, knock-em-dead, next big things.

"This very venue," she went on, opening her arms to embrace the thinly populated auditorium, "is testament to entertainment's central place in the contemporary marketing cosmos. The thrill we get staring up at the Paris Hotel's imitation Louvre façade, or scaled down Arc de Triomphe, or its half-size replica of the Eiffel Tower, is similar to the thrill we get reading about Robert Langdon's adventures in the 'real' Louvre Museum, the real Arc de Triomphe, the real Eiffel Tower, all of which feature in Brown's book."

At this precise point, a shiny-suited slick of self-importance, the conference session chairperson, leapt to his feet and, with more than a hint of East Coast condescension, announced that the presenter had five minutes remaining.

Aherne ignored the interruption.

"The second factor is Determination. Dan didn't give up, even though his first three books were failures, near enough. He kept plugging away, as did his support team at Doubleday. Business history shows that it's those who persevere despite repeated failure, abject failure, heart-wrenching failure are those who win through in the end. Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Walt Disney, Ted Turner, Steve Jobs, James Dyson, Oprah Winfrey, Martha Stewart, Mary K. Ash and so on exemplify this never-say-die attitude. Dan Brown, indeed, is an embodiment of the personal philosophy of Samuel Beckett, the Nobel-Prize winning Irish playwright, who urges us to 'fail better'. That is, to accept failure, to learn from failure and, eventually, to overcome failure. Brown failed better!"

Yasmin Buonarroti nodded enthusiastically. Brady was too preoccupied with the creases in his Armani pants to notice his associate's change in attitude.

"The third factor is Obscurity. People like puzzles, mysteries, enigmas, secrets, the more head-scratchingly cryptic the better. And *The Da Vinci Code*, with its arcane amalgam of esoteric symbology and cranky conspiracy theory, attractively wrapped up in a thrill-a-minute detective story, pressed all the right buttons. Better yet was Brown's post-publication withdrawal from public life. His refusal to give interviews, except in exceptional circumstances, and his strictly-no-comment stance only served to ramp up interest in the increasingly intriguing author. As J.D. Salinger, Thomas Pynchon and Don DeLillo remind us, there's nothing more newsworthy than a newswary celebrity."

The slick insect stood up with a one-minute warning.

"Fourthly and finally," the presenter said forcefully, "Controversy proved vital. There's nothing like a little controversy to attract attention, especially in today's world of superabundant similitude. There are so many brands out there, all functionally indistinguishable, all ably marketed, all vying for consumers' attention, that it's very difficult to stand out from the crowd. The commercial clamor is deafening these days and controversy helps cut through the cacophony. The Vatican's official disapproval was the best thing that ever happened to Brown. The wrath of Opus Dei, the harrumphing of hidebound historians, and the legal action brought by outraged authors, who claimed that Dan had stolen their ideas, also helped move the merchandise. Madonna's been doing it for years. Eminem's no slouch either."

Glaring at the session chair, with a don't-dare-interrupt expression, Emer Aherne continued, "In conclusion, Brown's success is down to Controversy, Obscurity, Determination and Entertainment. Or CODE for short. CODE is the key to the *Code*!"

As the audience chuckled appreciatively, the presenter pressed home her advantage, "However, a code without a well-trained operator is useless and Dan Brown is a very well-trained, very astute operator. He is what I call an 'authorpreneur', a writer with an exceptionally strong sense of what the market wants. Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, L. Frank Baum, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Norman Mailer and, of late, J.K. Rowling all qualify as authorpreneurs. Dan Brown is an authorpreneur and a half. He has discovered, dare I say it, the Holy Grail of modern marketing. He..."

Slick had had enough, even if the audience hadn't. "Thank you, Professor Aherne, thank you very much. Perfect timing! Are there any questions?" he went on quickly, hoping that his disapproving tone would discourage the curious and he'd be on his way as expeditiously as possible. Inevitably, this attitude had the oppo-

site effect. An arm shot up to slick's obvious annoyance. It was an eager doctoral student, attending her first academic conference and determined to savor every moment. "Is Brown's CODE applicable outside the bookselling business?"

"Oh very much so. As I said in my presentation, we live in an Entertainment Economy, where there's no business *without* show business—even the business-to-business business—and CODE applies there too. Marketers often treat the cultural industries as if they are a benighted backwater, where the principles of modern marketing have yet to penetrate. I believe that the opposite holds true. The entertainment industry is the toughest, most competitive business around, and while their marketing ideas are incompatible with mainstream Kate Phillips-style marketing, it seems to me that the 4Ps brigade have much to learn from Brown's marketing code."

"But it's not very scientific, is it?" interjected slick, assuming that the ultimate academic put-down would close the discussion.

"No, it's not," conceded Professor Aherne. "But then, I don't believe marketing is a science. Never has been, never will be."

"If it's not a science, what is it?"

"It's a belief system, just like religion, or magic, or indeed science for that matter. If you believe in marketing, it works. And if you don't believe, no amount of fancy analysis or hypothesis testing or marketing metric measurement will help you."

Slick rolled his eyes. Another hand flew up, an older hand this time, the hand of an ageing tenured professor, with ponytail. "Aren't we talking about two different marketing approaches here," he inquired, "the left brain and the right brain, the artistic and the scientific, the feminine and the masculine? Brown's basic approach is feminine, is it not? Doesn't he talk about the 'eternal feminine' in *The Da Vinci Code*? Isn't his marketing premised on this, too?"

"That's an interesting one," Aherne answered, choosing her words carefully. "Brown has been criticized by many feminists. The 'eternal feminine' stuff is regarded as a veneer, a thin cover for what some regard as antediluvian sexism. His books, especially *Angels & Demons*, the prequel to *Da Vinci*, are full of references to rape, sado-masochism, and the brutal degradation of women generally. The comedic books Brown wrote before he tried his hand at thrillers are equally misogynistic. One of the songs on his debut album was a ballad about the dubious pleasures of telephone sex. Even his hero, Robert Langdon, is a love-em-and-leave-em kinda guy, an unreconstructed chauvinist. So, I think the jury is out on the feminine angle."

"What you're really saying, Professor Aherne, is that the acronym CODE is inappropriate. The keywords surely are Chauvinist, Reactionary, Androcentric and Patriarchal. Or CRAP for short!"

"An awful lot of people have swallowed it, though," the quick-witted presenter retorted.

Slick seized the day. His moment of glory had arrived. "If anyone wants to continue talking CRAP, Professor Aherne will be around after the session. Unfortunately, we've run out of time. Thank you all for attending. Have a safe journey home."

Barton Brady II stood up. He straightened his Hermes tie, shot the cuffs of his Brooks Brothers button-down, checked the time on his Vintage Rolex Oyster and sauntered across the aisle. He leaned over his Prada-clad colleague, who was busy pulling a Moleskine notebook and Mont Blanc pen from her Miu Miu purse. "Get her," he whispered. "Take Aherne out! Make her an offer she can't refuse."

DISCUSSION

As is evident from the above excerpt, *The Marketing Code* is predicated on Dan Brown's megaselling blockbuster, *The Da Vinci Code*. It is simultaneously an analysis of the DVC phenomenon,

which is fascinating from a marketing/consumer research perspective, and an attempt to communicate the findings in an imitation of Dan Brown's distinctive style. *TMC*, in fact, is a deliberate and systematic inversion of *DVC*. Where *DVC* is set in the world of high culture (art, aesthetics), *TMC* is set in the world of base commerce (marketing, consumption); where *DVC* unfolds in delightfully picturesque cities (Rome, Paris, London), *TMC* transpires in purportedly dangerous places (Las Vegas, Belfast, Chicago); where *DVC* is based on a Cathar/Opus Dei/Priory of Sion conspiracy, *TMC* relies on a Freemasons/Knights Templar/P2 admixture; where *DVC* is Roman Catholic and makes much of the "sacred feminine," *TMC* is inherently Protestant and gets in touch with the "sacred masculine"; where *DVC* is a thriller with a pedagogic subtext, *TMC* is pure pedagogy with thrills on top; and, last but not least, where *DVC* was humorless at heart, *TMC* is humorous at bottom.

The Marketing Code is an admittedly derivative thriller. It contends that there is a marketing cabal at the heart of contemporary consumer society, a conspiratorial organization which seeks to exploit innocent consumers for its unconscionably nasty ends. Publicly, its affiliates adhere to the clichéd catalogue of customer-first, customer-focused, customer-facing corporate strategies. But privately, they cleave to a primal marketing code, a mysterious way of doing business, which keeps them on top and consumers in hock.

The cabal, however, is under threat. Its secret is rumbled by Barton Brady II, the main chance-minded CEO of Serendipity Associates, a Las Vegas-based branding consultancy. Something must be done to protect the cabal's ancient code of marketing practice. The word goes out. Stop Brady. Get Buonarroti.

Living happily ever after isn't an option...

To be sure, there's more to *The Marketing Code* than the usual mix of thrills, spills, destruction and death—"Sometimes You Have to Kill to Make a Killing," as the book's byline puts it—inasmuch as it is a novel about marketing and consumer research. It is not an out-and-out thriller but a novelization of academic issues. Thus the challenge for the author, or any author of scholarly fiction, is to ensure that the academic issues are introduced without impeding the action and, conversely, to make sure that the academic message is communicated in sufficient detail. This is a very difficult balance to maintain, especially in thrillers, which demand a page-turning momentum.⁴ Many novels, it is true, contain "messages," be they political (*Uncle Tom's Cabin*), philosophical (*Atlas Shrugged*), sociological (*Lord of the Flies*) satiric (*Animal Farm*), or whatever. Indeed, Dan Brown's (2006) literary high concept, believe it or not, is "thriller as academic lecture." Nevertheless, there's no doubt that authors whose intent is predominantly pedagogic are prone to fail when facing the foremost challenge for would-be writers of page-turning fiction—namely, keeping readers reading and wondering what happens next. Failure to do so means failure to communicate, means failure to inform and, as often as not, means failure to sell.

Regardless of its success or failure in the marketplace, *The Marketing Code* contains lessons for consumer researchers considering "alternative" (Sherry 1991) modes of representation. The actual writing process is undeniably challenging—as is making a movie, performing a play, composing a poem, etc.—but these fiction-forging challenges bring their own rewards. Being forced to think about plot, dialogue, character, pacing and so forth, the bread and butter of professional writers, is a very useful training exercise. Writing, after all, is a craft and being required to write outside the

comfort zone of the standard academic article helps enhance the skills that our craft calls for (Booth, Colomb and Williams 1995). We can all improve as writers and the field as a whole can only benefit thereby.

The downside of fictionalizing one's research is that it is very difficult to revert to more familiar forms of expression. Just as Belk and Costa (1998) discovered in their study of modern mountain men, it isn't easy to return to "real life" after immersion in the rites of rendezvous (see also Kozinets 2002). Analogously, the fiction writer's god-like ability to create living breathing characters—and controlling their ultimate fate—is dangerously intoxicating for researchers more used to testing hypotheses, mining data sets and writing articles in a conventional scholarly manner. The lesson, then, is that those who pursue unorthodox modes of representation must be prepared for a the post-partum sense of scholarly estrangement.⁵

Despite this caveat, the pleasures of writing academic fiction greatly exceed the accompanying pains and it is hoped that just as videography has been embraced by marketing and consumer researchers, so too novelizations of our research will become the norm. Perhaps, in due course, creative writing workshops will run alongside the ACR Film Festival. Screenwriting workshops as well. Time will no doubt tell.

CONCLUSION

Twenty years ago, Russell Belk (1986, p.24) contended that "one can learn more from a reasonably good novel than from a 'solid' piece of social science research." It is equally arguable that one can learn more from writing a novel than publishing yet another solid piece of social science research. The novel, according to its innumerable boosters (e.g. Bradbury 1990), is the pre-eminent form of cultural expression in the western world. Poets, painters, musicians, movie-makers, television-producers, video-games developers may beg to differ, but there's no doubt that novels are blessed with considerable cultural cachet. Although it is unlikely that marketing and consumer researchers will turn to writing novels en masse—highly unlikely—the recent rise of heterodox forms of representation demands that we make an attempt. As a cultural form and representational practice, the novel is just too important to ignore. Call me Phishmael.

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⁴In *TMC*'s case, this is circumvented to some extent by the academic setting, which affords numerous opportunities for incorporating instructional material in the guise of lectures, seminars, conversations between colleagues and, as the excerpt indicates, descriptions of conference presentations.

⁵Would-be CB novelists must also be prepared for the ultimate professional question: "Why bother?" In a world teeming with wannabe novelists writing books on contemporary consumerism and equally replete with consumer researchers wedded to established modes of representation, why bother bringing both together? The principal reason, as Belk (2002) rightly points out, is that conventional modes of representation are becoming less and less effective. Managers and policy makers increasingly look elsewhere for inspiration. The preeminent commentators on consumer issues are journalists, not academicians. If no one is reading our stuff, perhaps consumer researchers should reconsider how they communicate their findings.

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Authenticity in the Performing Arts: A Foolish Quest?

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Although philosophers (Benjamin [1936] 1973), anthropologists and sociologists (MacCannell 1973) have examined the concept of authenticity decades ago, it has been neglected by consumer researchers for a long time. Only recently did authenticity draw the attention of a few scholars (Arnould and Price 2000, Camus 2001, 2004; Cova and Cova 2004; Grayson 2002; Grayson and Martinec 2004; Grayson and Shulman 2000; Rose and Wood 2005). According to Grayson and Martinec (2004), consumer quest for authenticity has existed for hundreds of years and still persists today as reflected by a substantial number of purchase situations and a wide variety of market offerings. For Camus (2001), an actual culture of authenticity only emerged in the seventies. This emergence may be explained by three major factors: nostalgia of the past and of elsewhere, the quest for references, meanings and truth (Benjamin [1936] 1973) and the need for singularity.

Much in contrast with the idea of authenticity as emerging cultural framework, postmodern writers have argued that technology's innovations and globalization have undermined consumers' ability to assess the difference between the real and the fake, between the authentic and the contrived. Benjamin ([1936] 1973) was among the first authors to point at the depreciation of authenticity in the arts. In his "*Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*", he observes a shift in the status of traditional art, in a period where technical means of art reproduction such as photography and film increasingly dominate the imagination of mass public. Similarly, for Baudrillard (1983), authenticity has been replaced by copy and nothing is real though those engaged in the illusion are incapable of seeing it. For others, as Belk (1996), consumers now prefer the easily accessible replica to the more inaccessible original. Moreover, as far as museums and historic sites are concerned, Belk (1996) underlines that *consumers are no longer interested in history, art and culture as such but in fantasy and spectacle. In the same way, Benjamin quotes Duhamel* "the masses seek distraction whereas art demands concentration from the spectator" (232). In summary, in a *cultural* world of hyperreality where the distinctions between real and unreal are blurred, the search for *distraction and entertainment appears to prevail over the quest for authenticity*.

This paper is about authenticity in arts and more precisely in the performing arts. Our research was *guided by an attempt to answer the following questions: are consumers looking for authenticity in their artistic/cultural experiences? Are they looking for "artertainment" rather than authenticity? Which type of authenticity is relevant when considering different types of cultural domains?* Departing from the hyperreal condition of the postmodern view (Baudrillard 1983; Belk 1996; Firat and Venkatesh 1995), we argue that some performing arts' spectators look for and experience a kind of "authenticity" when attending such shows. The paper is articulated in three major parts. Firstly, we briefly examine the concept of authenticity according to relevant streams of research. Secondly, we propose an extended review of the concept of authenticity and of definitions/dimensions according to different theoretical perspectives. Finally, we consider the extent to which those definitions/dimensions can be applied to different forms of art focusing on "high" and "pop" performing arts.

PARADIGMATICAL SHIFTS

MacCannell (1973) is the first to suggest that an object's authenticity can be assessed according to certain standards. In

tourism, products such as souvenirs or works of art are usually described as authentic or inauthentic depending on whether they are made or performed by locals according to local traditions (Reisinger and Steiner 2006). Hence, in the tourism literature, modernists usually refer to authenticity as something which is perceived and judged independently by experts and not by the tourists themselves. Tourists sometimes have the illusion they have encountered authentic things but tourist spaces are often constructed backstage in a contrived manner. This is the origin of MacCannell's popular concept of "staged authenticity." The modernist view of authenticity as something that can be determined objectively reflects a way of thinking that is radically opposed by postmodernists.

Postmodern researchers argue that "there is no sense in asking what is the original and what is the copy" (Venkatesh 1999, 157). For them, inauthenticity is even not a problem arguing that people live in hyperreality (Eco 1986). Whereas modern art is characterized by realism and representation (Firat and Venkatesh 1995), postmodernism is characterized by the blurring of art and everyday life, high and pop culture, pastiche, irony, etc. (Featherstone 1991). For some postmodern writers like Firat and Venkatesh, postmodernity should lead to the liberation and emancipation of consumers as opposed to the highly pessimistic view of other postmodernists. For Baudrillard (1995) and Featherstone (1991), life is becoming more aesthetic, more like the arts: ephemeral, experiential, image- and style-based. Postmodern performance theorists such as Kaye (1994) show that postmodernist—or more accurately anti-modernist—projects seek to disrupt any foundationalism or essentialism and question the very concepts of authenticity, wholeness, meaning and originality. He isolates three unifying elements in many of the postmodern works he approaches, i.e. (1) the deflation of the art object as an autonomous whole in favor of an emphasis on the spectator's construction of that object as an image in the mind; (2) the shift from art as object to art as receptive event; and (3) the upsetting of the hierarchies and assumptions that define and stabilize the formal and thematic parameters of the performance work (on that point, see also Auslander (1992) and his analysis of the Wooster Group's work).

Recent studies in consumer research, supporting the perspective that the distinction between the authentic and the inauthentic can be personally or socially constructed, pinpoint common cues that consumers use to evaluate different kinds of authenticity (Grayson 2002; Grayson and Martinec 2004; Grayson and Shulman 2000). In their consumption study about reality television, Rose and Wood (2005) even argue that the consumption of reality shows represents a sophisticated quest for authenticity within the traditionally fiction-oriented entertainment paradigm. These "constructivist" approaches of authenticity contrast postmodern views of hyperreality and even accept as authentic the fantasy that consumers co-produce during recreative experiences.

DECLINATIONS OF AUTHENTICITY

The term "authenticity" derives from the Greek "authentikos" in which "autos" means self and "entea" refers to tools or instruments. Nowadays, "authentic" is generally defined in two different ways: it means either "of the authorship or origin claimed, real, genuine" (something which has genuine authority) or "worthy of acceptance, true" as opposed to that which is false, fictitious and counterfeit (Costa and Bamossy 1995; Kennick 1985; Phillips 1997). In other words, genuineness and true value are the two

broadly accepted meanings of authenticity and, as we will see, they often are taken into account in the different approaches exploring the concept.

Following a semiotic approach, Barrère and Santagata (1999) define a work of art according to three criteria, i.e., originality, artistic labour, and aesthetic need (or lack of utility). In the quest of authenticity in the art, the two first criteria appear to be more relevant. Indeed art aesthetics cannot be generalized as some goods may be considered art in one society and not in another (Barrère and Santagata 1999; Gell 1996). Originality may be connected with the “genuineness” definition of authenticity mentioned above. Every creative act, if original, is also unique and, in this sense, is to be opposed to the multiple productions of standardized goods. This characteristic means that art can be copied but not perfectly reproduced (Barrère and Santagata 1999). According to Benjamin ([1936] 1973), the presence of the original is central to the concept of authenticity, and the existence of the original is enhanced by its survival through time. According to him, authenticity includes “everything that is to be transmitted, from its origin, its material duration as well as its historical testimony” (214) and is depreciated by any mechanical reproduction. Of course, mechanical reproduction enables to reproduce all transmitted works of art but even the most perfect reproduction is lacking an essential feature: its *hic and nunc*, its unique existence or history. The *hic and nunc* of the original forms the essence of the notion of authenticity. With mechanical reproduction, the *hic and nunc* is depreciated. The subsequent proliferations of a traditional artwork bear only an imagistic similitude to the original, lacking the *aura* and therefore any relation to the actual historical dimension thereof. The *aura* refers to the artwork’s “presence in time where it happens to be” (Benjamin [1936] 1973, 214) and is an indicator of its authenticity and authority. According to Benjamin, in the age of mechanical reproduction, the *aura* is declining because exhibition value (emerging from reproductibility) gets the prevalence over cult value (arising from the devotion to a work of art or an artist). Originality is not the only condition for authentic artworks for Barrère and Santagata (1999). A second criterion is artistic labour, or the fact that the creation is achieved through a specific work. Because of its own specificity, the output of artistic labour is extremely heterogeneous. What is important here is the quality and personality of artistic labour, as well as the talent and the creativity incorporated in it. This criterion involves a broader definition of authenticity than “originality” because its emphasis is more on the artist’s performance than on the history of the work of art. This criterion includes the author’s inspiration and intention to create the object, which makes it authentic (Camus, 2001). In the same way, Cova and Cova (2002) argue that authentic refers to which is “built” without any strategic intention in it. The “producer” is to be authentic in his/her actions focusing on his/her current production/work and not on the future of it. This “short-term” disinterested view is, for us, the landmark of authentic artistic work as opposed to a mid-term perspective guided by returns or yields. On the one hand, spontaneity, emotionality, and simultaneity prevail, whereas, on the other hand, mechanical reproduction, calculation, and simulation contribute to inauthenticity. Those dimensions are in accordance with the “truth” definition already mentioned in the sense that a work of art will be considered as authentic because each performance is unique in itself.

Perhaps the earliest account of authenticity still popular today is Socrates’ admonition that the “unexamined” life is not worth living. In the 20th century, discussions of authenticity often refer to the key writers associated with existentialist philosophy (e.g., Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Sartre). Heidegger (1977) associates authenticity with non-technological modes of existence, seeing

technology as distorting a more “authentic” relationship with the natural world. With the new technologies, people observe spectacles, via control screens instead of living real experiences. Instead of the real, we have simulations and simulacra (Baudrillard 1983). So, from a philosophical point of view, the drift towards authenticity may be seen as a reaction to threats of inauthenticity inherent in postmodernism (Firat and Venkatesh 1995). Authenticity is contrasted with “falsity” or “fakery” in ordinary discourse, but, falsity does not imply fraud at every stage of the production of a fake, as argued by Dutton in his essay “*Authenticity in Art*” (2003). The latter author identifies two broad categories that help making a distinction between the authentic and inauthentic in aesthetics, which parallel the originality and performance criteria described above. First, works of art may possess “nominal authenticity”, simply defined as the correct identification of the origins, authorship, or provenance of an object, ensuring that an object of aesthetic experience is properly named (our originality criterion). However, the concept of authenticity often connotes something else, having to do with an object’s character as a true expression of an individual (our “artistic labour” or “performance” criterion). This second dimension of authenticity is called “expressive authenticity”. According to Dutton, many works of art that are called “inauthentic” are merely misidentified. There is nothing fraudulent about wrongly guessing the origins of an apparently eighteenth-century Italian painting. Fraudulence is approached only when what is only an optimistic guess is presented as well-established knowledge, or when the person making the guess uses his/her position or authority to give it a weight exceeding what it deserves (Dutton 2003).

In consumer research, many studies on authenticity have observed that commercialization can undermine authenticity and that the assessment of authenticity involves complex perceptual processes (Belk and Costa 1998; Kozinets 2002; Peñaloza 2001). But few of them clearly define and consider it as a key component that consumers take into account in their assessment of the arts. According to Rose and Wood (2005), consumers increasingly value authenticity in a world characterized by the mass production of artifacts. Recent works by Grayson (2002) and Grayson and Martinec (2004) on tourist attractions specified and identified two types of authenticity based on a semiotic perspective: indexical authenticity and iconic authenticity, both being associated with genuineness or true but in different ways. On the one hand, indexicality helps to distinguish “the real thing” from its copies. To perceive something as an index, the consumer must believe that it actually has the factual and spatio-temporal link that is claimed (Grayson and Shulman 2000). On the other hand, iconicity refers to the object being perceived to look like what was expected. In other words, iconic authenticity describes an entity whose physical manifestation resembles something that is indexically authentic of it (writers sometimes use phrases such as “authentic reproduction” or “authentic recreation”). The authors also mention that these two kinds of authenticity are not mutually exclusive. Moreover, all market offerings have both properties but not all will be judged as authentic by a particular consumer. Finally, perceptions of indexicality and iconicity are graded: consumers may perceive market offerings as being more or less iconic or indexical. These studies contrast postmodern views of hyperreality by suggesting that consumers can readily distinguish between the authentic and the contrived. Rose and Wood (2005) challenge the notion of indexical authenticity adopted by Grayson and Shulman (2000) considering that authenticity necessarily depends on a judgment of genuineness. In the context of reality shows, indexical authenticity is found to be an important condition for commitment but not sufficient to ensure a judgment of “satisfying” authenticity (a function of the conjunction of the objectively real and the desirable). The authors argue that

consumers mix fantastic elements of programming with indexical elements connected with their personal reality. In other words, viewers value “hyperauthenticity”, a label used by Rose and Wood after Baudrillard’s (1983) notion of hyperreality: “whereas hyperreality denotes the nonreflexive substitutions of signs of the real for the real itself, hyperauthenticity denotes viewer’s reflexive consumption of an individualized blend of fantasy with the real” (294). In fact they propose a third way between the modern quest for authenticity and the postmodern view of hyperreality; they accept as authentic the fantasy that is coproduced in entertainment experiences.

Looking at authenticity from different perspectives reveals the multidimensionality of that concept and hence, the complexity of its assessment. Consumers will rely on different cues to assess different kinds of authenticity (Grayson and Martinec 2004). In the arts, the way the authentic/inauthentic distinction sorts out is thus importantly context-dependent. In the next section, we describe the particular characteristics of performing arts and investigate how these characteristics can influence the complex process involved in the perception and assessment of authenticity.

AUTHENTICITY IN THE PERFORMING ARTS

There is a need to analyze the nature of authenticity in arts, like dance and music, even though they are being created, *hic et nunc*. Seminal works of Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) have frequently been mentioned as the first attempt to understand consumer behavior in the cultural field. For these authors, consumption has to be seen as involving a steady flow of fantasies, feelings and fun encompassed by an “experiential view.” According to them, cultural and artistic activities are particular services whose consumption mainly aims at satisfying the consumer’s hedonic and aesthetic needs. What the consumer really looks for is living a rewarding experience rather than solving a utilitarian problem. It should be stressed that “live” cultural activities involve more experiential and spectacular aspects of the consumption than cultural goods. The artwork remains the same in time and is unaffected by the presence of a different audience; this is not such the case for the cultural activity/experience. In this paper, the focus is on cultural activities involving “a performer” (e.g. a singer, an actor, an orchestra, a ballet dancer, etc). Performing arts not only involve one or more performer(s) but also an audience. In live performances, the audience usually reacts to the performers who, in turn, react to the audience in a permanent cyclic interchange. Actors often acknowledge that they live on an audience’s energy, especially as far as comedy is concerned, and complain when the audience does not react in conspicuous ways. Artists’ performances will vary from one night to the next depending in large part on the audience’s feedback. The togetherness of both actors and spectators is a feature that helps making a distinction between performing arts such as theater, ballet or concerts, and cultural industries such as film and television. Along with the live presence of an audience, group participation distinguishes performing arts from plastic/graphic arts like painting or sculpture.

In the following paragraphs, a series of propositions are made about authenticity in the performing arts. These propositions are summarized in Table 1. First, a show could be qualified as “authentic” because it is performed more or less the way it was fixed in time several decades/centuries ago, this conception of authenticity fits into the idea of “genuineness” or “originality.” This question of original work often arises in “high” performing arts. Here, the word “authentic” refers to a class of performances that seek historical verisimilitude, typically through using period tools and attempting to recreate performance as in the past. According to some philosophers (Davies 2001; Dutton 2003), the historical reconstruction of

a performance (i.e., nominal authenticity) is not the best way to convince spectators of the artwork’s interest. One would not go back to Shakespeare’s productions in which boys performed females’ roles just because it was the way it should happen in Shakespeare’s time. In other words, we assume that Shakespeare would have chosen women to play these roles if had the option. Similarly, the Beethoven piano sonatas were written for the biggest, loudest pianos Beethoven could find in the early 19th century; there is little doubt that he would have favored the modern concert grand, if he had the choice (Dutton 2003). Nevertheless, in “high” performing arts, original texts, compositions or scores left by authors and composers are cues of authenticity spectators are still looking for because reputation and time have elevated them to a “sacred” status. We like to hear “good” French when attending Molière plays. We like to be meditative hearing Bach’s Passion. We often exhibit a kind of “respect” due the sacred character of the work in high performing arts. Precision and trustworthiness are more important than improvisation. Despite those “original” cues, spectators are now searching for creativity and renewal in performances. The very idea of a performing art allows performers a degree of interpretive freedom (Davies 2001). The best attitude towards authenticity in performing arts is when performers try to take the largest artistic potential out of the work.

Another conceptualization of authenticity in the performing arts adheres to the definition that the Greeks must have intended. Authenticity here derives from the quality of the relationship between the artist’s self and its performance on stage. The more honest this relationship, the more authentic is the art that emerges. Performing arts exist in a finite space and time; this means that a performance has a very short-lived existence. Another similar work of art may be created the next night, but the different audience and the differences in the performers themselves will make the performance different. Because performances of actors in a play or of musicians in a rock concert are never twice the same (uniqueness of the performance), it is impossible to reproduce such performances exactly in their original state (Evrard, Bourgeon, and Petr 2000). The artist(s) on stage has no right to make mistakes; s/he has to be committed, “true” and as honest as possible with respect to his/her public and fans. Benjamin ([1936] 1973) argues that new forms of imaging—such as film and photography—challenge traditional conceptions of art that emphasize genius, originality and uniqueness. These new forms of visuality are rooted in mechanical reproduction. A film print or photograph has no “original”—and, according to Benjamin ([1936]1973), no *aura*—in the conventional sense. Also, the aura that envelops film actor also vanishes in comparison with the stage actor because of new techniques (and the cult of the “movie star” that it generates). Performing arts’ spectators often perceive an *aura* emanating from the stage actor. This is most obvious when considering the charismatic power emanating from singers such as Mick Jagger and Bono or actors like Ethel Barrymore and Gerard Depardieu. This aura may be connected with indexical authenticity defined by Grayson and Martinec (2004) as “a person’s actions or expressions [that] are thought to clearly reflect who the person really is” (297). It is also in line with the concept of performance authenticity (expressive authenticity in philosophers’ terms) that may be defined as faithfulness to the performer’s own self and originality in that the performer does not ape someone else’s way of playing (Kivy 1995). In summary, the performance’s uniqueness (including live production, *aura*, indexicality) and irreproductibility seem to make the experience real and true and so, to be determinants of authenticity in the performing arts.

As mentioned before, in performing arts, the live presence of the audience is an essential element of the show. The existence of strong social interactions with the rest of the audience as well as

TABLE 1
Authenticity and Its Applications to Arts

	Plastic/Graphic Arts Painting, Sculpture	“High” PA Classical music performance, Opera, Ballet, Theatre	“Pop” PA Pop/Rock Concerts, Musical plays	Cultural Industries Movies, Photography, Music (records and tapes), Edition, Television, Radio
Originality	Can be reproduced but not always in its original state (fakes) and is often transmissible	Can not be reproduced in its original state but “sacred” original texts, compositions and scores	Can not be reproduced in its original state	Depreciation of authenticity because of multiple reproduction and transmissibility
Uniqueness and truthfulness	Uniqueness (challenged by reproduction)	Uniqueness of the performance, “live”	Uniqueness of the performance, “live”	No uniqueness
	Aura emanating from the artist	Aura emanating from the performer	Aura emanating from the performer	Lack of aura
	Indexical (and possible Iconic) authenticity	Indexical (expressive) authenticity	Indexical (expressive) authenticity	Highly possible Iconic authenticity
Endowment of the experience with authenticity	Existence without any audience	Existence through audience (moderate interactions)	Existence through audience (strong interactions)	Existence through audience (few interactions)
	Cult Value (but with multiple reproduction, increasing exhibition value)	Cult Value (more inner ritual)	Cult Value (more outer ritual)	Dominance of exhibition value
	Weak negotiation between fantasy and real	Negotiation between fantastic and real elements	Negotiation between fantastic and real elements	Strong negotiation between fantastic and real elements
No Authenticity	Postmodern View of Hyperreality			

with the performers (in comparison with the more anonym cinema) adds authenticity to the show. Aesthetic experience inspires and produces a reaction, but art is something that exists both independently and outside of the consumer of art, as well as within the human realm. It is through the interaction between the consumer and the art that aesthetic experience is materialized (Venkatesh and Meamber 2006). For the audience, attending performing arts is a major opportunity to establish and maintain social ties, to experience and share emotions. Social interactions contribute to authenticity through rituals and the emergence of a *communitas* of devoted spectators. This concept has been introduced by Turner (1969) and was redefined by Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989) as “a social antistructure that frees participants from their normal social roles and statuses and instead engages them in a transcending camaraderie of status equality” (7). In other words, people who otherwise do not have anything in common interact and share experiences. Turner (1977) has characterized *communitas* as involving a “shared flow.” It should be noticed that, during the show, the balance between outer and inner manifestations of *communitas* may differ between high culture (i.e. opera, theatre) and popular culture (i.e.

rock concerts). For example, in a rock concert, a strong interaction between an individual and the rest of the audience is clearly illustrated by situations when spectators sing together with the performer or “bring the house down.” A larger and highly-involved audience gives more room for laughing, crying, shouting, or jumping together, which add authenticity to the show. The audience forms a collective identity (*communitas*) during the performance, which results in spectators’ feeling of having lived a “real” authentic experience. These interactions also imply rituals (Rook 1985). Various aesthetic products such as operas or theatre are commonly considered to be spiritually elevating, and their consumption is highly ritualized (Levy, Czepiel, and Rook 1981). Even less elevating aesthetic situations, such as heavy metal concert, are extensively ritualized episodes (for instance, some AC/DC fans also called “headbangers”, all shaking their head while following the beat). With these *communitas* and rituals, the cult value, beloved by Benjamin ([1936] 1973), persists and contributes to authenticity.

Fantasy in performing arts can also contribute to authenticity. Logically enough, performing arts experiences involve a steady flow of fantasies, feelings and fun. As in Rose and Wood’s study

(2005), attending performing arts results in an active negotiation of fantastic and real elements that leads to a constructed, authentic experience characterized as “hyperauthentic” (Rose and Wood 2005). Moreover, at the opera or during a theatre play, the participation to the show also implies a flow or peak experience. Flow experiences include a centering of attention, a loss of self, a feeling of being in control of self and environment and an autotelic aspect such that the activity is its own reward (Csikszentmihalyi (1975) referenced by Belk *et al.* 1989, 8). As pinpointed by Arnould and Price (2000), activities that induce flow or peak experience (intense emotions for instance) may be experienced as authenticating acts. The issue here (regarding strong social interactions and the blend of fantasy and real) is not whether the individual “really” experiences the authentic, but rather whether the individual endows the experience with authenticity (with empathy for example). So, authenticity of the performing arts may be constructed both socially and through spectator’s personal experiences. This idea is in opposition with postmodernists’ view of a “pristine world of uncontaminated art” i.e., a world where artists create aesthetic objects to realize their personal vision and to satisfy their own creative impulses and where the artistic enterprise is removed from the world of consumer whims and fantasies (Venkatesh and Meamber 2006).

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

“Without culture, and the relative freedom it implies, society, even when perfect, is nothing but a jungle. This is why any authentic creation is a gift to the future” (Camus 1953, 186). This quote from Albert Camus summarizes pretty well which kind of authenticity performing arts spectators are looking for: the authentic (re)creation. In this paper, authenticity has been presented as committed, as resulting from personal expressions, as being true to one’s artistic self rather than to an historical tradition (Dutton 2003). The *aura* of the artists clearly survives. Really taking part to the show, the audience contributes to authenticity: the performing art’s experience is not objectively real but rather endowed with authenticity by the spectators themselves (Arnould and Price, 2000). That is why we have to accept that fantasy and real are blended and negotiated by the consumer. Moreover, the existence of the work of art with reference to its *aura* is never entirely separated from its ritual function (Benjamin [1936] 1973). With *communitas* and rituals, performing arts have something “sacred” that make them more authentic experiences. Nevertheless, some threats to authenticity exist like when adaptations are made in order to be in fashion or when performers lack honesty.

In addition to the quest for genuineness in performing arts, future research should be directed toward the concept of nostalgia that certainly is connected with authenticity. Some people are nostalgic when thinking about the *Woodstock* festival that Arnould and Price (2000) would certainly qualify as an authoritative performance, i.e., “a collective display aimed at inventing and refashioning cultural traditions” (140) such as the antiglobalization or anti-branding practices exhibited en masse during the Burning Man festival (Kozinets 2002). Perhaps present events such the *Live Eight* is a substitute for the *Woodstock*’s nostalgic persons and attempts to remind us what are the “true” values or what is a community so finally what is “authentic”.

Finally, more and more performers and producers spread political views through their shows. Philip Auslander has written about the Wooster Group’s political postmodernism (1992): the group uses to recontextualize historical texts and exposes the texts’ underlying political assumptions. Then they calls on audience members to formulate their own commentaries, their own answers

to the questions raised; in doing so, the group returns critical voices to the audience. In that way, they also create a kind of “authentic” experience, making spectators reflect on present reality. As mentioned by Turner (1982) in his book on theatre, “when we act on the stage, whatever our stage may be, we must now in this reflexive age of psychoanalysis and semiotics as never before, bring into the symbolic or fictitious world the urgent problem of our reality”.

Philosophers will certainly agree if we assume that the depth of authenticity in the performing arts finally remains in the communion of honest and “true” artists with a passionate audience...

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Aesthetic Advertisements and Scientific Evaluations: Divergent Philosophies in Advertising Production

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Art or Science? Advertising in Historical Perspective

Advertising has been recognised for its embodiment of aesthetic qualities (Brown 1995; Venkatesh and Meamber 2006), and some theorists have suggested that advertising in itself is a legitimate form of art (Gibbons 2005; Scott 2005). However, advertising fulfils a commercial business function for client sponsors, and the conflict between art and commerce within advertising agencies has been an omnipresent macro theme of advertising history (Frank 1997; Jackall and Hirota 2000). In the early twentieth century, there was a concern amongst clients and advertising agencies to minimise the risk associated with advertising through the application of scientific approaches to predict, measure and control the production and reception of advertisements (Kreshel 1990; Marchand 1985). The most significant proponent of the "scientific" approach to advertising was Claude C. Hopkins, who's landmark textbook "Scientific Advertising" (Hopkins 1998 [1923]) was extremely influential on how advertising was practiced during this time period, and his work inspired other practitioners to write highly popular and influential books detailing rational and rule-based scientific approaches to writing, developing and testing advertising that were pivotal to both commercial and creative success (Ogilvy 1963; Reeves 1961).

The 1950's and 1960's however brought about a global period of cultural and social change, and with it what became known as "the creative revolution" in advertising (Frank 1997). A new generation of creative advertising practitioners had arrived such as Leo Burnett and William Bernbach, who had a more aesthetic appreciation of advertising and rejected the scientific dominance and rules of the Hopkins advertising tradition. While the creative revolution in advertising took place in the mid-twentieth century, the divergence between aesthetic and scientific philosophies in advertising production has been an enduring feature of the industry up to the present day (Fox 1997; Steel 1998; Tasgal 2003). This philosophical divergence is most apparent in client's use of scientifically-orientated copy testing in the creative process, which is often based upon a "neo-positivist epistemology" (Hackley 2003, p. 324) to predict and measure consumer response to advertising, and is regarded as "pseudo-science" by creative teams (Kover 1996, p. 8). Creative cultures in advertising agencies have artistic ideologies (Hackley 2003; Hirschman 1983), while client cultures are increasingly adopting scientific approaches to creative processes (Tasgal 2003), and this philosophical division has sustained the conflict between art and science in advertising production (Bogart 1989; Eighmey 1988).

Research Method

The primary research for this paper draws from interview data collected during an ethnographic study of a full-service advertising agency in Dublin, Ireland in 2003. The purpose of the paper is to explore how advertising practitioners describe the dominant philosophies, ideologies and conflicts that exist in the production of advertising in a contemporary agency, and to investigate if the historic division between art and science in advertising is manifested within these discursive accounts (Fox 1997). Ten ethno-

graphic interviews were conducted in total (Spradley 1979); five interviews with advertising account planners, and five interviews with advertising creative teams of copywriters and art directors. The broad interview agenda was to gain informants reflections and observations on the process of producing advertising, the nature of everyday work practices in an advertising agency, the role of advertising clients in the creative process and the methods of advertising research used to evaluate the advertising produced within the agency. The interviews were tape recorded and fully transcribed into over 80,000 words of text. A discourse analysis approach was adopted for the collection, analysis and interpretation of the interview data (Potter and Wetherell 1987; Wood and Kroger 2000), to explore how advertising practitioners described and accounted for the practices and processes of developing advertising campaigns with corporate clients.

Data Analysis

Four central "interpretative repertoires" were developed from the interview data, which are the stylistic sets of terms, figures of speech and metaphors drawn upon by advertising professionals in the interviews to describe their work within the agency and the advertising process more generally (Hackley 2000). "*Client Ideology*" described the power relationship between large corporate clients and the advertising agency, which was based upon the economic dependence of the agency on the business of the client. This power relationship was reinforced in the ways in which advertising agency processes and practices in the development and evaluation of advertising ideas for large clients were constructed through dominant client ideologies. "*Scientific Rationality*" described the conflict between certainty and risk in advertising production, and how large clients rationalised the creative process within the agency through the application of scientifically-orientated copy testing methodologies to evaluate advertising. "*Tunnels of Mediocrity*" was drawn upon by the creative practitioners to describe how the "systematising" of advertising by clients through copy testing led to the production of advertisements that were "middle of the road" and "safe", and in this process advertising became "acceptable to all and exciting to no one" (Steel 1998, p. 226) from the creative perspective. Finally "*Managerial Accountability*" described how client representatives were increasingly being held personally accountable to managerial superiors within client organisations for advertising campaign decisions, which reduced the risk-taking propensity and bravery of clients in the creative process.

Conclusions

This paper has explored the historical conflict between art and science in advertising production, and has shown how this philosophical division is still both relevant and apparent in contemporary practice in an Irish advertising agency. While the study focuses upon one advertising agency within a specific cultural context, some conclusions can be drawn and recommendations for advertising practice can be made. The scientific paradigm of prediction, measurement and control was an implicit framework used by clients to evaluate the advertising produced by the agency, which was a source of underlying creative conflict and divergent philoso-

phy within the advertising process. A key finding of the paper is that the advertising cycle between art and science continues to perpetuate itself in contemporary advertising practice in Ireland (Fox 1997), and that science was the dominant paradigm for the evaluation of creative advertisements by large clients. Some suggestions for a cultural and aesthetic approach to research knowledge are offered as a viable alternative to the scientific paradigm in advertising production.

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ROUNDTABLE

Disseminating Transformative Consumer Research: Getting Research Results Out of the Tower and Into Consumers' Lives

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David Hunt, University of Wyoming, USA
David Mick, University of Virginia, USA
Julie Ozanne, Virginia Tech University, USA

BACKGROUND—TRANSFORMATIVE CONSUMER RESEARCH

In the report on the ACR Task Force on Transformative Consumer Research (TCR), David Mick describes the mission of TCR as making "...a beneficial difference in the lives of consumers, both present and future generations, through the chosen focus and conduct of specific research, and in the communicating of its implications and usefulness. More simply stated, TCR is "...consumer research in the service of quality of life."

In addition to identifying a number of substantive topics for Transformative Consumer Research, members of the inaugural Task Force on TCR acknowledged the importance of *disseminating transformative research* in a form comprehensible to and valued by consumers. Task force members recommended several strategies including, special issues of academic journals, special symposia and published proceedings, development of the "for consumers" section of the ACR website, creation of the position of ACR chief communications officer, and development of media aimed at the general public. This initial dialogue provides a framework and some strategic options for moving the relevance of consumer research findings closer to the consumer.

ROUNDTABLE PURPOSE

In the spirit of the Task Force's call to develop and act upon the ideas that emerged from the initial dialogue, the purpose of the Disseminating TCR roundtable is twofold: 1) to further develop and clarify appropriate mediums for reaching consumers with transformative research, and 2) to bring to light existing resources where synergistic interest in substantive TCR topics generates opportunities for collaboration in the dissemination of transformative research to consumer audiences.

ROUNDTABLE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

The proposed Disseminating TCR roundtable will include: 1) members of the inaugural Task Force on Transformative Consumer Research, 2) researchers actively involved in substantive topics relevant to transformative consumer research, and 3) experienced and aspiring consumer researchers interested in making their research relevant and accessible to consumers.

Panelists will be asked to share personal experiences with research projects in the area of TCR, and to discuss appropriate mediums and possible resources for disseminating their findings to consumers. It is expected that the ensuing discussion will stimulate interest in seeking synergistic collaborations with the express purpose of disseminating transformative research to consumer audiences.

Particular questions to be addressed include: Where and how should our findings be communicated? Who is the audience? Who should/could be involved in dissemination the findings? How can we leverage relationships within university environments to facilitate the information dissemination? How can we leverage information collected by state and federal agencies (e.g., needs assess-

ments) and how can we leverage their existing relationships with consumers to communicate our findings?

There are several potentially valuable outcomes of this roundtable. One would be a better understanding of how the "For Consumers" section of our ACR website should look (e.g., Who is the audience? How should the information be communicated? How can we leverage relationships within university environments and within consumer interest groups and agencies?). Another outcome would be exploring new publication options and collaborations with ACR for newsletters, books, and so forth that are aimed at the general public and its welfare. Another outcome would be exploring the development of a volunteer or partly-paid Communications Director position at ACR, a person who would have a large role in coordinating publicity and new findings related to ACR's venture in Transformative Consumer Research.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Low-Fat Foods and High-Fat People: The Role of Anticipated and Experienced Consumption Pleasure and Guilt

Pierre Chandon, INSEAD, France

Brian Wansink, Cornell University, USA

According to Vohs and Baumeister (2004) "Eating is one of the most commonplace, yet least well understood, self-regulation domains." Indeed, how can one reconcile the rising obesity rates with the increasing availability of healthy foods and the increasing number of Americans who are on a diet and exercise regularly?

The objective of this special session is to examine how anticipated and experienced consumption pleasures and guilt can explain why we are a nation of low-fat foods and high-fat people. Specifically, the three presentations show that the guilt caused by the perceived healthiness of food influences the anticipated and experienced pleasure of consuming it, which in turn affects whether people choose healthy or unhealthy food and how much of it they consume. These papers also offer different insights for leading consumers toward healthier food consumption decisions.

In the first presentation, Raghunathan, Naylor, and Hoyer show that one of the reasons why consumers steer away from unfamiliar healthy food is that they expect that it tastes worse than unhealthy regular food. For example, they find that people expect that a new brand of crackers tastes better when it is high in "bad" saturated fat than when it is high in "good" unsaturated fat. They also find that people enjoy Mango Lassi more when it is described as "generally considered unhealthy". Their results hold regardless of whether consumers believe that unhealthy food is generally tastier than healthy food or not. This suggests that education programs and even taste tests aimed at convincing consumers that healthy food is tasty may be of limited impact.

In the second presentation, Wansink and Chandon show that, even if consumers have already chosen a healthy food alternative, even a familiar one, they are likely to overeat it and may therefore end up with a higher calorie intake than if they had chosen the less healthy food. For example, they show that labeling M&M's as "low fat" increases food intake during a single consumption occasion of people by up to 50%. They show that this occurs 1) because people erroneously infer that "low fat" means "low calories" and that a larger serving size is therefore appropriate for low-fat foods and 2) because "low fat" labels decrease anticipated consumption guilt. From a public policy perspective, they find that providing objective serving size information (e.g., "contains 2 servings") only reduces overeating among normal weight consumers, *not* among overweight consumers, who typically experience low levels of guilt.

The third presentation, by Goldsmith, Kim, and Dhar, integrates the findings of the first two presentations. They show that feelings of guilt caused by the perceived unhealthiness of food reduce anticipated and experienced consumption pleasure for unambiguous food but increase anticipated and experienced consumption pleasure for ambiguous food. They find that priming guilt reduces the anticipated enjoyment from eating a favorite dish and reduces the actual enjoyment from consuming ice cream. For novel food however, they find that priming guilt *increases* the expected and experienced consumption pleasure. These findings explain why Raghunathan, Naylor, and Hoyer, who focused on ambiguous food, found higher likelihood of choosing guilt-inducing unhealthy foods whereas Wansink and Chandon, who focused on well-known snacks, found a lower consumption quantity for guilt-inducing unhealthy foods.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY
Thinking About the Future
Ying Zhang, University of Chicago

SESSION SUMMARY

Consumers' everyday choice of action is often based on future-oriented thinking. For example, consumers may decide to forgo a delicious dessert in anticipation of achieving their ideal weight by a certain date, or they may decide to open a college saving account with the hope to go to college in the future. Although a great deal of research has been directed toward the dynamics of self-regulation in consumer choice (e.g. Fishbach and Dhar, 2005; Kivetz and Simonson 2002), relatively less attention has been given to how thoughts about future goal attainment may influence consumers' current goal pursuit. Given the motivational power of future expectations or fantasies, this session seeks to explore the key principles of how future-oriented thinking may impact consumers' current goal pursuit.

When contemplating about future, consumers may think about what they would do (i.e., *actions*), predict how they would feel (i.e., *emotions*), and plan when they would take actions to pursue their goals (i.e., *temporal frames*). In this session we plan to address these different aspects of thinking about future. In terms of future actions, we explore how expecting obstacles in future goal pursuit influence people's optimistic predictions and how these predictions may then impact their actual goal pursuit. In terms of expected emotions, we are interested in how thinking about future emotional experience enhances one's motivation for ongoing goal pursuit. In terms of temporal frames associates with goal-setting, we present research exploring whether thinking about limited (vs. unlimited) self-regulatory resources make people focus more on goals set for the proximal, compared with for the distant future.

The three papers in this session are organized around the theme of impact of future-oriented thinking on self-regulation in the present, and they each addresses one specific aspect of thinking about future: planning actions, anticipating emotions and considering available ego resources. Specifically, the first paper (by Zhang and Fishbach) suggests that when consumers expect obstacles in future goal pursuit, they come up with more optimistic predictions to motivate themselves, and these optimistic predictions in turn elicit higher motivation for their goal pursuit. However, when consumers strive to be accurate in their predictions, they become more conservative when considering the effect of future obstacles, and their actual motivation for goal pursuit decreases as a result. For example, consumers who hold a saving-money goal would predict to save more in face a big end-of-holiday sale, and they would subsequently end up saving more compared with those who try to be accurate in making such predictions, and who may report less saving when facing a big end-of-holiday sale, and actually save less.

The second paper (by Keinan and Kivetz) builds on previous literature attesting that consumers often suffer from a reverse self-control problem, i.e., exercising too much self-control and forgoing short-term pleasures. This paper examines whether consumers can foresee the future detrimental consequences of excessive self-control at present. It demonstrates that anticipating future regret relaxes consumers' self-control efforts at present and motivates choice of indulgence. For example, thinking about the regret one might feel in the distant future for missing out on an indulgence may encourage the person to choose more temptation-related options in an immediate choice.

The third paper (by Mukhopadhyay and Agrawal) indicates that individuals' future-oriented goal setting interacts with their lay

theory on whether self-control is a limited or unlimited resource, suggesting that consumers who believe their self-regulatory resources are limited are more likely to act on goals that are temporally closer, whereas those who hold the belief that self-regulation is unlimited are more influenced by distally framed goals. For example, consumers who believe that self-control resources are limited may be willing to pay more for a gym membership when the keep-in-shape goal is framed for the near future, whereas those who believe self-control is unlimited may be willing to pay more when the same goal is framed for the distant future.

Each of the three papers in this session explores one aspect of future-oriented thinking—expected actions, expected emotions, and expected temporal frames. Collectively, they provide new insights on the understanding of self-regulation by studying how individuals' future-oriented thoughts may impact their ongoing actions. The set of papers will lead to an interesting discussion about the effect of such psychological factors as temporal distance on consumer choice. These papers further contribute to an emerging research area that is relevant to the diverse interests of many ACR members: those interested in self-control, motivated cognition, construal level, optimism and emotions.

“To Be Optimistic or To Be Accurate: How Self-Control and Accuracy Motives Influence Predictions of Goal Pursuit”

Ying Zhang, University of Chicago
Ayelet Fishbach, University of Chicago

Consumers' forward-looking predictions, such as how long it will take to complete certain tasks and how much one can save next year, consistently suffer from the optimism bias. Both cognitive (Buehler, Griffin, and Ross 1994) and motivational explanations (Kunda 1990; Taylor and Brown 1988) are offered to account for the optimism bias in predicting one's goal pursuit, arguing that insufficient attention given to obstacles and motivation to see oneself in positive lights are reasons behind the optimistic predictions. More generally, it is believed that when people intend to arrive in a particular and directional conclusion, they rely on some biased cognitive processes, such that the desired outcome can be attained through reasoning.

Whereas all existent accounts emphasize the impact of the desirability of outcome in causing the prediction biases, we propose that consumers come up with optimistic predictions in order to motivate themselves when anticipating obstacles to their future goal attainment. Specifically, we propose that the predications of future goal pursuit involve two competing motives: an accuracy motive, by which people try not to overestimate or underestimate their future goal pursuit, and a self-control motive, by which people seek to motivate themselves by making an optimistic prediction.

These two competing motives (accuracy vs. self-control) may lead to opposite predictions when people face obstacles for goal pursuit: while the accuracy motive points to a more conservative prediction, the self-control motive may push for a more optimistic prediction to motivate more goal pursuit. Which of the two competing motives takes the upper hand in predictions would then depend on whether the situation calls for greater accuracy or more self-control.

When people exercise self-control, anticipation of obstacles to the attainment of important long-term goals activates counteractive evaluations (Fishbach and Trope 2005; Trope and Fishbach 2000).

Therefore, it is possible that in situations where obstacles are present, the activated self-control motive fosters optimistic predictions as a demanding goal to elicit higher motivation. On the other hand, when the motivation to produce an accurate estimate is emphasized, people generate more conservative predictions. We further hypothesize that predictions affect actions, such that optimistic predictions induced by self-control would motivate more actual goal pursuit, compared with a more accurate but more conservative and hence, less motivating prediction.

Three studies were conducted to test our general hypothesis. In Study 1, participants were asked to predict the amount of their future goal pursuit either before or after they answer questions concerning possible temptation pursuit. The results showed that participants predicted that they would engage in more goal related activities (e.g., studying for exams) when they thought about temptations that may undermine their goal attainment first, compared with when they did not. However, when prompted to be accurate in their predictions, participants estimated roughly equal amount of goal pursuit before or after the thoughts on temptation.

Study 2 extends the basic finding using behavioral measures. In this study, participants were given a take-home exam to finish and were asked to give an estimated return date before they left. When participants were motivated to complete the exam early, those who expected interference in the exam completion, predicted to submit the exam earlier than those who did not expect interference. However, when participants were motivated to offer an accurate prediction, participants predicted to submit the exam later when they expected interference than when they did not. The subsequent measure of their actual submission time showed that those who predicted earlier submission did take less time to complete the exam.

Study 3 further investigated the effect of optimistic predictions on people's effort in goal pursuit. Participants in this study completed a word composition task while listening to some background music, and were either told that the music would help their performance or that it would hurt their performance. The results showed that when participants were motivated to perform well in the task, those who were told the music is harmful predicted to perform better, compared with those who were told that the music was helpful. However, this pattern was reversed when participants were motivated to be accurate in their predictions. The subsequent measure of participants' actual persistence in the task showed that those who predicted better performance despite harmful music showed the highest motivation to pursue the goal.

Taken together, this research identifies two different motives behind people's prediction of their future goal pursuit: a self-control motive, which is made salient by the presence of obstacles to goal attainment, and an accuracy motive, which foster more conservative predictions. As shown in three studies, the self-control motive fosters more optimistic predictions and promotes more actual goal pursuit, whereas the accuracy motive induces more conservative predictions and less goal pursuit as a result.

“Remedying Hyperopia: The Effects of Self-Control Regret on Consumer Behavior”

Anat Keinan, *Columbia University*
Ran Kivetz, *Columbia University*

“The trouble with resisting temptation is it may never come your way again.”—*Korman's Law*

Many purchase and consumption decisions involve an intrapersonal struggle between consumers' righteous, prudent side and their indulgent, pleasure seeking side. While purchasing and con-

suming utilitarian necessities and virtues (e.g. a practical car, a healthy food item) is considered responsible and farsighted, yielding to hedonic temptations (e.g. buying a luxurious car, eating a chocolate cake) is viewed as impulsive and wasteful. The perceived precedence of virtue and necessity over vice and luxury is at least as old as ancient Greek civilization (Plato and Aristotle argued that reason ought to rule appetitive and passionate elements). Similarly, consumer self-control research emphasizes the importance of exercising willpower and controlling desires (e.g., Hoch and Loewenstein, 1991; Prelec and Herrnstein, 1992). Much of this research has been premised on the notion that consumption and purchase of vices generate regret (e.g., Baumeister, 2002; Read, Loewenstein, and Kalyanaraman, 1999). According to this perspective, consumers are better off in the long-run if they chose virtue over vice, work over leisure, and utilitarian necessities over hedonic luxuries.

Recent research challenges this approach and suggests that consumers often suffer from a reverse self-control problem, namely excessive farsightedness and over-control, or “hyperopia” (Kivetz and Simonson, 2002; Kivetz and Keinan, 2006). Hyperopic consumers overemphasize virtue and necessity at the expense of indulgence and luxury. Kivetz and Simonson suggest that consumers, who recognize their tendency to avoid temptations and focus on doing “the right thing,” pre-commit to indulgences to ensure that the goal of having more fun and luxury is realized. Further, Kivetz and Keinan (2006) demonstrate that, while in the short-term it appears preferable to act responsibly and choose virtue over vice, over time such righteous behavior generates increasing regret. They argue that the passage of time attenuates regret about choosing vice and accentuates regret about choosing virtue due to the decay of indulgence guilt and the intensification of feelings of missing out on the pleasures of life.

The present research builds on the notion of hyperopia and examines whether consumers can foresee that such prudent behavior will evoke increasing regret. More importantly, we demonstrate that anticipating long-term regret can influence preference and motivate consumers to counteract their righteous tendencies and behaviors. The effect of anticipatory regret on real choices and actual buying behavior is examined using different methodologies, samples, and self-control dilemmas. The studies demonstrate that, whereas short-term regret impels consumers to select virtues and purchase necessities, long-term regret drives consumers to choose vices, purchase indulgent products, and spend more money when shopping.

Our findings are particularly important in view of the frequent use of anticipatory regret in advertising campaigns (e.g. state lotteries, V8, AT&T, Kodak), and the growing interest in the behavioral consequences of consumers' regret (see Cooke, Meyvis, and Schwartz, 2001; Simonson, 1992; Tsiros and Mittal, 2000). While past consumer research focused on imaginary regrets and hypothetical decisions, the present research demonstrates the effects of real regrets on real consumer choices and actual purchases in the marketplace. Furthermore, prior consumer research examined the impact of anticipatory regret on *immediate* preferences and choices. That is, previous studies emphasized for consumers the possibility of regret during the decision process. Since consumers do not typically make purchase decisions immediately following the exposure to a marketing communication (e.g., an advertisement), we examine in two field experiments whether anticipatory regret can affect real purchase decisions that occur a few hours and even a few days after the regret manipulation.

We report a series of five studies that test our conceptual framework. We begin with a pilot study that explores whether the effect of temporal distance on self-control regrets generalizes from

retrospective regret (see Kivetz and Keinan, 2006) to prospective (anticipatory) regret. We then present three studies that demonstrate the effect of self-control regrets on immediate preferences and choices. In these studies, choices of indulgence increase when participants judge the long-term rather than short-term regrets of others (Study 1), anticipate their own regret at the distant rather than the near future (Study 2), or reflect on their regret regarding an actual decision that they made in the distant rather than the recent past (Study 3). We conclude with two field experiments that examine the effects of anticipated self-control regrets on consumers' real purchases at a shopping mall (Study 4) and during the Thanksgiving Holiday (Study 5). Combined, the five studies demonstrate that when consumers consider long-term regrets they are more likely to anticipate regrets of righteous decisions and consequently correct their prudent behavior by indulging and splurging on pleasurable products. The studies also include process measures and examine consumers' mindsets and feelings of guilt and missing out under narrow, broad, and spontaneous temporal perspectives.

“Planning For Which Future? Lay Theories of Self-Control and the Temporal Framing of Goal-Directed Behavior:

Anirban Mukhopadhyay, HKUST

Nidhi Agrawal, Northwestern University

Goal-directed behavior generally consists of two stages—goal setting followed by striving (Bagozzi and Dholakia 1999). A key component of the goal setting process is the time frame associated with each goal—is this something we'd like to get done today, tomorrow, next week, next month or in a year's time? Getting to the goal would require self-control, the ability to resist temptations that may dilute one's pursuit of the relevant goal. This research examines how people's beliefs about the nature of self-control interact with the temporal frames of their goals to influence goal pursuit.

Lay theories have been shown to affect judgments and behavior in a number of domains (Furnham 1988). Specific to goal-directed behavior, Mukhopadhyay and Johar (2005) demonstrated that people's lay theories of self-control, i.e. the extent of the belief that self-control is a restricted resource (as per Muraven and Baumeister 2000) or not, can determine the number of goals set as well as success at these goals. We build on this research by investigating how the temporal framing of a goal can influence goal pursuit differentially for limited versus unlimited theorists of self control.

A growing body of research examines how time-lines that people set for their thoughts influences the nature of the goals they set and how they pursue those goals (Trope and Liberman 2003). Construal Level Theory suggests that when individuals take up tasks for the near future, they construe these tasks at lower levels. These lower levels of construal emphasize feasibility and means, focusing on constraints (Liberman and Trope 1998). The same task to be done in the distant future is construed at higher levels that emphasize desirability and outcomes and not constraints (Liberman and Trope 1998). Our key proposition is that limited theorists, who believe that reserves of self-control are small and finite, should be more concerned about the constraints and resources required to achieve their goal and hence more likely to take a proximal time perspective on their goals. Further, goals framed to be closer (vs. distant) in time are likely to emphasize concerns—of feasibility and resources—of greater relevance to limited theorists and hence likely to lead to greater intentions of pursuit. In contrast, unlimited theorists are likely to focus on the desirability of a goal and hence their time perspective is likely to be more distal. Moreover, goals framed to be distant (vs. near) are likely to emphasize desirability concerns that are more appealing to unlimited theorists leading to greater intentions of goal pursuit.

Given this context, study 1 examined the relationship between lay theories of self-control and goals set for the near vs. distant future in a 2 (lay theories: limited vs. unlimited) x 2 (time frame: week vs. year vs. self-generated control) between subjects design. Participants were asked how many times they planned to work out in the next week / year / a blank space containing the legend “fill in an appropriate time frame.” After an unrelated filler task, respondents' lay theories of self-control were measured as per Mukhopadhyay and Johar (2005.) The number of sessions listed was normalized across conditions to a per-week basis for ease of comparison. Results in the control condition indicated that limited theorists were more likely to pick shorter time frames than unlimited theorists. Further, limited theorists listed more exercise sessions per week in the week rather than year condition, but unlimited theorists had more intentions to work out per week in the year rather than week condition.

Study 2 extended the above by manipulating temporal distance (rather than time periods), manipulating rather than measuring lay theories, and assessing the extent of persuasion of a goal-relevant message. Participants primed with limited vs. unlimited lay theories wrote about the health related activities they planned to do during the course of a given week, either in the near (i.e., “the next week”) or in the distant future (“a week, one year from now”). Participants then read a brochure about a local Iyengar yoga center, and completed measures of attitude towards the center, willingness to pay for yoga class, and a measure of how much reading about Iyengar yoga made them want to join any type of exercise program. Consistent with our theorizing, the results revealed a significant interaction such that limited [unlimited] theorists in the near [distant] frame had more positive attitudes, were willing to pay more for yoga class (almost twice as much), and had greater intentions of joining an exercise program. For unlimited theorists, planning of distant (vs. near) future was more effective. Further studies investigate possible processes underlying the observed effects.

To summarize, we demonstrate that peoples' lay beliefs about self control impact whether people are more effective for near vs. distant goals. Or from another perspective, lay theories seem to induce systematically varying preferences on time frames chosen for goal relevant activities and attitudes towards goal-related activities/objects. These findings are not only of relevance to the immediate theoretical study of naïve theories and self-control, but indeed to many other domains where planned action towards single and/or multiple goals is involved (e.g. savings, investment, health-related behaviors). These studies contribute to our understanding of how people plan their personal goals, factors that might help or hinder their goal-directed behavior, and marketing strategies that might leverage this knowledge.

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Special Session Summary

Order Effects in Multiple Choices: of Lost love, Spent Willpower, and Relinquished Control

Simona Botti, Cornell University, USA

SESSION SUMMARY

Most research on consumer decision making has focused on single decisions and their consequences for satisfaction, well-being, and motivation. This single choice paradigm excludes the common situation of multiple sequential decisions, either in the same or in different domains. The act of making multiple choices introduces additional factors that need to be considered when studying decision making. This session focuses on some of these factors, such as the emotional, cognitive, and motivational depletion caused by the interaction between multiple choices, and the influence of the structure of the decision process on the outcomes of sequential choices. Thus, this research cautions against studying decisions without considering the choices that precede and follow them—as we may be ignoring important moderating factors.

The first paper, by Botti and Meyvis, examines how the control one has over different stages of a choice process influences subsequent satisfaction with the decision outcome. Specifically, this paper studies the effect on satisfaction of controlling the consideration set formation, but not the final choice, versus controlling the final choice, but not the consideration set formation. Results show that, both when the initial information about the choice options is ambiguous and when it is not ambiguous, satisfaction is greater when participants control the choice set formation, rather than the final choice. The second paper, by Levav et al., investigates car buyers making a series of real-life choices. The order of these choices is manipulated such that it either proceeds from attributes with a greater variety of levels to those with a lower variety (Hi-Lo) or viceversa (Lo-High). Results show that, relative to those in the Lo-Hi condition, consumers in the Hi-Lo condition are more likely to accept a default option and experience less satisfaction with the final decision outcome. The third paper, by Vohs and Kim, reveals that making multiple choices depletes consumers' ability to engage in self-regulation, thereby decreasing participants' motivation to engage in tasks that require self-control. Interestingly, the relation between making multiple choices and self-regulation also works in the opposite direction, so that when participants' self-regulation resources are depleted their ability to engage in multiple choice-making is impaired.

This session is intended for researchers interested in consumer judgment and decision making, in choice theory and assortments, or in the effect of the choice process on product perception and preference. The three papers should also be of interest to marketing practitioners because they examine a more realistic model of decision making that involves series of choices instead of single choices.

The papers in this session suggest that studying decision making contexts involving multiple, as compared to single, choices present some unique challenges. These challenges derive from two main factors. First, each decision may influence the following one so that the sequence in which the choices are made can significantly affect consumers' evaluation of the decision outcome. Second, making multiple choices enhances the emotional and cognitive costs associated with making a single choice; consequently, prior results showing that making a single choice may negatively affect consumers' motivation and satisfaction can be extended to contexts in which this effect has not yet been found. The study of sequential decisions also has the potential to increase the ecological validity of

decision research as more often than not consumers are faced with a series of choices to make, instead of choices made in isolation. In spite of this importance, researchers have rarely investigated the effects of multiple and sequential choices on consumer behavior (with the notable exception of research in inter-temporal decision making).

“Setting the Stage or Making the Final Cut: The Timing of Control in the Choice Process”

Simona Botti, Cornell University

Tom Meyvis, New York University

Classic research in economics and psychology has found the provision of choice to have beneficial effects on consumers' psychological and even physiological well being. These benefits derived from the act of choosing have been explained both with the opportunity for preference matching and with an increased perception of control. More recent research has however investigated the cognitive and emotional costs often associated with choice to show that in some circumstances the advantages of choice may be moderated. For example, choosing from larger choice sets, as compared to smaller ones, can be emotionally daunting and lead to greater dissatisfaction or choice avoidance, especially when consumers' preferences are not clearly established (Chernev 2003; Iyengar, Jiang and Komenica 2006). A potential explanation for these results is the greater regret that choosers, as compared to non-choosers, experience when forgoing multiple options to which they might have gotten psychologically attached (Carmon, Wertenbroch, and Zeelenberg 2003). Thus, on the one hand, choosing allows people to feel in control of their own actions and select the most preferred alternative, but on the other hand, it involves emotional conflicts that may eventually spoil subsequent satisfaction with the decision outcome.

The present research investigates this interplay of positive and negative psychological consequences of choosing by hypothesizing that a key element in predicting whether the benefits of choice are going to overcome its detriments consists in the choosers' ability to make peace with their decision (Gilbert and Ebert 2002). We tested this hypothesis by manipulating the stage of the decision process in which consumers are allowed to make their choice. When consumers have to select a product, they usually form a consideration set based on the available options and then choose from that set. However, sometimes the first, screening phase is beyond their control (e.g., the store has only a limited number of brands available). Other times, consumers control the screening phase, but not the final choice (e.g., the travel agent selects a hotel from a list provided by the customer on the basis of availability). The act of choosing the consideration set, but not the final outcome, allows participants to control for the worst possible outcome and psychologically prepare themselves for this eventuality. In contrast, being deprived of control over the consideration set formation forces participants to confront a set of choices that have not been freely made, making it more difficult for them to make peace with their final decision.

The first experiment was a 2 (ambiguous vs. unambiguous) x 2 (choice/no choice vs. no choice/choice) between subjects design. Participants in the ambiguous condition were shown relatively non-diagnostic descriptions of nine photographs, whereas those in the

unambiguous condition were shown the actual photographs. Participants in the choice/no-choice condition first constructed a choice set of either three or four photographs and then were informed that the computer would make the final choice by randomly assigning them to one of the photographs from this set. Conversely, participants in the no-choice/choice condition were first assigned a random three or four-option set from the computer and were subsequently allowed to make their final choice by selecting one of the photographs included in the computer-chosen set. Participants were then shown the selected photograph and asked to evaluate it. Results show that participants in the choice/no-choice condition liked the photograph more than those in the no-choice/choice condition, but only when they were confronted with the actual photographs. When participants received relatively non-diagnostic photograph descriptions there was no difference between participants' satisfaction in the two experimental conditions. We explain these results with the assumption that making peace with the final decision was easier in a low-ambiguity than in a high-ambiguity context in that the actual characteristics of the photographs provided participants with more compelling justifications to convince themselves of the merits of the eventual final selection at the moment of the formation of the consideration set. The second study replicated the design of the first study after changing the initial number of pictures from 9 to 7 and fixing the choice-set size to 3. This way the expected ranking of the final photograph selection was controlled for without having to rely on the two different choice-set sizes as in the prior study. In addition, study 2 introduced a third condition (choice/choice) in which participants both constructed their initial choice set and made a final choice from it. This additional condition allowed us to understand whether the difference in satisfaction was due to the choice manipulation at the stage of the choice-set selection or at the stage of the final choice. Finally, additional process measures were collected to have a better understanding of the underlying psychological process. In addition to replicate results of study 1, study 2 results show that the effect on satisfaction was due primarily to the manipulation of choice at the choice-set stage. Consistent with our hypothesis, process measures indicated that participants in the no-choice/choice condition perceived a lower degree of control than those in the choice/no-choice condition, and they felt worse about forgoing the non-selected options both at the time of the consideration set formation and at the time of the final choice. The third study provided additional support to our hypothesis by showing that when participants were not given enough time to make peace with their choices and start the inoculation process, then the effect found in the previous studies were reversed: participants who were shown the photographs and given the opportunity to choose their consideration set evaluated the decision outcome lower than those who were granted choice only in the final stage.

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- "The Effect of Attribute Order and Variety on Choice Demotivation: A Field Experiment on German Car Buyers"**
Jonathan Levav, Columbia University
Mark Heitmman, St. Gallen University
Andreas Herrmann, St. Gallen University
Sheena S. Iyengar, Columbia University
- What factors determine choice demotivation? Iyengar and Lepper (2000) conclude that choice demotivation is a consequence of having too great a variety of options to choose from. In this paper we conduct two field experiments to test the effect of attribute order and variety in sequential choice, and show that demotivation can occur even when choice sets are small.
- Participants were prospective Audi car customers in Germany who had come to the dealership in order to configure and purchase an A4 sedan. We conducted two replications of the same study (with a few caveats mentioned below). The studies were conducted at a computer terminal using the same configuration software available to Audi customers who configure their car on the World Wide Web (see www.audi.de). Only customers who had not configured their car online were allowed to participate. The configuration process includes a sequence of decisions about approximately 40 attributes of the car, made one at a time, and takes approximately thirty minutes to complete. Each decision appears on a different screen, with a side-screen indicating the total price of the car to that point. At any point customers are free to revise their previous choices. For all decisions there is a default attribute level that is already checked-off. For almost all the default is the cheapest option and appears at the top of the list (e.g., engine), but for other attributes this is not the case (e.g., exterior color).
- We chose 8 target attributes (interior color, exterior color, engine and gearbox, rims/tires, steering wheel, rearview mirror, interior décor style, and gearshift style; in Study 2 we replaced engine with radio), and placed them at the beginning of the configuration sequence. Each attribute consists of different numbers of levels, and different levels have different prices; for instance, there are 56 interior colors and 13 types of rims to choose from. After completing a short questionnaire about their experience with Audi cars, the importance of each of the 8 target attributes using a constant sum scale (only in Study 1), and their willingness-to-pay for their new A4, participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions. Our Hi-to-Lo condition ordered the target attributes from most to least variety (i.e., interior color was the first decision in the sequence and gearshift style the eighth); our Lo-to-Hi condition was the exact opposite (i.e., gearshift style was first and interior color eighth). A control condition simply used Audi's usual sequence, which is not systematically ordered according to attribute variety. Our dependent variable was participants' propensity to accept the default attribute level at each of the eight stages of the target decision sequence. We interpret acceptance of the default as a signal of choice demotivation. The remainder of the decision sequence was the same in all conditions. At the end of the configuration process participants were asked to indicate their satisfaction with the configuration software and the car, their likelihood of configuring the same car again, and the extent to which the car they configured matched their preferences. In study 2 participants were also asked to complete 8 complex addition problems in order to assess cognitive fatigue (there was no difference between the conditions).
- As one would expect from simple taste heterogeneity, we find that as variety increases the likelihood accepting the default de-

creases. Second, we find a main effect of depletion (i.e., fatigue) such that as participants proceed from one decision stage to the next, their likelihood of accepting the default increases. Third, in Study 1 greater attribute importance is associated with a decrease in default choice for that attribute (recall that importance was not measured in Study 2). However, this relationship is qualified by an importance by decision stage interaction, such that the effect of importance on the probability of accepting the default diminishes as participants advance in the choice sequence. It appears that the choice process overwhelms participants' ability or desire to best match their preferences even on their more important attributes. Most important to this investigation, we find that the slope of the depletion effect is steeper in the Hi-to-Lo condition than in the Lo-to-Hi condition. In other words, choice demotivation occurs even for small choice set sizes, provided these followed larger choice sets. Note that this effect persists even while we control for depletion. This finding suggests that demotivation may be a result of insufficient "emotional energy" to resolve a decision, and that when this energy is somehow "drained" (in this case by complex previous choices) then even small choice sets seem overwhelming. It provides a hint of the psychological process of choice demotivation. Finally, in both studies participants were overwhelmingly more satisfied and more confident in their choice in the Lo-to-Hi condition than in the Hi-to-Lo condition. Satisfaction was not correlated with default taking, or with price paid for the car. It appears that satisfaction was most sensitive to the process in which the decision was made. Furthermore, we were able to manipulate price paid for the car depending on condition and on the target attributes we included in the sequence. For instance, in Study 1 participants in the Hi-to-Lo condition paid more for the car because engine, a big ticket item, appeared early in their decision sequence and therefore they were more likely to pick a more expensive engine rather than the cheap default. However, in Study 2, where engine was removed from the target attributes and replaced with a cheaper attribute with few levels, this price payment difference disappeared. This result suggests that people's willingness-to-pay is malleable and can be affected by simple changes in attribute sequence.

"The Bidirectional Relationship Between Making Choices and Self-Regulation"

*Kathleen D. Vohs, University of Minnesota
Jungkeun Kim, University of Minnesota*

This research was motivated by a desire to understand the relation between choice and self-regulation. The results of four experiments are reported. Two experiments examined the effects of making a series of choices on later self-regulation, whereas two additional experiments examined the effect of self-regulation on sequential choices. In both sets of studies, we hypothesized that engaging in one process (e.g., choice) would affect behavior in the other sphere (e.g., self-regulation).

We understand self-regulation as resulting from the availability of self-regulatory resources, which are engaged when people self-regulate. This model predicts that because the (finite) supply of self-regulatory resources is reduced after an act of self-control, subsequent attempts at self-regulation will be less effective. The results of over 60 published experiments support the model. Making a choice may also draw upon self-regulatory resources, we hypothesized, for two reasons. 1) Gollwitzer's Rubicon model of action (Gollwitzer 1996) depicts decision making as occurring in two stages. The first is a deliberative stage, in which people evaluate options in as rational a style as they can; the second is an implemental stage, in which actions are geared toward the chosen option. Choosing requires resources insofar as it is taxing to move out of a

deliberative mindset and into an implemental mindset. 2) Strack's Reflective-Impulsive Model (RIM; Strack, Werth, and Deutch 2006) postulates that when people make a choice, they form a mental connection between the self and the chosen option. The formation of this linkage is conceptualized to take energy, above and beyond merely pondering options or forming preferences. If indeed choice and self-control are related, then we should see that engaging in one of these processes affect operation of the other.

In Experiment 1, participants logged onto the Dell.com website. They were either allowed to make choices from a set of options presented for each computer feature or they were instructed to choose a pre-determined option from the same set of options. Thus, all participants viewed the same stimuli, but only some made choices. Subsequently, participants were asked to solve anagrams. Persistence, as measured by length of time spent persisting, was the main dependent measure. As predicted, making choices affected self-regulation, such that participants who made choices performed poorer on the anagram task, relative to participants who had not made choices. In Experiment 2, participants in the choices condition made 60 binary choices between household products, whereas participants in the no-choices conditions gave their opinions regarding eight advertisements. Thus, participants in both conditions were thinking of their own preferences but only some were making choices based on those preferences. Subsequently, participants were presented with a healthy but bad-tasting beverage and were asked to consume as much as they could. As predicted, making choices rendered participants less able to drink the ill-tasting but healthy drink, relative to merely offering one's opinions.

In Experiments 3-4, we switched the independent and dependent variables to examine the effects of self-regulation on patterns of sequential choice. In Experiment 3, participants' self-regulatory resources were depleted with a task that first creates a habit and then requires the habit be broken in order to follow new rules. All participants first crossed off all instances of the letter "e" on a page of text. A second task separated the depleted from the nondepleted participants. For nondepleted participants, they continued to cross out "e"s on a new sheet of text; for depleted participants, however, their job was now to cross out all "e"s in the text, except when the "e" followed a vowel or appeared two letters before a vowel. The latter task has been found to tax people's self-regulatory resources more than the former task (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998). Then participants were presented with three sequential choices. Each choice had one high price/high quality product and one low price/low quality product in the same category. The dependent measure was whether participants switched between choosing high price/quality options to low price/quality options (or vice versa) at any point during the three choices. As predicted, participants who earlier depleted their self-regulatory resources switched less (i.e., stuck with the same choice strategy) than participants who had not earlier overridden a habitual response. This finding presumably occurred because switching choice strategies requires volitional energy, which depleted participants lacked. In Experiment 4, we hypothesized that making a switch away from the status quo would require self-regulatory resources, insofar as this process calls upon the active self to diverge from what is already known. Accordingly, participants who were taxed of their self-regulatory resources were hypothesized to prefer a previously-chosen (status quo) option. All participants first made a choice between two options wherein one option dominated the other. Next, participants performed either a nondepleting or depleting version of the crossing out "e" task described above. Subsequently, all participants were presented with another a second choice task. They were presented with a new calculator, which was pretested to be equivalent to the high quality (i.e., dominant) option presented to partici-

pants in the first choice. They were asked whether they wanted to exchange their chosen option for the new option. Participants who had previously expended their volitional resources were less willing to exchange their chosen option for the new option, compared to participants who had not expended self-regulatory resources during the earlier task. Once again, we see that making the choice to switch away from the status quo requires self-regulatory resources.

In sum, choice and self-regulation are integrally linked. In four experiments, we showed that engaging in one process affects one's performance on the other. These findings suggest that there may be a plethora of other mental activities (e.g., problem solving) that will be influenced by earlier engagement in either choice or self-control.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

When Who I Am Affects Who and How Much I Help: Social Influences on Giving

Karen Page, University of Pittsburgh, USA

SESSION SUMMARY

Despite the fact that spending on donations and gifts is a large part of consumer spending, researchers often focus on consumers' consumption for themselves. In 2004 U.S. charitable donations totaled \$248.5 billion (Charity Navigator 2005). Yet, factors influencing donations and gift giving are not well understood, the unstated assumption being that the same factors that influence choices for self operate—in the same manner—on charitable giving and gift giving. This is unlikely to be the case. Believing that, giving is, in large parts, an activity motivated by social considerations, this session examines social influences in determining donation and gift-giving behavior.

We build on the literature examining the impact of social identities and social norms (e.g. Cialdini et al. 1987; Tajfel and Turner 1979), studying their role in donations and gift giving. Mindful of previous research on the social influences of giving (Lowrey et al. 2004; Reed and Aquino 2003), we seek to better understand the effect that social identities and social norms have on consumer giving. How does knowing the amount of donation given by the person preceding you affect your donating behavior, and why? Do women donate more to outgroups (e.g., Iraqis) than ingroup members (e.g., British), and why? Despite the extreme importance of personal survival, how and why did “giving” evolve in Nazi concentration camps? These questions are crucial to understanding consumers and their desire to connect with society through acts of giving.

The first presentation, co-authored by Jen Shang, Rachel Croson, and Americus Reed, examines the “mere social information effect” on donation behavior, examining when social information influences the level of donations. They find that the mere awareness of a single other's donation amount affects the target's donation level and this effect is enhanced when the consumer's gender identity is congruent and important and his or her decision is collectively focused. In the second presentation, Karen L. Page, Vikas Mittal, and William T. Ross study what influences the choice to donate to members of an ingroup (e.g., flood victims of Katrina in New Orleans) or an outgroup (e.g., flood victims of Tsunami in Asia). They find that internal moral identity and gender interactively influence judgments of relief efforts and monetary donation allocations to the ingroup and the outgroup. Tina M. Lowrey and Jill G. Klein, in the third presentation, explore giving in a highly charged context—Nazi concentration camps—where giving itself had severe consequences. Through the analysis of memoirs, findings indicate that giving and sharing occurred not only among those with close relational ties such as family, but also among strangers. The findings and practical implications of these presentations were addressed by Joan Nelson, the Director of Research and Evaluation for the Heart of Florida United Way.

“I Give, but “We” Give More: The Impact of Identity and the Mere Social Information Effect on Donation Behavior”

Jen Shang, Indiana University

Rachel Croson, University of Pennsylvania

Americus Reed, University of Pennsylvania

The impact of social information (e.g., information about what others have done in the past) is important in a variety of marketing environments (e.g. Reingen, 1982). In the absence of other information, consumers often rely on social information as a basis to make

their own consumption decisions (Amaldoss & Jain, 2005). In this research, we examine a particular kind of social information: another person's contribution to a nonprofit entity—and how that affects contribution behavior. We try to delve into the identity implications of this “mere social information” effect.

This package of studies makes several contributions to the field of marketing and to the knowledge of psychological processes in consumption and donation decision-making. First, it is the first study in marketing, to our knowledge, to demonstrate in a field study setting that social information significantly influences the level of contributions. There has been a call for consumer research to focus on more “messier” environments in order to buttress the mundane realism of the body of knowledge in the field (Cohen, 2005).

Secondly, there is a growing body of work in consumer behavior that illuminates the importance of activated identities on consumption decision-making (Reed 2004; Forehand, Reed and Deshpande 2002) and how identities shift as a function of contextual and situational cues (cf. DeMarree, Wheeler and Petty 2005; Mandel 2003). We demonstrate and build on this research in the domain of donation behavior. Third, an examination of key identity based constructs in the substantive domain of nonprofit giving should be informative for nonprofit marketing and consumption behavior research. These theoretical and practical contributions should also be informative for practitioners in charge of figuring out how to maximize charitable contributions.

In the first two field experiments we show a very subtle pattern of results we refer to as the “mere social information” effect: Awareness of even a single other's contribution amount can affect the target's contribution level (Experiments 1a and 1b). The first field experiment was conducted in an anonymous public radio station on the East coast in June and September 2003 during their on-air fund drive. Listeners responded to on-air appeals during the drive and called the station to make a pledge. After answering the phone with the station's identifier: “Hello, STATION_NAME member line”, experimenters asked: “Are you a new member or a renewing member of STATION-NAME?” After the caller answered, experimenters read (or did not read in the control condition) the following sentence: “We just had another member, they contributed \$300.” The question asked right after the manipulation was: “How much would you like to pledge today?” The dependent measure, the pledge amount, was then collected.

We find that the average contribution is significantly higher in the \$300 condition (\$119.70) than in the control condition (\$106.72). This is a \$13 difference, and would translate into a 12% increase in revenue for the station had all callers been offered the social information. Similar results were replicated in a different public radio station on the west coast using similar method (1a). Donors on average again contribute significantly more in the social information condition (\$65.4) than in the control condition (\$95.34).

In Field Experiment 2, we show that the effect can occur due to the congruence between the source of the social information and the target donor along the gender identity dimension. In particular, we show that this effect differs with the social similarity between the source of the information and the target donor. Here we tell callers the gender of the other contributor “s/he contributed \$300.” Same-gender donors are more responsive to the social information than different-gender donors; matched gender donors (\$141.88)

give significantly more than mismatched gender donors (\$105.7). This result compellingly argues that the *social* nature of the information is critical. This result compellingly argues that the congruence of the target's identity to the other is one possible precursor for the results (see Sirgy 1982).

Finally, in order to examine this effect more closely, we conducted a laboratory study to test at least one possible mechanism through which the kind of social information and congruent identity used in the previous field studies influence behavior. The study is a 2 (Identity Salience: Gender Match vs. Gender MisMatch) x 2 (Identity Self-Importance: low vs. high) x 2 (Collective Mindset: Individualistic vs. Collective) between subjects design with the latter two factors as measured covariates. Participants first read a scenario carefully developed to mimic the situation in public radio fundraising, where either a female or a male donor contributed \$70. In the high (low) identity salience condition, participants' gender matched (mismatched) the donors' gender in the scenario. Identity along the self-importance dimension was measured by modifying Luhtanen & Crocker's (1992) collective self-esteem scale to account for gender. Collective mindset was measured using two questions we developed. The dependent variable is a hypothetical contribution question on "how much would you likely contribute to this radio station? \$_____."

A hierarchical regression on the dependent variable showed that the impact of social information as a reference point for one's own contribution decision is most potent when an identity is activated through congruence with a contributing other, when that identity is chronically important to the giver, and when focal thoughts about how much to give are relatively more collective and interdependent in nature (cf. Mandel 2003). Our results suggest that the kind of effects found may be identification based (as opposed to compliance based). Our results suggest that social information influences behavior when the social information connects with the giver. Identity driven processes impact donors to give more, because "we" give more than "I" do.

This research does not only contribute to the academic understanding of the social identity based influence of social information, it also has significant practical implications. Our results suggest techniques to raise revenues without additional costs. The effect sizes are large, between 12% and 46% percent of revenue.

"Tsunami or Katrina?: Effect of Conflicting Identities in Donation Behavior"

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Consumers hold multiple social identities (Reed 2004). We argue that these multiple social identities interact to jointly affect consumer donation to ingroups versus outgroups. Contrastive examples of such groups for Americans include: victims of Hurricane Katrina versus Indian Ocean Tsunami and families of terrorist victims in London versus Afghanistan. We examine two specific chronic identities—moral identity and gender identity. Specifically, we find that consumers' moral identity, a psychological expansiveness or psychological boundary of ingroups (Aquino and Reed 2002), and gender interact to jointly influence judgments and donations to such groups. Building on this, we also show that the impact of these chronic identities is contingent on the giver's activated interdependent or independent self-construal (Markus and Kitayama 1991; Singelis 1994).

This research enhances our understanding of consumers' multiple identities, even when they are in conflict. Whereas past research has examined effects of chronic versus accessible identities (Agrawal and Maheswaran 2005; Reed 2004), this research

considers the interplay of three novel identities—gender, moral identity, and activated self-construal. The effects of these multiple identities on consumer giving are not additive, but interactive.

The first two studies examine the joint effect of moral identity and gender on 1) donation allocation and 2) judgments of giving. The first study is a survey of adults who are given the option to allocate \$100 to the families of terrorist victims in eight different groups. The study focused on donations made to the U.S. in-group of London and a U.S. out-group of Afghanistan. A manipulation check confirmed that survey respondents perceived London as an in-group and Afghanistan as an out-group. The results indicate that gender and internal moral identity (IMI) interact to influence the extent of donations. Specifically, there is significant favoritism of the ingroup for males with high IMI (\$37.20 vs. \$9.90 donated to London and Afghanistan respectively) but no differentiation is made between the ingroup and outgroup by females with high IMI (\$17.68 vs. \$8.71 donated to London and Afghanistan respectively). Conversely, this effect is reversed for individuals with low IMI. Males with low IMI do not differentiate between the ingroup and outgroup (\$17.05 vs. \$12.90, respectively) whereas females with low IMI do differentiate (\$34.45 vs. \$3.12, respectively).

This effect is replicated in a laboratory study with a between-subjects design where we examine participants' judgments of relief efforts by manipulating the group (London vs. Iraqi terrorist victims) for which the relief effort is being made. The chronic identities of gender and internal moral identity are measured. Again, a three-way interaction of IMI, gender, and group is found. Similar to the donation allocations made in the first study, judgments of relief efforts by males with high IMI favored London over Iraq and judgments by females with high IMI did not differentiate between the groups (Males: 4.59 vs. 3.79; Females: 4.63 vs. 4.62, London and Iraq respectively). The reverse effects are found for males and females with low IMI such that females favor London efforts over Iraq efforts whereas males do not differentiate between groups.

In the final study, we examine the impact of a third identity, the giver's activated self-construal, on the effect of the chronic identities on giving. We manipulate participants' activated self-construal in this study. We examine the effect with judgments of giving to two groups of natural disaster victims, Hurricane Katrina and Indian Ocean Tsunami. This between-subjects design (Group: New Orleans vs. Indonesia) X (Activated Self-Construal: Independent vs. Interdependent, manipulated) X (IMI, measured) X (Gender) finds a four-way interaction of group, self-construal, IMI, and gender. In our sub analyses, we find that the two-way interaction of group and IMI is significant for males with independent priming, which is consistent with their chronic cultural self-construal, such that those with high IMI favor Katrina victims over Indonesia victims (5.41 vs. 4.10 for Katrina and Indonesia respectively) but those with low IMI do not differentiate (4.18 vs. 3.81 for Katrina and Indonesia respectively). The two-way interaction of group and IMI for females primed with an interdependent self-construal, which is inconsistent with their chronic independent cultural self-construal, is not significant. The results show that for these females with interdependent self-construal priming, no group differentiation occurs, regardless of IMI (High IMI: 5.55 vs. 5.45; Low IMI: 5.50 vs. 5.14, Katrina and Indonesia respectively). These results suggest that the interaction of these multiple social identities, which are in conflict at times, significantly influence consumers' judgments of giving.

Furthermore, the interaction of these multiple social identities does not simply result in an additive effect, but actually reverses or attenuates the extent of in-group favoritism on donation allocation and judgments of giving. These results not only have substantive theoretical implications for the effects of multiple, and sometimes

conflicting, social identities, but also practical implications for fundraising efforts and public policy issues.

“Giving and Sharing in Concentration Camps: The Impact of Third Party Influences”

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Jill G. Klein, INSEAD

The study of giving and sharing in the extreme setting of concentration camps (through the textual analysis of memoirs as case studies; see Stake, 1995) yields seemingly contradictory findings. On the one hand, survivors suggested that they and others around them were self-absorbed to the point of “every man for himself”—on the other hand, most survivors also described touching scenes in which they and others shared along a giving continuum. On one end of this continuum lay small tokens or mementos given to others in an effort to boost morale. On the other end of the continuum lay the potential sacrifice of one’s life for another (Klein and Lowrey, 2006).

Clearly, the likelihood of giving in this setting was linked to relations between individuals—the closer the connection between prisoners, the more likely giving and sharing was to occur. However, there were also incidents of giving and sharing with complete strangers:

“Human relations in the camps took as many forms as they generally take. The most narrow but intense social unit was the family; beyond that were old friends, and beyond that a sense of collective identity among those from the same town or area—bonds reinforced by the earlier ordeal of deportation which all had suffered together. Another strong basis for solidarity was nationality. There are endless tales of the toughness of national groups sticking together, and all survivors recall occasions when they received help from, or offered help to, a stranger who was a fellow countryman.” (Des Pres, 1976)

This calls to mind concentric circles of extradyadic relations (Lowrey, Otnes and Ruth, 2004), in which the immediate family is in the center, extended family in the next “ring” out, friends in the next, and so on. In addition to the strangers who were fellow countrymen mentioned in the quote above, however, there were also several survivors who recalled giving and sharing occurring between strangers who did not share nationality—in many of these cases the common bond was the shared tragic fate of Jewish heritage at a specific time in history, in others (where “outsiders” helped those in the camps despite potentially devastating results if discovered), the common bond was simply being human.

It makes perfect sense that one might be more likely to share more frequently with one’s own family member than a stranger. However, acts of giving and sharing in the camps were guided by social norms that, while perhaps rooted in everyday behavior from the outside, were more intense given the extreme setting. Social influence on giving behavior has been explicated in a more mundane setting (Lowrey, et al, 2004). In that study of Christmas giving, ten types of influence were identified that stemmed from five underlying relational processes. The first two types of influence, calibrating and practicing equipollence, stemmed from the process of making social comparisons. Clearly, this occurred in the camps, as the preceding discussion suggests. Calibrating is when a giver distinguishes recipients based on the type and/or closeness of the relationship (the idea of concentric circles explained above). The practice of equipollence is when a giver treats sets of recipients as

equivalent. This was very important among groups of friends in the camps who had bonded together to help each other survive.

The next two types of influence, reenacting third-party traditions and relinquishing tradition, were somewhat less likely to occur in the camps, although there were a few instances of such behavior (such as continuing a family holiday tradition despite the death of the originator). The underlying relational process for these influences is adjusting to disrupted relational traditions, which was very likely to occur. However, the impact of third parties in this setting was less influential.

Enrolling accomplices and using surrogates both stem from the process of accessing social support, but only the first was highly likely to occur. It was often necessary to enroll the assistance of another in order to procure physical gift items, as well as intangible gifts (such as getting a physician to label an inmate as too sick to work for a day). Very few instances of giving or sharing occurred through the use of surrogates (which entails giving a gift to someone “through” a revered third party specifically to minimize the risk of gift rejection, such as a woman giving a gift to her mother-in-law “from” the children). The use of surrogates is a rare behavior in any setting, but even more so in the extreme setting of the concentration camps.

Gaining permission from gatekeepers and adhering to group norms both stem from the process of acting within relational rules, but only the second was highly likely to occur. Indeed, adhering to group norms in the camps was highly correlated with the practice of equipollence. Finally, integrating and purging, both stemming from the initiation and severing of relationships, was very relevant in the camp setting. Again, some of this behavior was closely linked to norms regarding who should or should not be considered a part of the group.

Although these social influences and their underlying relational processes originally emerged in a study of Christmas shopping, the majority of them are valid descriptors of the behavior observed and described in the memoirs of concentration camp survivors as well. The difference is that the consequences of violating norms in the latter case could be much more severe. Indeed, giving and sharing strengthened bonds within social networks, and one’s very survival in the camps was directly related to the social networks to which you belonged:

“...survival...could only be a social achievement, not an individual accident...” (Weinstock, 1974, quoted in Des Pres, 1976).

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The Effect of Unintended Information Acquisition

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Most research in consumer information search assumes that consumers know what product they want and the purpose of search is to acquire information to help them choose. However, information acquisition is a much broader activity than mere direct search. Indeed, information acquisition is a collection of activities through which consumers obtain product and service information, voluntarily or involuntarily, consciously or non-consciously (Xia and Monroe 2005). In addition to direct search, people can and do acquire information unintentionally through casual browsing such as looking at a retail display window, scanning an advertisement, skimming through a catalog or website, or even when walking through a store. Searching and browsing are two conditions under which consumers acquire information. While information regarding the search target is acquired under the searching condition, additional information regarding non-targets may be acquired unintentionally while browsing or searching. We propose that consumers acquire information both directly and indirectly, with and without intention, and yet such information may be available to them when facing a purchase task.

The difference between information acquired through different exposure conditions (e.g., searching and browsing) may show in consumers' recollection of the exposure. We use the remember versus know paradigm to examine these differences. Remembering and knowing are two subjective states of awareness (Gardiner and Richardson-Klavehn 2000). *Remembering* refers to past personal experiences and events that people can recreate with a mental awareness of reliving these experiences and events. *Knowing* refers to other past personal experiences and events that people are aware of, but in a more impersonal way. Knowing includes a general sense of familiarity and awareness of previous events but without reliving them mentally. Ample evidence shows that this sense of knowing is enough to influence people's subsequent judgments and choices (Gardiner, Ramponi and Richardson-Klavehn 1998; Holden and Vanhuele 1999; Rajaram 1993). Remember and know responses are sensitive to different manipulations (see Gardiner and Richardson-Klavehn 2000 for a summary). Remember responses are more sensitive to manipulations that facilitate conceptual and elaborative processing. On the other hand, manipulations facilitating perceptual processing affect knowing but not remembering (Rajaram 1993; Gardiner and Richardson-Klavehn 2000).

Using browsing and searching as two different encoding conditions and "remember" and "know" as the memory tests, we hypothesize that participants will "remember" more target items in the searching condition than in the browsing condition and will "remember" more non-target items in the browsing condition than in the searching condition due to different attention and processing resource allocation. However, there should be no difference in the number of "know" items since "know" responses are not sensitive to attention and processing resource allocation. Further, both searching and browsing conditions should reduce need for further information search when a purchase occasion arises due to the information acquired. Finally, we propose that the influence of information exposure, in both searching and browsing conditions should carry over to future unrelated purchase tasks.

Two studies were conducted. In the first study, participants were exposed to a simulated online store with various product

categories, product names, pictures, and brief product information. One group was asked to search for a target product with a purchase intention (searching). Another group was asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the website design (browsing). A control group was exposed to a different website with the instruction of evaluating the design. After the exposure and a distracter task, participants were given the memory test where they tried to recognize previously exposed products from a mixture of old and new products and indicate whether they "remember" or "know" the product. Finally, they were asked to make a purchase decision on the target product category and we measured their choice confidence and desire for further information. Results supported our predictions.

In study 2, we used the same stimuli and instruction but changed the dependent measures. After exposure and the distracter task, we gave participants a choice task where they were told it was a completely new task. In this task, they were to buy a graduation gift for their best friend from a list of product categories (a mixture of old and new) and then specific brands within the categories (a mixture of old and new). Results showed significant effect at the product category level but no effect was found at the brand level.

Overall, our research shows that consumers acquire information during both searching and browsing. In the "browsing" condition, participants acquired information through exposure although they had no intention to buy. And, browsing in one occasion may reduce the need for direct search when a purchase intention occurs later. In the "searching" condition, while participants searched the target product, they incidentally browsed other products either to figure out the information structure of the website or to locate the target product. Such browsing of the non-target products occurred without either purchase intention or full attention. Thus, even though participants may not clearly recall the exposure event, there was a sense of familiarity based on that exposure. Our studies showed that this sense of familiarity is sufficient in to influence certain choice tasks.

By examining information acquisition under a variety of conditions, we have broadened the scope of research on consumer information search. Since information acquisition is a crucial element of consumer decision making, our efforts in understanding browsing behavior and its potential influences on consumer decision making contributes to the existing knowledge of consumer information acquisition as well as consumer decision making.

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Sex-related Cues Instigate the Urge to Splurge. How An Incidental Visceral State Renders Subsequent Behavior, Judgment and Decision-Making More Impulsive

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Recent brain imaging research suggests that any factor that produces limbic activation, such as the sight, smell or touch of a desired object, may be associated with impulsive behavior (McClure et al. 2004). This is consistent with a wealth of evidence suggesting that activation of affective states accentuates temporal myopia (Metcalf and Mischel 1999). An increase in desire for food, water, sex, etc. is capable of engendering impatience (Hoch and Loewenstein 1991; Baumeister 2002). As such, visceral factors, such as hunger, thirst, sleep deprivation, physical pain, drug craving etc. bring about myopic, impulsive or short-sighted decisions and may drive impatient and impulsive behaviors (Loewenstein 1996).

Exposure to individuals possessing cues of easy sexual access intensifies men's romantic desires (Schmitt, Couden, and Baker 2001). Like other visceral factors, sexual desire may lead to impulse control difficulties. The basic tenet of the current research is that 'sex-related primes' are able to provoke a wide variety of impulsive behaviors among men. Our approach differs from earlier research in several ways. First, previous studies on the impact of visceral factors assume a good-specific collapsing of time perspective toward the present. Loewenstein (1996) explicitly states that the present orientation applies only to goods that are associated with the visceral factor. In contrast, we hypothesize that visceral factors produce effects in domains unrelated to the visceral factor and investigate whether sexual cues impact impulsive behavior in non-sexual domains. Second, our research differs from earlier studies in the subtlety of the sexual cues: Rather than exposing men to nude centerfolds of Playboy magazine (Loewenstein, Nagin, and Paternoster 1997) or asking participants to self-stimulate (Ariely and Loewenstein 2006), we expose men to relatively mild cues that are not distinguishable from the models that abound in print and TV ads. Third, we use a multi-task battery and demonstrate that sexual cues affect a diverse set of impulsive decisions, actions and judgments.

In the first study, we demonstrate that men have a heightened preference for immediately available rewards over larger, later monetary rewards after exposure to sexual cues. Participants had to specify the amount of money they would require in one week and the amount they would require in one month to make them indifferent to receiving €15 now. Male participants require more money after exposure to pictures of sexy women than after pictures of landscapes. An explanation in terms of mood is ruled out.

In the second study, we investigate whether men have difficulty in getting control over their impulses after exposure to sex-cues. Male participants engaged in a behavioral inhibition task in which they had to press a right-pointing arrow key on the computer keyboard when they saw a left-pointing arrow on the computer screen. After exposure to lingerie (vs. a T-shirt) male participants have more difficulties in inhibiting prepotent responses. Consistent with study 1, male participants require more money to make them indifferent to receiving €15 after exposure to a bra than after exposure to a T-shirt. As such, we demonstrate that sexual cues are capable of instigating impulsive behavior unrelated to wealth or material resources and we rule out the possibility that the impulsive behavior is driven merely by the presence of an individual. Again, a mood explanation is ruled out.

In the third study, we demonstrate that sexual cues affect other and even more distinct operationalizations of impulsivity. First, we show that sexual cues affect the tendency to participate in risky behavior. Men prefer a larger, more risky monetary reward over a smaller, less risky reward after exposure to pictures featuring female models high in sex-appeal (vs. pictures of elderly women and vs. pictures of young women with unrevealing clothes). Second, we demonstrate that sexual cues lead to changes in the perceived appropriateness of buying impulsiveness. Male consumers have less unfavorable opinions about an impulse purchase when they had been previously exposed to women high in sex-appeal. This study rules out an explanation in terms of both mood and cognitive load.

In this series of experiments a diverse set of behavioral measures is used to quantify the extent to which an individual acted impulsively following sexual imagery. We demonstrate that sexual cues lead to a heightened preference for smaller, immediate rewards; to difficulties in inhibiting prepotent responses; to a heightened preference for larger but riskier rewards, and to less unfavorable opinions about impulse buying. These findings lead us to conclude that exposure to sexual cues (lingerie or pictures of sexy women) causes male consumers to act impulsively. We rule out explanations in terms of mate attraction (Roney 2003), mood (Rook and Gardner 1993), presence of individuals (Luo 2005), attractiveness of female models (Wilson and Daly 2004) and cognitive load (Shiv and Fedorikhin 1999).

Our studies are consistent with the hot-system/cool-system analysis of behavior in which a cool, cognitive system and a hot, emotional system interact to enable or undermine attempts at self-control (Metcalf and Mischel 1999). Decisions made after sensory contact with desirable items or in the presence of cues that emphasize sensory pleasures are likely to be more impulsive than are decisions made in the absence of these types of visceral cues (Ditto et al. 2006; Loewenstein 1996; Metcalf and Mischel 1999). We show that the influence of visceral states induced by a prior, irrelevant situation carries over to decisions and judgments boldly unconnected to the visceral factor: Visceral states may persist and generalize beyond the eliciting situation and affect subsequent behavior. As such, we contribute to the literature by demonstrating effects of "incidental visceral states". This series of experiments adds to a growing body of research (Briers et al. 2006; Giordano et al. 2002; Wilson and Daly 2004) showing that visceral states may produce effects in or carry over to domains unrelated to the visceral factor.

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Positive Implicit Memory Effects For Event Incongruent Sponsorship

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

One of the main goals of sponsors is to increase awareness (Walliser 2003). Congruence between the sponsor and the event sponsored is one important factor influencing awareness. Congruence can be defined as the perceived fit between a sponsor and the event sponsored (Speed and Thompson 2000). Several authors have shown that an increase in congruence improves aided and unaided awareness (Grohs et al. 2004; Quester and Farrelly 1998; Rodgers 2004). However, this result has no strong theoretical support (Stangor and McMillan 1992) and it may partly be explained by constructive processes of sponsor identification (Johar and Pham 1999).

Johar and Pham (1999) showed that sponsor identification is biased toward sponsors that are perceived as congruent to the event. Consumers will identify sponsors based on the fact that they find it more logical if an event is sponsored by congruent sponsors (whether true or not). Thus, when assessing sponsor recall and especially recognition, subjects may construct an artificial response according to their existing expectations. It is nevertheless important to assess sponsor awareness without the presence of such bias. The use of implicit memory measures enables to suppress this bias.

Implicit memory is defined as the non intentional and non conscious retrieval of information previously encoded in memory (Schacter 1987). Two types of implicit memory can be distinguished: perceptual implicit memory and conceptual implicit memory (Lee 2002). Perceptual implicit memory rests on an encoding of the physical proprieties of the stimulus whereas conceptual implicit memory rests on an encoding of the semantic proprieties of the stimulus. Implicit memory measures enable verifying the encoding of information and are not influenced by conscious retrieval strategies. However, implicit memory measures are not explicit memory measures (i.e. recall or recognition) without biases.

We used the associative network model (Crocker et al. 1984) and the encoding flexibility model (Sherman et al. 1998) to develop hypotheses on the relative encoding of congruent versus incongruent sponsors. The encoding flexibility model proposes that it is because consistent information is easily understood and confirms prior expectations that it will receive little attention and that the perceptual details of this information is not well encoded. After having extracted the basic gist of consistent information, individuals will direct their attention to other information harder to comprehend such as inconsistent information. Following the research of Lee (2002) we also chose to develop hypotheses concerning sponsor choice. Lee showed that perceptual implicit memory influences stimulus based choices and that conceptual implicit memory influences memory based choices.

We tested the hypotheses in an experiment on sports events sponsorships by brands. The experimental design used was the following: congruence (low vs. high) x processing capacity (low vs. high) x type of implicit memory measure and type of choice (perceptual implicit memory and memory based choice vs. conceptual implicit memory and stimulus based choice). Participants were exposed to 23 sponsorships of international events (8 congruent, 8 incongruent and 7 filler sponsorships). Half of the participants was under mental load whereas the other half was not. Implicit memory measures were introduced as a new test of brand awareness.

Participants were asked to identify brands flashed briefly (40 ms) on the center of the screen. Subjects had to identify 67 brands among which 7 congruent and 7 incongruent target brands. For perceptual implicit memory measures, the 14 target brands were the sponsoring brands. For conceptual implicit memory measures, the 14 target brands were brands in the same product categories as the sponsoring brands. Indeed, conceptual implicit memory of a brand rests on the activation of the link between the brand and semantically related concepts such as the other brands in the product category. The choice tasks consisted of 6 memory based or 6 stimulus based choices.

An awareness check questionnaire enabled us to classify 111 subjects as non conscious. We started by assessing criterion validity of the implicit memory measures used by showing that the perceptual implicit memory measure is not affected by a diminution of processing capacity but that the conceptual implicit memory measure is affected (Mulligan 1997, 1998).

For the memory measures, the dependent variable of interest was the proportion of congruent and incongruent target brands correctly identified. As hypothesized, for perceptual implicit memory measures, we found a main effect of congruence such as incongruent sponsors are better encoded ($M=.0.534$) than congruent sponsors ($M=.0.435$) and that whatever the level of processing capacity. For conceptual implicit memory measures, as hypothesized, we found a significant interaction between the type of sponsor and the processing capacity such as when capacity is high conceptual implicit memory is higher for incongruent sponsors ($M=.436$) than for congruent sponsors ($M=.399$) and when capacity is low conceptual implicit memory is higher for congruent sponsors ($M=.335$) than for incongruent sponsors ($M=.318$).

For stimulus based choices, we found that incongruent sponsors have more chance of being chosen than congruent sponsors (44% vs. 28% of choices) but, contrary to our hypothesis, only when processing capacity is high. For the memory based choices, we found, contrary to our hypothesis, that congruent sponsors and incongruent sponsors have the same chance of being chosen.

The results of this research suggest that some existing findings showing that an increase in congruence improves aided and unaided awareness may have been polluted by new response construction biases. Recognition measures, which mainly rest on perceptual processes, are particularly likely to have been polluted (Roediger 1990). This should however be tested in a follow up experiment using explicit memory measures corrected for response biases as dependent measures.

The use of implicit memory measures is nevertheless important as implicit memory can influence judgments and choices of consumers (Trendel and Warlop 2005). Moreover, the memory record of the association between a sponsor and the event sponsored is often weak (Walliser 2003). Thus, it is often the information encoded in implicit memory that will influence behavior and judgment of consumers and it appears that incongruent sponsors are often better encoded in implicit memory than congruent sponsors.

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Implicit and Explicit Influences on Spontaneous and Deliberate Food Choices

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Within the consumer research literature, there is a long standing tradition that focuses on deliberative and volitional aspects of consumer behavior. It is assumed that consumers are aware of their attitudes, which drive their behaviors through the mediation of behavioral intentions. Recently however, studies have shown that attitudes might be activated automatically and drive behavior without conscious awareness. Dijksterhuis, Smith, van Baaren, and Wigboldus (2005) even make the claim that the majority of shopping choices are unconsciously driven, influenced by automatically activated attitudes. The domain of food choices is particularly akin to this observation, when consumers claim they bought a chocolate snack displayed near the cashier "against their will". Shiv and Fedhorikin (1999; 2002) unraveled the interplay between unconscious and more controlled processes involved in food choices. In this article, we build and add to this line of study by highlighting the influence of the implicit (i.e. below awareness) attitudes and preferences on consumer behaviors involving control and deliberation compared to those more spontaneous and impulsive.

Evidences for the Existence of Implicit Consumer Attitudes

Several studies have recently provided strong evidences for the existence of implicit consumer attitudes. Among the earliest examples, the "subliminal mere exposure effect" underlies that an implicit attitude might be merely created in the context of an experiment. Holden and Vanhuele (1999) demonstrated that participants identify fictitious brands as familiar, without explicit memory of having been exposed to them in the context of the experiment. Also, in Shapiro, MacInnis, and Heckler (1997), participants who had been exposed to ads subliminally were more likely to include in their consideration set the products featured in the ads than participants in the control group.

Much of the impetus in studying implicit consumer attitudes has been given by research in social psychology on stereotyping and prejudice. Building on a priming paradigm, a variety of indirect tests-among them the Implicit Association Test (Greenwald et al. 1998) and the Go-No Go Association Task (Nosek and Banaji 2001) highlighted the existence of an implicit attitude that might be dissociated from the explicit or self-reported attitude, especially for socially sensitive attitude objects or issues (e.g. attitudes toward prejudiced groups such as homosexuals or African-Americans). As consumer attitudes are traditionally less subject to social desirability bias, implicit and explicit attitudes are expected to correlate for a large majority of consumer products. For instance, Brunel, Tietje, and Greenwald (2004) found a high implicit-explicit correspondence for attitudes toward computer brands. So did Maison, Greenwald, and Bruin (2004) in studies involving brands of yoghurts, fast-food chains or soft-drinks. Nonetheless, studies on implicit brand ethnocentrism reveal that in some instances and for certain groups of consumers, implicit and explicit consumer attitudes might be dissociated. In Maison, Greenwald, and Bruin (2003) study, Marlboro regular smokers report an explicit preference in favor of Marlboro over a local Polish brand of cigarettes yet showing more positive associations with the local brand on the IAT.

If we assume that consumers hold toward products both an explicit attitude that they exert a control on in self-report and an implicit one which they might not be aware of, the question becomes which of the implicit and explicit exert an influence on

consumer behaviors and choices, and under which circumstances will each attitude be a better predictor of behavior.

The Interplay Between Implicit and Explicit Influences in Driving Choices

Recent research on the differential role of implicit and explicit attitudes on behavior suggest a dissociation pattern, with explicit attitudes driving controlled and deliberative behaviors whereas implicit attitudes would be better predictors of spontaneous and more impulsive responses. In the domain of stereotyping and prejudice, explicit attitudes exert an influence on behaviors involving information processing such as choosing to employ people from certain groups. Yet, implicit attitudes were found to be better predictors of non verbal responses that lie outside of conscious awareness and control such as blinking and visual contact (Amodio, Harmon-Jones, and Devine 2003), friendliness of interactions with a black confederate or frequency of handing a pen to an African American vs. placing it on the table (reported in Wilson et al. 2000).

Such antagonistic effects of the implicit and explicit attitudes are particularly apparent in the case of temptations, where impulses resulting from an activation of the implicit attitude facilitate behaviors incompatible with deliberate evaluations (Karpinski and Hilton 2000). Offering a choice between a chocolate cake and a fruit salad, Shiv and Fedhorikin (1999; 2002) demonstrate that when decisions are made quickly and under impairment of processing resources, choices are driven by automatic affective processes, otherwise choices are influenced by the higher-order (more controlled) processes.

Recently, Perugini (2005) modeled the implicit and explicit influences specifically on spontaneous and deliberate behaviors in an experiment offering participants the choice between a snack and a fruit and using the recollection of their past behavior as proxy for controlled choice. His conclusions are strongly in favor of implicit preferences influencing spontaneous choice with no significant influence of explicit preference whereas explicit preferences clearly show the opposite pattern, with strong influences on deliberative behavior and no influence on spontaneous choice (study 2). Nonetheless, Perugini (2005) also found that the prediction of being a smoker or not (Study 1) is more effective when having both the implicit and explicit attitude entered as predictors, especially when explicit and implicit attitudes are congruent. Perugini proposes that spontaneous behaviors involve a mix of both automatic and controlled components, with the controlled components more likely to act as an overriding mechanism. His results also suggest that when attitudes are not congruent, the influence of the implicit might be magnified.

The Role of Depleted Cognitive Resources on the Implicit Influence

Precisely, Wilson et al. (2000) explains the existence of dissociation between the implicit and explicit attitude through an overriding mechanism. In some instances, people might block access to an implicit attitude they view as illegitimate or unwanted and replace it by an attitude which they believe good or instrumental with respect to their goals. This process requires motivation and cognitive capacity. For instance, Koole, Dijksterhuis, and van Knippenberg (2001) found a correspondence between implicit self-

esteem (positive bias towards the letter of one's name) and self-reported self-evaluation only under time pressure (study 3) and cognitive load (study 4). In the domain of consumer decision making, Shiv and Fedorikhin (1999; 2002) tested the effect of restricting cognitive resources on the choice between an alternative associated with more positive affect (a chocolate cake) and one associated with more positive cognitions (a fruit salad). Findings suggest that when resources are restricted, lower-order affect arising from more automatic processes might have higher impact on choice (leading to higher likelihood to choose the chocolate cake). On the contrary, when resources are not restricted, higher-order affect arising from more controlled processing might have more influence, leading to higher likelihood to choose the fruit salad. In line with this line of reasoning, we suggest that when consumers are able and motivated to control their choices, behavior will be determined by their explicit attitude whereas when consumers are less in control, due for instance to impairment in cognitive resources, behavior will be strongly determined by their implicit attitude.

In the following studies, we start (study 1) by testing the dissociation pattern (i.e. influence of implicit attitude on "spontaneous" choice and explicit attitude on "deliberate" choice) by proposing a choice between a chocolate bar and a yoghurt. Hetherington and Macdiarmid (1993) report that chocolate is the food item that is most likely to produce conflict and trigger loss of control. On the other hand, yoghurt is supposed to be a more rational option, more likely to be chosen deliberately for health reasons. The explicit attitude should be a strong predictor of deliberate choice (behavioral intention as proxy) whereas the implicit attitude should be a better predictor of a more spontaneous choice (i.e. real choice under pressure between a chocolate bar and a yoghurt). The second study directly tests the impact of restricting cognitive resources on a group of people likely to experience an implicit-explicit dissociation toward food items (i.e. restrained eaters). When restrained eaters are motivated and have the cognitive capacity to override their temptations, they control their eating and their food choices whereas when they release from self-imposed control they make choices dictated by their impulses (Ward and Mann 2000). We suggest that under high cognitive load, people experiencing an implicit-explicit dissociation (i.e. restrained eaters) will be more heavily influenced by their implicit attitude than when under low cognitive load. Non restrained eaters should be less affected by the cognitive load manipulation.

STUDY 1

Method

PROCEDURE. 197 persons (evenly distributed on gender) participated in the study in exchange of a \$25 compensation. The cover story for the experiment was the assessment of word categorization as an automatic skill. After filling out an informed consent form and a demographic / screening questionnaire, participants were seated in front of a desktop computer running the Inquisit® software. Participants undertook first the implicit tasks (I.A.T. and G.N.A.T. counterbalanced) followed by the explicit questions on computer. The category "chocolate bars" was selected as focal attitude object. The category "yoghurt" was chosen as contrasting category likely to yield more neutral implicit attitudes.¹ At the end of the section on

the computer, participants were brought one by one to another room where they were asked to make a choice between two products (i.e. a chocolate bar by Cadbury and yoghurt in tube by Yoplait). These two products were similarly convenient (e.g. no spoon needed for the yoghurt) and of same value (i.e. same price in vending machines). They were stored in an ice-bag during the experiment and were not visible except when participants were making their choice. Time taken to make the decision was below 5 seconds.

IMPLICIT MEASURES. The experiment's two indirect tasks used the same set of stimulus words. Ten adjectives-five pleasant and five unpleasant-were selected from Ottaviano, Hayden, and Oakes (2001) and the pleasant and unpleasant sets were matched on word length (average length 8.6 for pleasant words, 8.8 for unpleasant words). Ten target brands-five per product category- were selected via two pre-tests based on word length (chocolate 7.4 vs. yoghurts 7.2), familiarity (on a seven-point scale anchored by -3 to 3, chocolate 2.54 vs. yoghurts 2.41, $t(37)=0.72$, $p=.47$) as well as association with the target category and dissociation with the contrasting category (chocolate 2.89 vs. yoghurt -2.71, $t(19)=1.63$, $p=.12$).

IAT. The IAT used a complete sequence of seven blocks (see Greenwald et al. 1998): (a) evaluative attribute discrimination (b) initial target discrimination (c) practice initial combined task (d) test initial combined task (e) reversed target discrimination (f) practice reversed combined task (g) test reversed combined task. The evaluative attribute block included all pleasant and unpleasant words. Each target discrimination block included all target words. Each practice combined block (blocks c and f) included 20 trials including 10 evaluative attributes and the 10 target words. Each test combined block (blocks d and g) included 40 trials including twice each target word and twice each evaluative attribute.

GNAT. The Go-No Go Association Test (see Nosek and Banaji 2001) requires participants to respond to stimuli that represent the target category and the valenced attribute e.g. good (signal) and ignore other stimuli e.g. bad words (noise). Response latency and errors are compared between blocks presenting target + good and target + bad. The GNAT task was compounded of 8 blocks. First, four blocks of practice trials were presented at random. Each practice block was compounded of 10 trials, such as all evaluative and target words would be used once as signal and once as noise. Next, another set of four blocks mixes evaluative and target words as signal and noise. These four blocks appeared in randomized order. Each of these test blocks was compounded of 70 trials, and was preceded by 8 trials used as practice. The ratio of signal to noise was set at 1:1 for practice block, but 4:3 for test blocks to reduce the length of the test (see Nosek and Banaji 2001, Experiment 3). Signal stimuli appeared for 1000ms whereas noise stimuli appeared for 500ms (see Nosek and Banaji 2001, Experiment 5) in order to be able to use response latency in addition to errors as dependent variable.

EXPLICIT MEASURES. After the sequences of indirect measures, participants read on the screen that the next questions assess variables that could have an impact on the speed with which they categorized the words. The explicit attitude was assessed through three questions (randomized) "My attitude toward ___ is" on three seven-point scales anchored by "unfavorable-favorable", "positive-negative" and "bad-good" for both the chocolate bars ($\alpha=0.97$) and for the yoghurt category ($\alpha=0.95$). Behavioral intention was assessed through two questions: "To what extent do you expect to eat ___ in the upcoming week" (anchors definitively do not-definitively do) and "How likely is it that you will eat ___ in the upcoming week" (very unlikely-very likely) for chocolate bars ($\alpha=0.95$) and for yoghurts category ($\alpha=0.95$)

¹A pilot study (n=40) had been conducted in order to choose both product categories.

TABLE 1
Implicit attitude measures

	Av. Lat.	ConvLog	ConvMs	D
Yoghurt-chocolate	1151ms	0.11	114.36	0.27

Results

IAT. The analyses used Greenwald, Nosek, and Banaji (2003) improved scoring algorithm. The % of error in the test was low (6.38%) and will not be discussed further. Table 1 displays the average latencies (Av.Lat.) and the mean differences between the initial condition and the reversed condition (c and d and f and g steps) in log-transformed values (ConvLog.) and in milliseconds (ConvMs). Participants were faster in associating chocolate bars with good words (and yoghurt with bad words) than in associating chocolate bars with bad words (and yoghurt with good), indicating a positive implicit preference in favour of chocolate bars. Cohen's *d* indicates a small IAT effect (by convention 0.2 is considered a small effect).

GNAT. Analyses proceeded according to the algorithm defined by Nosek and Banaji (2001). First, *d*-prime was calculated as the difference in the proportion of hits (correct hit to signal) and false alarms (incorrect hit for noises) for each of four combinations of targets (chocolate or yoghurt) and attributes (good or bad) as signals. As expected, sensitivity was greater when subjects were jointly discriminating chocolate and good from distracters ($d' = 1.79$) than jointly discriminating chocolate and bad ($d' = 1.71, t(196) = 2.66, p = .01$). This result suggests that chocolate and good is more strongly associated than chocolate and bad. On the other hand, when the target concept was yoghurts, there was no significant difference in sensitivity between yoghurts + good ($d' = 1.69$) and yoghurts + bad ($d' = 1.74, t(196) = -1.58, p = .11$). The GNAT corroborates the IAT results in favour of an automatic positive attitude towards chocolate and tends to indicate a rather neutral attitude toward yoghurts. Second, the latencies to categorize the target words when associated with bad compared to when associated with good were analyzed as second dependent variable. Reaction times were log-transformed and subsequent analyses are based on log-transformed data, although presented in ms for meaningful purposes. The difference in reactions times when chocolate is associated with bad ($M_s = 587$) and when chocolate is associated with good ($M_s = 544$) is significant ($t(196) = 7.52, p = .00$), indicating a positive attitude toward chocolate (Cohen's $d = 0.41$). On the other hand, for yoghurt, the difference in reactions time when yoghurt is associated with bad ($M_s = 547$) vs. good ($M_s = 542$) is non-significant ($t(196) = 0.53, p = .60$), indicating a neutral attitude toward yoghurt (Cohen's $d = 0.04$). Overall for the GNAT, both dependent variables (sensitivity and latencies) are internally consistent and in line with the IAT, with a positive implicit attitude toward chocolate and a neutral attitude toward yoghurts.

PREDICTORS OF DELIBERATE AND SPONTANEOUS BEHAVIOUR. An index of explicit preference toward chocolate was created by subtracting the attitude toward yoghurt from that of chocolate ($M = -0.14, SD 2.42$). An index of deliberate choice (as proxy) was also created by subtracting the behavioral intention toward yoghurt to that of chocolate ($M = -0.21, SD 2.39$). Last, the actual binary choice between the yoghurt stick and the chocolate bar was entered as measure of spontaneous choice. Participants display an explicit preference toward the yoghurt over the chocolate and report being

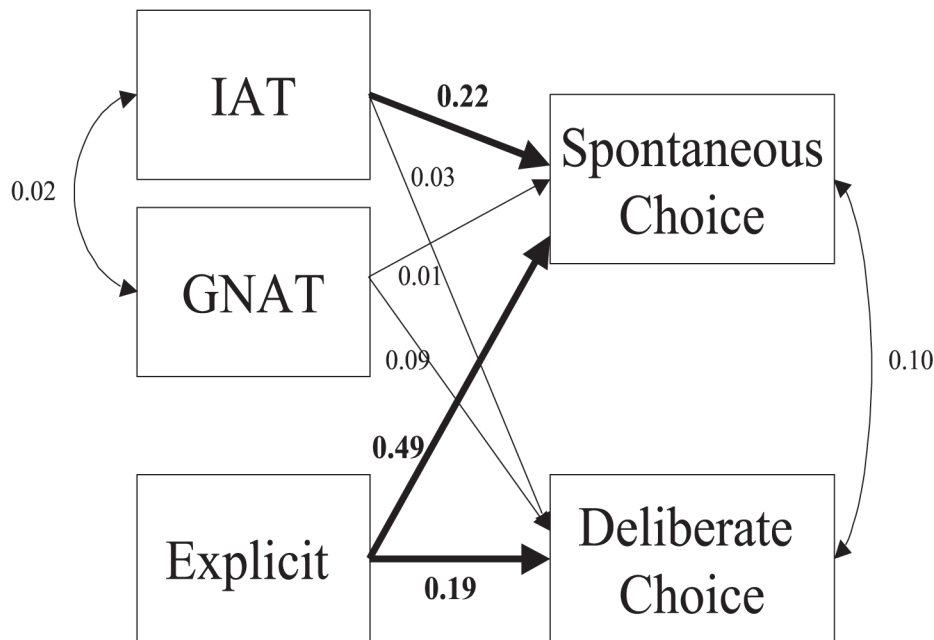
more likely to choose the yoghurt. Yet, in the binary choice task, 59.3% of participants chose the chocolate.

A Structural Equation Model (see fig 1) predicting simultaneously the spontaneous and the deliberative choice from implicit and explicit measures was fitted using the Mplus® software. The fit of this model is excellent, with a non significant chi-square ($p = .67$) and a CFI close to 1 (CFI=0.99). Nonetheless, because these traditional measures of fit have a rather low power to reject a model with binary outcome (Yu and Muthen 2002), two additional indicators of goodness of fit were taken into account, the RMSEA and the WRMR. Both indicated a very good fit, with a RMSEA close to 0 (RMSEA=0.001) and a WRMR below 0.9 (WRMR=0.072). The implicit preference (IAT, est./S.E.=4.80, $p = .00$) in addition to the explicit preference (est./S.E.=1.99, $p = .05$) contribute to the prediction of the spontaneous choice. The deliberative behaviour is significantly influenced by the explicit preference only (est./S.E.=2.48, $p = .01$). The GNAT measures do not help predict significantly neither the spontaneous nor the deliberate choice.

STUDY 2

Study 1 provides evidences that implicit preferences are a major predictor of actual and more spontaneous choices whereas the explicit preference exerts an influence on both spontaneous and more controlled choices (i.e. behavioral intentions as proxy). The second study was meant to provide a deeper understanding of the respective influences of explicit and implicit attitudes. We chose to assess the attitude toward two totally antagonistic products, one supposed to yield strong positive implicit attitudes (double stuff OREO) and the other supposed to yield strong negative implicit attitudes (reduced fat OREO). We manipulate the control exerted by participants on their choice through a cognitive load manipulation. Participants are split into a restrained group (controlling their diet and likely to have an explicit preference in favour of the reduced fat option and an implicit preference in favour of the double stuff option) and a non restrained group (likely to prefer the double stuff option both at implicit and explicit level). Tuorila and colleagues demonstrated that even though consumers had never tasted specific fat-free food in the past (i.e. cake, crackers and cheese), they had strong (negative) expectations on the taste of these products. In addition, the difference in attitude and behavioral intention toward reduced fat products (cakes and chocolate in particular) between restrained and non-restrained is well documented (see Tuorila, Kramer, and Engell 2001), with restrained eaters more positive toward reduced fat products and more likely to choose them over regular alternatives than non-restrained eaters. Access to cognitive resources was manipulated through a memory test. It was expected that restrained eaters in the high cognitive load condition (i.e. disinhibitive effect; see Ward and Mann 2000) would make a choice influenced by their implicit preference whereas they should make a choice more related to their explicit preference in the low cognitive load condition. Non-restrained eaters should be less affected by the manipulation.

FIGURE 1
Structural model of implicit and explicit influence on choice



Standardized parameters for the structural equation model on the group of respondents (N=197). Significant structural paths are in bold.

Method

SAMPLE. 120 Women were pre-screened over the phone fifteen days before the beginning of the study to be perfectly fluent in English, to have a correct vision and not suffering from serious food diseases. In addition, all of them were selected to have knowledge of the brand OREO cookies. The Revised Dietary Scale (Herman and Polivy 1980) was embedded in the set of questions. Participants were classified as restrained or non-restrained eaters on the basis of their score on this restrained scale: women with a score above 16 out of 35 (conventional cut-off) were considered as restrained eater.

PROCEDURE. Participants were tested individually.² Upon entering the experimental room, all participants completed the IAT and the GNAT (counterbalanced) in order to assess their implicit preferences between double stuff and reduced-fat OREO cookies. They also reported their explicit attitude toward both products and their behavioural intention toward each OREO variety on computer in the same procedure as study 1. Next, participants had to memorize words displayed one by one in the middle of the screen, each for five seconds, and participants had to memorize these words. One group of participants (low cognitive-load condition) had to memorize two words whereas the other group (high-cognitive load) had to memorize ten words. Afterwards, participants were offered a choice between a box of double stuff OREO cookies and a box of reduced-fat OREO cookies. 55% of participants chose the double stuff OREO.

Implicit measures. Both the IAT and the GNAT used the same procedure as described in study 1. The only change was on the target words. For each product, the five words describing best both

varieties of OREO cookies were selected in a pre-test (n=20 women). Both sets of words were evaluated as equally familiar (on a seven-point scale anchored by -3 to 3, set reduced-fat=2.75 and set double stuff=2.72, $t(19)=0.43$, $p=0.67$) and equally associated with the target category and dissociated from the contrasting category (on a seven-point scale from strongly associated with double stuff to strongly associated with reduced-fat, set reduced fat=1.52 vs. set double stuff=-1.48, $t(19)=0.09$, $p=.93$).

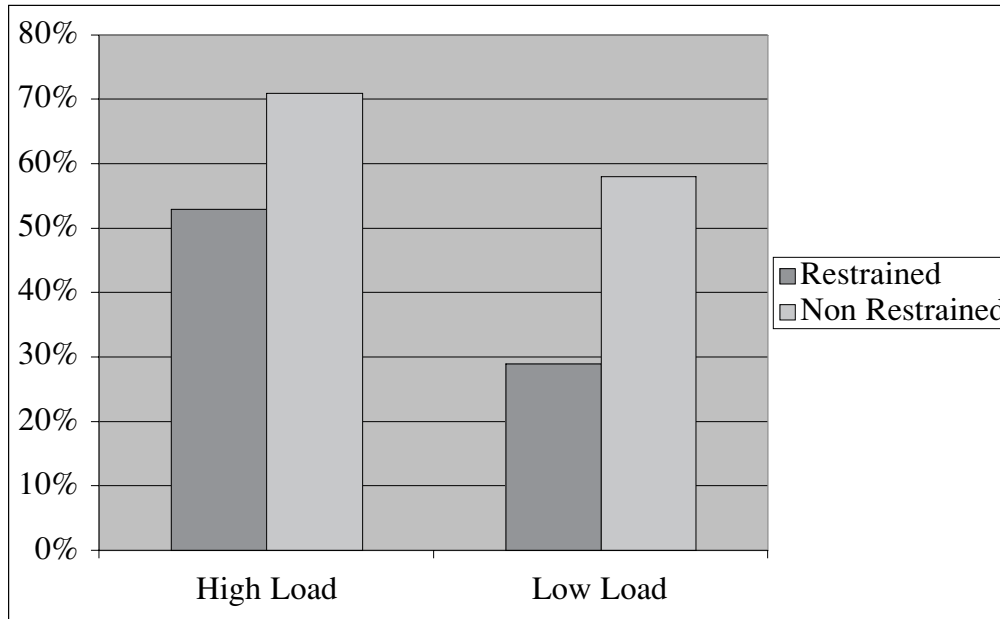
Cognitive load manipulation check. After making their choice, participants had to describe, as completely as possible, whatever went through their minds while they were deciding between the two cookie types (see Shiv and Fedorikhin 1999). The thought protocols were coded by two independent judges for the total number of thoughts. Along Shiv and Fedorikhin's (1999) procedure, any statement representing evaluations or descriptions of the food options, thoughts about the task, or prior experience with the options, or consequences of choosing one or the other option (e.g. on their weight), description of current state (hungry or thirsty) were coded as thoughts (all statements fell into one of these categories). Inter-coder agreement was high (96%) and discrepancies were resolved through discussion. A between-subject ANOVA with cognitive load condition as independent variable reveals that the manipulation was successful ($F(1,118)=8.73$, $p=.00$). Participants reported an average of 2.98 thoughts (SD 1.71) in the high cognitive load condition vs. 3.89 (SD 1.64) in the low cognitive load.

Results

ANALYSIS OF IMPLICIT ATTITUDE MEASURES. Analyses for the IAT proceeded as those of study 1. Conform to expectations, partici-

²The study reported in this article is part of a larger protocol.

FIGURE 2
% choice for double stuff OREO (over reduced fat)



pants were faster in associating double stuff + good (and reduced fat + bad) rather than double stuff + bad (and reduced fat + good) Cohen's d ($d=0.40$) indicates a moderate IAT effect, with no difference between restrained groups ($p=.18$). Analyses for the GNAT were conducted first on sensitivity scores and then on latencies (same as study 1), both for the double-stuff and for the reduced fat option. As expected, sensitivity was greater when subjects were jointly discriminating double stuff and good from distracters ($d'=1.90$) than jointly discriminating double stuff and bad ($d'=1.69$, $t(119)=4.64$, $p=.00$). This result suggests that the double stuff OREO and good are more strongly associated than double stuff and bad. When the target concept was reduced fat, sensitivity was greater when subjects were jointly discriminating reduced fat and bad from distracters ($d'=1.84$) than when jointly discriminating reduced fat and good ($d'=1.71$, $t(119)=-3.22$, $p=.00$). On this dependent measure, results indicate that participants display a negative implicit attitude toward reduced fat OREO cookies and a positive implicit attitude toward the double stuff version. The latencies to categorize the target words when associated with bad compared to when associated with good were analysed as second dependent variables. The difference in reactions times when double stuff OREO is associated with bad ($M_s=627$) and when double stuff OREO is associated with good ($M_s=545$) is significant ($t(119)=11.49$, $p=.00$), indicating a positive attitude toward the product (Cohen's $d=0.50$). For reduced fat, the difference between bad ($M_s=564$) and good ($M_s=578$) is also significant in the opposite direction ($t(119)=-1.99$, $p=.05$), indicating a negative implicit attitude toward reduced fat OREO (Cohen's $d=-0.11$). In terms of differences between conditions, a MANOVA with restrained status as between-subject factor indicates no difference between groups, neither for the reduced fat nor for the double stuff.

Overall for the GNAT, both dependent variables (sensitivity and latencies) are internally consistent and indicate, as was expected, a positive implicit attitude toward double stuff OREO and a negative implicit attitude toward reduced fat OREO. GNAT results are perfectly in line with IAT results, and indicate a clear implicit

preference in favour of the double stuff option, both for restrained and non restrained eaters.

PREDICTORS AND MODERATORS OF BEHAVIOR. An index of explicit preference toward double stuff was created by subtracting the attitude toward reduced fat from that of double stuff ($M=0.18$, $SD=2.46$). There is a significant difference between restrained eating groups, with restrained eaters preferring the reduced fat option ($M=-0.34$) and non-restrained eaters showing a marked preference for the double stuff ($M=0.68$, $F(1, 118)=5.32$, $p=0.02$).

A logistic regression with restrained status and cognitive load condition levels as predictors and choice between the double stuff and the reduced fat as dependent indicates differences both between restrained group and conditions ($\chi^2=11.88$, $p=.01$). In line with expectations, there is a main effect of cognitive load, with an increased likelihood to choose the double stuff option over the reduced fat in the high load condition (odds=4.67, Wald=13.52, $p=.00$). There is also a main effect of the restrained status on choice, with restrained eaters being more likely to choose the reduced fat over the double stuff cookie (odds=0.48, Wald=3.06, $p=.08$). Last, the interaction between restrained status and cognitive load condition is significant (odds=4.21, Wald=3.51, $p=.06$).

In order to test the influence of the implicit and explicit attitude on spontaneous choice, a second logistic regression was conducted. The explicit preference, the implicit preference (IAT), the implicit attitude (GNAT) toward high fat and reduced fat OREO were introduced as predictors of choice. The restrained status and the cognitive load condition were also introduced as categorical predictors. The model fits the data very well ($\chi^2(7)=37.30$, $p=.00$) and helps predict 71.2% of the choices. Corroborating the results of study 1, both the explicit preference (odds=1.51, Wald=11.51, $p=.00$) and the implicit preference (IAT, odds=1.87, Wald=2.85, $p=.09$) have an influence on spontaneous choice. The implicit attitude toward the reduced fat option (GNAT) is never significant, neither as main effect nor as interaction. The implicit attitude toward the double stuff is not significant as main effect. However, there is a restrained X condition X GNAT double stuff interaction

(odds=8.13, Wald=4.95, $p=.02$), with the implicit attitude toward the double stuff option being more influential for restrained eaters in the high load condition.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

This research extends Shiv and Fedorikhin (2002; 1999) findings on spontaneous and controlled influences in the choice between an affect vs. a cognitive-based option. We demonstrate that spontaneous behaviors are strongly influenced by a combination of unconscious and conscious influences whereas our controlled behaviors and behavioral intentions are predicted mainly by those attitudes self-reported and endorsed (study 1). In addition, when a choice is made quickly or under impairment of cognitive resources, the implicit attitude has a stronger influence on the alternative selected, especially when there is a conflict between that attitude endorsed and “wanted” by the consumer (i.e. the explicit) and that overridden (i.e. the implicit). In study 2, restrained eaters with depleted control due to impairment of cognitive resources made a choice in favor of the double stuff option over the reduced fat option, in line with their positive implicit attitudes in favor of this option (and although they preferred the reduced fat option in self-report).

Results are of particular interest to researchers and practitioners alike involved in changing behaviors, especially in domains where there might be dissociation between implicit and explicit attitudes (i.e. condom, health-related attitude objects etc.). First, it is demonstrated that consumers might hold attitudes toward certain products which they are not aware of or which they deny. Self-report measures do not necessarily reflect the real or the full picture. Yet, these implicit attitudes might be assessed with reliability through quantitative methods, whereas until now qualitative methods only (eg. through projective techniques) could have access to this hidden side of the consumer. This finding offers the opportunity for marketers to dig deeper into consumers’ evaluation of their products. Second, results suggest that spontaneous and impulsive choices might often be driven by the implicit attitude whereas more deliberate choices are strongly influenced by the explicit attitude. Hence, for products which might lead to conflicted attitudes (chocolate, biscuits, candies etc.), any action in the store that constraint processing resources or encourage immediate choices (i.e. pressure of a salesperson; end-of-aisles) increases the likelihood that the implicit attitude will drive the behavior (Shiv and Fedorikhin 1999). On the contrary, any action in the store that would favor elaboration and deliberation (such as tasting sessions, presentation of information on leaflets etc.) increases the likelihood that the explicit attitude will drive behavior.

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Investigating The Interactive Effects of Visual Imagery and Brand Familiarity on Brand Recall: A Cross-Cultural Study

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The issue of visual imagery in cross-cultural consumer research is addressed in the study. It investigates the relationships between the brand familiarity, visual imagery of an ad, and the brand claim recall in two distinct cultural environments—the U.S. and Russia.

A substantial research in cognitive psychology and consumer behavior is devoted to exploring sources, nature, specific features, and memory outcomes of human imagery. Memory recall is documented to be higher if associated with more intensive visual imagery activity rather than under conditions that are believed to be less imagery stimulating (Paivio and Csapo 1969; Elliott 1973; McKelvie and Demers 1979; Rossiter and Percy 1980; LaBarbera, Weingard, and Yorkston 1998). Therefore, the improving recall of ad contained information for imagery-intensive ads is hypothesized.

Another hypothesized effect is positive relationship between the level of brand familiarity and brand claim recall. The evidence for this relationship is provided by the signal detection and information organization theories as well as by the recent research on message processing and message response (e.g., Campbell and Keller 2003; Sagarin *et al.* 2002; Campbell and Kirmani 2000). The interaction between the two factors discussed above is considered as well.

Based on the cross-cultural consumer behavior and advertising research, it was proposed that there will be the difference between Russian and American consumers in terms of advertising image elaboration and, therefore, in relationship between imagery and brand claim recall.

The 2 x 2 factorial between subjects experimental design with two manipulated conditions—brand familiarity and imagery content of the ad—was applied in Study 1. The two chocolate brands—American (A) and Russian (R)—both of which operate on the U.S. and Russian markets, were chosen for the experiment. Two ads, one consisting of picture and text, and the other one consisting of text only, were created for each brand.

The students filled the questionnaire measuring the brand familiarity for brands they were assigned to, then rated the visual imagery level of ads. Then subjects were given a surprise claim recall test on the ads.

A two-way ANOVA followed by post-hoc tests produced the results that indicate at significance of both imagery and familiarity main effects as well as interaction effect (higher marginal influence of imagery on lower rather than on higher level of brand familiarity).

The Study 2 was conducted in two countries—USA and Russia. Each subject was randomly assigned to one of the treatments (HF/HI, HF/LI, LF/LI, and LF/HI). The 2 x 2 x 2 factorial between-subjects experiment was designed with three manipulated conditions—a subject's country of domicile, brand familiarity and imagery content of the ad. The same chocolate brands—Brand A and Brand R—were used. Attitude towards brand score (A_B) was measured as well.

An ANCOVA with A_B score as covariate was applied. The main effects of imagery rating and brand familiarity on brand recall remained to be significant after removing the covariate's effect. The higher imagery effect under low rather than high familiarity conditions was demonstrated as well. The significant 3-way inter-

action between country of domicile, brand familiarity, and imagery rating reveals different pattern of marginal influence of the imagery on brand claim recall for high familiarity vs. low familiarity conditions in two cultures. While in the U.S. imagery has much higher contribution to brand recall on low levels of brand familiarity, in Russia the difference of this contribution for high and low familiarity conditions is much less substantial.

To summarize, the Studies 1 and 2 provided highly significant support for brand familiarity and imagery effects on brand recall. Their interaction (higher contribution of imagery to brand claim recall on low rather than on high levels of brand familiarity) was supported by both studies as well. The significant differences of imagery influence on brand recall score in two countries was revealed by the significance of corresponding interactions. The difference of brand familiarity's influence on brand recall across two cultures was not supported.

The obtained results have important implications for both academic and practitioner research. The findings reported in this study attract attention to the issue of information processing resources that exist in consumer mind. The high level of brand familiarity creates the strong brand-related schema, that can use the cognitive capacity and interfere in the elaboration of the new image-evoked information. In contrary, the absence (or weakness) of such a schema for unfamiliar brands increases the availability of cognitive resources needed for image elaborating activity (Carlston 1980; Britton and Tesser 1982; Kardes 1986).

The study also demonstrates that the process of elaboration of image-initiated information is strongly influenced by social media. The need for image processing appears to be a cultural phenomena, that is influenced by spiritual traditions of the country, its media habits and dominating lifestyle. The strong cultural predisposition to reading the books and newspapers result in lower level of need for visualization, while media habits oriented at watching TV and reading colorful magazines create image-based information elaboration pattern. The associative links evoked by images result in higher attribute recalling abilities for consumers from image-intensive media environments, like USA. In contrast, consumers from reading-intensive environments, like Russia, have higher predisposition to elaborate textual rather than imagery information contained in the ad.

From managerial point of view, the study demonstrated that investment in image-intensive advertising will not produce the same return for different levels of brand familiarity and different international markets. The well established brands with higher familiarity rating require different communication strategies aimed at facilitating brand claim recall than low familiar ones. Image-intensive tools generate diminishing returns with increasing brand familiarity. The companies that are going global should also evaluate the degree of image intensiveness of the environments they are going to operate within. This is needed for assessing the "imagery advertising leverage" that global businesses will have in the particular culture.

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The Safety of Objects: An Examination of Materialism and Brand Connections

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Consumers across many parts of the globe place considerable value on the acquisition of material objects. Over the past two decades, researchers have sought to establish how materialism is formed and how this value influences individual and collective well-being (see Burroughs and Rindfleisch 2002 for a review). While these studies contribute to our understanding of psychological functioning, they do not generally consider the impact of this value upon consumption behavior. Our research seeks to address this gap by examining the relationship between materialism and brand connections. Drawing insights from research on material values, cognitive needs, and branding, we suggest that individuals with high levels of materialism will exhibit strong ties to the brands they consume as a means of coping with uncertainty.

We assessed the relationship between materialism and brand connections by employing two survey studies. The first study was a nationwide mail survey in the United States ($n=363$), while the second study was a mall intercept survey in Singapore ($n=300$). The response rate for these two studies was 20% and 26%, respectively, and the demographic profile for both surveys closely mirrored the general population for each country. Two product categories were the focus of each study. In the US, respondents were asked to record the make of automobile they currently own as well as the brand of jeans they last purchased for themselves. In Singapore, respondents were asked to record the brand of cell phone they currently own, as well as the brand of wristwatch that they last purchased for themselves. Our brand connection measures were assessed in relation to these brands.

We assessed three different manifestations of brand connections, *brand loyalty* (Chadhuri and Holbrook 2001), *self-brand connection* (Escalas and Bettman 2003), and *brand community* (Keller 2003). We assessed materialism using the updated (Richins 2004) 15-item Material Values Scale (MVS). Our conceptual framework argues that materialism is positively related to brand connections because materialists use brands to fulfill their fundamental need for certainty. To assess the influence of this cognitive need, our Singapore survey included two specific measures from the need for cognitive closure (NFCC) scale (Webster and Kruglanski 1994). Conceptually, NFCC is defined as, "the desire for a definite answer on some topic...as opposed to confusion and ambiguity" (Kruglanski 1989, p. 14). Specifically, we focused on *need for order* and *need for predictability* as our key dimensions. All measures displayed good psychometric properties.

We tested the relationship between material values and brand connection through a series of multiple regression analyses using our three brand connection measures (i.e., loyalty, connection, and community) as dependent variables and material values as the key predictor variable. These regressions revealed that materialism exerts a negligible influence on brand loyalty for all four product categories: automobiles ($b=-.01$, ns), jeans ($b=.04$, ns), watches ($b=.07$, ns), cell phones ($b=.06$, ns). In contrast, materialism has a significant effect on both self-brand connection (SBC) and brand community (BC), for automobiles (SBC: $b=.19$, $p<.01$; BC: $b=.26$, $p<.01$), jeans (SBC: $b=.22$, $p<.01$; BC: $b=.23$, $p<.01$), watches (SBC: $b=.18$, $p<.01$; BC: $b=.20$, $p<.01$), and cell phones (SBC: $b=.23$, $p<.01$; BC: $b=.21$, $p<.01$). In sum, materialism exhibits a positive influence on two out of the three measures of brand

connections for all four product categories, providing general support for our claim that materialists attempt to manage uncertainty by establishing strong individual and communal relationships with their brands.

In order to probe more deeply into the nature of the relationship between materialism and brand connections, we investigated the cognitive motives that may underlie this relationship, namely the need for order (NFO) and the need for predictability (NFP). Because our tests of the effect of materialism on brand connections indicate that materialism has no influence on brand loyalty, this additional analysis focuses on materialism's potential role as a mediator between NFO and/or NFP upon self-brand connection and brand community. In order to assess this potential influence, we conducted a series of mediated regression analyses. These analyses indicate that among our two indicants of the need for certainty, only NFP is significantly related to materialism ($b=.38$, $p<.01$). Thus, materialism's role as a potential mediator of the link between need for certainty and brand connections appears to be related to its ability to provide a sense of predictability rather than a sense of order. In addition, these analyses show that materialism fully mediates the effect of NFP on both self-brand connections and brand community for both watches (SBC: $b=.09$, ns, BC: $b=.07$, ns) and cell phones (SBC: $b=.11$, ns, BC: $b=.06$, ns), as the inclusion of this variable reduces the effect of NFP on these outcomes to nonsignificance.

In order to give shape to the ephemeral constructs upon which we ply our trade, academic researchers often employ cognitive archetypes (Lakoff 1987). Thus far, the dominant archetype among materialism researchers is an image of materialists as selfish status seekers. For example, Belk's (1985) seminal article portrays materialists as greedy, envious, and possessive. This image appears to hold a considerable degree of verisimilitude, as materialism has been shown to be negatively related to concerns for family, community, and religion (Burroughs and Rindfleisch 2002). However, our research suggests that this archetype may not fully capture why materialists form strong connections to their brands. Thus, in order to understand the relationship between materialists and branded objects, there appears to be a need for a new archetype. Based on our findings, one potential perspective would be to cast materialists (at least in terms of their brand relationships) as communal meaning seekers rather than selfish status seekers. This image appears to be quite congruent with prior findings that materialism is a means to manage uncertainty (Kasser 2002), and may also stimulate new insights regarding how and why materialists engage in consumption.

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Cultural Differences in Brand Extension Judgments and Feedback Effects

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Factors that influence the success of a brand extension and its feedback effect on the parent brand evaluations have been a great concern of theory and research in consumer judgment. It has been shown that an extension of a brand is evaluated more favorably when it is similar than dissimilar to the parent brand (e.g., Aaker and Keller 1990; Barone, Miniard, and Romeo 2000; Bottomley and Holden 2001; Broniarczyk and Alba 1994; Keller and Aaker 1992; Park, Milberg, and Lawson 1991; Zhang and Sood 2002). Further, a number of studies have found that unsuccessful extensions can influence perceptions of the parent brand such that dissimilar (vs. similar) extensions are likely to have a negative feedback effect on the parent brand evaluations (e.g., Loken and John 1993; Milberg, Park, and McCarthy 1997).

In this research we intended to extend the literature by investigating whether or not a cross-cultural difference (i.e., Eastern vs. Western culture) leads to a difference in magnitude of the "similarity effect" on extension evaluations and the "feedback effect" on the parent brand. It has been suggested that the Eastern culture is characterized by a prevention focus in motivation and self regulation, whereas the Western culture is relatively more promotion focused (e.g., Briley, Morris, and Simonson 2005; Lee, Aaker, and Gardner 2000). According to the literature, prevention-focused individuals are primarily concerned with presence/absence of a negative outcome of a decision alternative, whereas promotion-focused individuals are primarily concerned with presence/absence of a positive outcome (e.g., Higgins and Spiegel 2004). Further, the former individuals are less willing to take a risk in decision making than the latter, thus making fewer false hits and more misses in recognition tasks (Crowe and Higgins 1997). Perhaps, a dissimilar extension is more uncertain in terms of quality and thus perceived to be riskier than a similar extension. Consequently, we expected that the similarity effect in extension evaluations (i.e., the relative favorability of similar extension over dissimilar evaluations) would be more pronounced in an Eastern (prevention focus) culture than in a Western (promotion focus) culture. Further, people in the prevention-focused culture, compared to those in the promotion-focused culture, are likely to be more concerned with presence/absence of a negative outcome, and thus might be more sensitive to a failure of the extension. Thus, we also expected that an unsuccessful extension would have a negative feedback on the parent brand evaluations, but the dilution would be greater in an Eastern culture than in a Western culture.

These hypotheses were confirmed in three experiments. In two experiments data were collected from both Eastern and Western cultures (Korea and Canada). Results from both experiments indicated that extension evaluations were influenced by the parent-extension similarity and that as expected, this effect was greater in an Eastern culture than in a Western culture. Further, this difference was replicated over different product categories (durables and non-durables) and different parent brands (*Nike*, *M&M-s*, *J&J*). In addition, experiment 3 showed that unsuccessful extensions had a negative feedback effect on the parent brand evaluations and that as expected, the dilution was greater in an Eastern culture than in a Western culture. Theoretical and managerial implications of these findings are discussed.

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Linguistic Differences between Chinese and English and Their Effects on Consumers' Ability to Generate Images

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how language influences subjects' ability to generate imagery. Experiment 1 shows that Chinese subjects who read Chinese messages tend to generate more images than do Americans who read English messages. High-imagery versus low-imagery words have no significant imagery-provoking effects on Chinese subjects who read Chinese, whereas they do have a strong effect on Americans who read English. Experiment 2 shows that the imagery-provoking ability of Chinese subjects differs when they read a different language. The imagery-provoking ability of Chinese subjects is inhibited when they read English.

INTRODUCTION

Much research has examined the effects of imagery on memory for verbal materials because it is one of the most powerful factors influencing memory. Studies have shown that certain words have higher imagery value and are more likely to facilitate the generation of imagery than other words (Paivio 1971; Paivio and Csapo 1973; Paivio and Foth 1970; Paivio, Yuille, and Madigan 1968; Richardson 1980). High-imagery words, concrete words, may induce images in people's minds, whereas low-imagery words, abstract words, may fail to do so. For example, such concrete words as apple, banana, table, chair, etc. are more likely to create an image in people's minds than such abstract words as love, freedom, justice, virtue, etc.

According to the dual coding model, two processings, visual and verbal processing, occur in subjects' minds (Paivio 1986). Words are represented as verbal codes and pictorial information, such as pictures and mental imagery, are encoded as imaginal codes. Studies also show that the likelihood of retrieval is strongly related to the number of alternative retrieval routes in memory (Anderson and Reder 1979). So high-imagery words are easier to recall than low-imagery words (Lutz and Lutz 1978; Richardson 1980; Sheehan 1972) because people may create visual and verbal codes in their mind when processing high-imagery words and use multiple retrieval routes to recall them, whereas people may form only verbal codes when processing low-imagery words and use one route to recall them. In a manner similar to the picture superiority effect (the superior memorability of pictures over words), the formation of two codes from high-imagery words results in smaller memory differences between pictures and high-imagery words than between pictures and low-imagery words (Paivio 1971; Paivio and Csapo 1969). Moreover, the effect of having pictures accompany high-imagery words may be minimized because images will be formed during the processing of such words and the addition of pictures is redundant (Unnava and Burnkrant 1991). In contrast, the addition of pictures increases the likelihood of recall in low-imagery verbal information because dual codes may serve the retrieval route.

The dual coding model, based on simple arousal of visual and verbal codes, can only offer an explanation at the level of the gross imagery effect (Kieras 1978). Kieras (1978) argues that to memorize a sentence, the subject must visually read the words in the sentence, access their meanings, do a syntactic analysis of the sentence, and construct a representation of the content of the sentence. Whether imagery is manipulated or not, that process must be carried out whenever a sentence is to be comprehended. Kieras (1978) further points out that both empirical evidence and computer

simulations of complex mental processes show that "perception and comprehension processes must operate in terms of deep units, such as concepts, relations, properties, features, and meanings, rather than surface units, such as word representations or copies of sensory input" (p. 533). So the dual coding model can only explain the effect of imagery on verbal memory at the surface level.

Many propositions have been developed to explain the imagery-verbal memory effect (see Kieras 1978 for a review). Three models, the prepositional representation model, the semantic elaboration model, and the imaginal elaboration model, seem plausible.

Propositional representation (Anderson 1984, 1985; Anderson and Bower 1973) argues that all knowledge can be expressed in a proposition. A typical example of a proposition is a network that consists of nodes interconnected by links. For example, remembering a pair of words like "monkey" and "bicycle" can be enhanced by imagining a monkey riding a bicycle. In this simple model, the proposition (monkey, bicycle and ride) would appear as a node for the concept MONKEY connected by a RIDING link to a node for the concept BICYCLE. All of the propositions can be retrieved by the activation of any proposition in the network.

The semantic elaboration model argues that the semantic representation of a sentence is derived and then related image(s) may be formed, but the image is not stored. The memory search, which involves image formation, produces additional information about the content of the sentence, such as inferences about the concepts and additional relations between the concepts. The redundant connects provide alternative retrieval routes when the subject suffers from incomplete storage or partial memory loss of the basic sentence content. The mechanism underlying the imagery-words effect is not the storage of image but more redundant semantic information available for storage.















The imaginal elaboration model is like the semantic elaboration model. But this model argues that the image is stored and provides redundant connections, giving alternate retrieval routes.

This research is based on psychology and cognition of Western languages, especially among American subjects. So their generalization and effectiveness across difference cultures is questionable. Recent marketing research has shown that language differences can influence consumer information processing because language, the core of a culture, is central to communication and closely related to thought (Schmitt, Pan and Tavassoli 1994; Tavassoli 1999). Studies have shown that linguistic differences between Chinese and English can influence consumer memory of verbal information by affecting mental representation (Schmitt, Pan, & Tavassoli 1994), judgment and choice (Schmitt and Zhang 1998), and verbal processing (Tavassoli, 1999). It is well known that Chinese is an ideographic language and English is an alphabetic language. So language differences may influence consumers' ability to generate images in their minds. The purpose of this paper is to check the effect of language differences between Chinese and English on consumers' imagery-generation ability.

LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHINESE AND ENGLISH

"Language is the most primitive and original mode of thought of human beings and is direct realization of thought" (Yang, 1990-1991, p. 48). Language, embedded in culture, is the essence of

communication and can shape mental processes (Schmitt, Pan, and Tavassoli 1994; Tavassoli 1999). All Western languages are based on an alphabet whereas Chinese is an ideographic language. So the different language structures may result in different mental structures and representations (Schmitt, Pan Tavassoli 1994; Tzeng and Wang 1983; Yik 1978) and ability to generate imagery.

The formation of Chinese characters follows several principles. The earliest Chinese characters were formed by drawing pictographs. The characters were originally pictures of people, animals or other things. For example, the sun was written as , the moon as , water as , an ox as , fish as , rain as , sheep as , a bird as , and so on. Second, Chinese created indicatives by adding a kind of sign to a character to indicate certain meaning. For example, by adding a point to “刀” (knife), a new word “刃” (blade) is formed; by adding one stroke to “一” (one), a new word “二” (two) is formed. Third, in order to express abstract ideas or concepts, ancient Chinese created “associated compounds” or ideatives by combining two or more elements or characters. For example, the sun and moon were written together to form a new character, , to express the meaning of “bright or brightness”; the sun over a line, , to express the meaning of “sun rise” or “morning”; “人” (person) against “木” (tree), “休”, to express the meaning of “rest”. Over centuries, the Chinese characters have evolved from irregular drawing to stylized forms, from picture-based hieroglyphics to ideographic “square characters”, but they have similar structure and grammar. For example,  (sun) is written as “日”;  (moon) as “月”;  (ox) as “牛”;  (rain) as “雨”. Since the Chinese characters are more like picture, the processing of Chinese is more likely to generate images in people’s minds.

Moreover, the structure of Chinese characters has nothing to do with their pronunciation. The pronunciation is based on “rote associative learning” (Tavassoli 1999, p.171). So the pronunciation provides no cue to the recall of the structure of the Chinese character. The learning, reading and memory of Chinese characters rely heavily on visuospatial information, on how to discern subtly different structures of characters. For example, in order to tell the difference among “己” (ji, myself), “已” (yi, already), and “巳” (si, snake), between “天” (tian, heaven) and “夫” (fu, husband), and among “甲” (jia, first), “由” (you, cause), and “田” (tian, cropland), people must pay attention to subtle structure differences rather than the order of different strokes.

According to Schmitt and Zhang (1998) and Norman (1988), Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Thai widely use classifiers to categorize words into different groups. Words are classified based on their physical properties, such as shape, size, thickness, and length, and conceptual properties, such as bendable, elastic, and graspable. For example, in yi zhang zuo-zi (a table), zhang is used as a classifier for objects (such as tables, desks, photos, and paper) that have properties of flatness and extendedness. The processing of such classifiers also relies heavily on visual code. In contrast, English, French, Germany, and Spanish never use such classifiers.

Based on previous discussion, the processing of Chinese words may rely heavily on visual coding and ignore, at least partly, phonemic coding (Rozin, Poritsky, and Sotsky 1971; Sasanuma 1975; Schmitt, Pan Tavassoli 1994; Tavassoli 1999).

In contrast, the entire English alphabet consists of twenty-six meaningless letters whose orthography represents the pronunciation of words (Tavassoli 1999). English speakers subvocalize (phonologically recode) written words (e.g., McCusker, Hillinger, and Bias 1981) and rehearse words in short-term memory’s phonological loop (Baddeley 1986). Moreover, English speakers tend to phonologically recode visual information (McCusker, Hillinger, and Bias 1981). So the process of English is dominated by phonological representation (Schmitt, Pan, and Tavassoli 1994; Tavassoli 1999) and the ability to generate imagery may be inhibited by allocating mental resources to subvocalize words.

McCusker, Hillinger, and Bias (1981) argue that Chinese and English native speakers seem to use multiple codes to process the verbal information because studies have shown that the processing of Chinese may involve phonological coding (e.g., Huang and Tzeng 1981; Nomura 1979; Perfetti and Zhang 1991; Yik 1981) and that processing of English may involve visual coding (Parks et al. 1972; Posner and Keele 1967). But no study has demonstrated that phonological coding overthrows the visual coding in the processing of Chinese and that visual coding dominates the processing of English.

DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

The foregoing discussion leads to the conclusion that Chinese rely mainly on visual coding to process Chinese characters and that the Americans rely primarily on phonological coding and less on visual coding to process English. So when Chinese subjects read the verbal message (Chinese) in an advertisement, they are more likely than readers of English to create visual coding in their minds no matter whether the words are highly imagery-provoking or not. In contrast, the visual coding of English may be mediated, at least partially, by phonological coding. Therefore, I expect:

- H1: High-imagery messages (versus low-imagery messages) have no significant imagery-provoking effect on the processing of Chinese.
- H2: Chinese subjects who read Chinese will generate more mental images than will American subjects who read English under all message conditions.

Studies have shown that for English, high-imagery words are more likely to facilitate the generation of imagery than low-imagery words, therefore, I assume:

- H3: High-imagery words (versus low-imagery words) have a strong imagery-provoking effect on the processing of English.

EXPERIMENT 1

The first experiment investigates whether language has a strong impact on the consumer’s processing of verbal messages.

Subject and Design

16 Chinese students and 16 American students who were taking the MBA class at a major mid-western university were selected. They received a gift, key ring, for their participation. The experiment relied on a 2 (Message: High Imagery vs. Low Imagery messages) X 2 (Country: Chinese vs. American) between-subject factorial design.

TABLE 1

High Imagery Version	Low Imagery Version
Picture a child's shiny face, happy smile, and dancing eyes as he blows out his birthday candle. The light of that one candle is enough for the Classa digital camcorder.	A Classa digital camcorder performs very well under low light conditions. With its new filters and lenses, a light as dim as a candle is enough.
Imagine screaming people on a roller coaster plummeting down the steep track. The excitement on their face can be captured clearly with high zoom ability of 12X optical zoom and 480X digital zoom.	The digital camcorder allows you to capture the scene from a long distance. The new lens gives you 12X optical zoom and 480X digital zoom. Because of the high zoom, you can get clear pictures even from a mile away.
It also helps improve your tennis. As your feet pound back and forth on the tennis court, under the hot sun, you know that every split second of every stroke you played has been captured forever by your Classa. The tape can be analyzed later, to the minutest detail, using slow motion and freeze-frame	The Classa can help you in several sports, too. It records all your movements with great accuracy and plays them back at different speeds. Its freeze-frame feature on playback helps you analyze your mistakes. Or you could choose the slow motion feature to play back everything you recorded at 1/15 the speed.
Makes a professional out of anyone! Ordinary camcorders produce rainbow "noise" between scenes. With the Classa, whether you are making a tape of the Statue of Liberty, a speeding firetruck, or a fast-paced basketball game, it goes from scene to scene cleanly.	Make professional videotapes. This camera does not create noise patterns between scenes when shooting some activity with a lot of scenes like games. The Classa erase head produces clean, clear transitions between scenes. Everything you shoot looks professional.

Stimuli

Stimuli were adapted from those used by Unnava and Burnkrant (1991) to ensure that there was no significant difference on such dimensions as believability, understandability, meaningfulness, distinctiveness, self-referencing, informativeness, or the perceived strength of arguments. Subjects in my study rated an imagery index adapted from Unnava and Burnkrant (1991) on three 10-point Likert scales. They were used to measure the imagery-provoking ability of the ad (not imagery-provoking/imagery provoking; dull/vivid; boring/interesting). A digital camcorder was used as the target product because it should be of enough interest to the subjects that they could process the target advertisement carefully. I chose a digital camcorder because consumers may be quite familiar with it, even they don't have one, so the ability to generate images may not be inhibited in a situation where little schematic knowledge exists (Wright and Rip 1980). A fictitious name (Classa) was used to minimize the effect of prior experience with established brands. The English version was translated to Chinese. A double translation was used to ensure the accuracy of translation.

Unnava and Burnkrant (1991) used seven advertisements as filler. But filler advertisements were not used in this study. First, research shows that immediate recall seems to be limited to about seven units (Solso 2001) and the target advertisement already has four messages, with more than seven sentences. The experiment might suffer from subjects' loss of memory if they were asked to read more than seven different advertisements and messages. Second, the purpose of this study is to check whether language can influence consumers' imagery-generation ability. A picture is also an outstanding external source to induce imagery (Alesandrini and Sheikh 1983; Bugelski 1983; Finke 1980; Lutz and Lutz 1978; Paivio 1971; Rossiter 1982; Shepard 1967; Singer 1978). Therefore, the experiment may be biased if subjects recall and write down imagery generated from filler advertisements.

The ad describes four attributes of the digital camcorder (low light performance, zoom, ability to capture sports action, ability to

switch between still and action scenes, and the availability of different modes).

Message

The messages for high- or low-imagery words were adapted from those used by Unnava and Burnkrant (1991). The messages are shown in Table 1.

Procedure

Subjects sat in the conference room and were asked to read an advertisement with four messages. They were told that they would evaluate the advertisements for a local magazine. The Chinese subjects read and answered the Chinese version. After reading the ad, the subjects were asked to complete a ten-minute questionnaire on basic information about the U.S. that has nothing to do with this study to clear their memory. Then, the subjects were asked to write down everything in their mind when they were reading the ad. Finally, the subjects were thanked and dismissed.

RESULTS

Manipulation Checks. An analysis of variance of the imagery index with country and message as fixed factors revealed a significant main effect for words ($F(1, 28)=7.201, p<.05$) and a significant interaction effect ($F(1, 28)=14.297, p<.01$). Since the interaction effect was significant, simple effect tests were performed. Pooled error from 2 x 2 ANOVA was used for simple effect tests. As expected, for the Americans, high-imagery messages were rated higher on the imagery index ($M=8.63$) than low-imagery messages ($M=4.88, F(1, 28)=36.058, p<.01$, see table 2). For the Chinese, there was no significant difference between high-imagery messages ($M=6.96$) and low-imagery messages ($M=7.58, F(1, 28)=1.002, p>.1$).

Generated Images. Two judges who were blind to the purpose of this study counted the images generated in the subjects' minds. The judges agreed on their number of 88% of the images. Disagree-

TABLE 2
Means for Imagery Index and Generated Images

Measure	American Subject		Chinese Subject	
	High Imagery	Low Imagery	High Imagery	Low Imagery
Imagery Index	8.63	4.88	6.96	7.58
Generated Images	3.88	2.13	4.38	4.13
n	8	8	8	8

ments were resolved by mutual discussion. The generated images were reported in table 2.

An ANOVA was performed on the number of generated images with country and message as fixed factors. The ANOVA revealed significant main effects for country ($F(1, 28)=33.333, p<.01$) and message ($F(1,28)=21.333, p<.01$). The ANOVA also showed a significant interaction effect ($F(1, 28)=12.000, p<.01$). Since the interaction effect was significant, simple effect tests were conducted. Pooled error was used for the simple effect tests. The simple effect tests indicated that for the Chinese subjects, there was no significant difference between high-imagery ($M=4.38$) and low-imagery words ($M=4.13, F(1,31)=0.667, p>.1$). Thus the H1 prediction that high-imagery words (vs. low-imagery words) would have no significant imagery-provoking effect on the processing of Chinese was supported. Simple effect tests also showed that American subjects generated more images when reading high-imagery words ($M=3.88$) than when reading low-imagery words ($M=2.13, F(1, 28)=32.667, p<.01$). The H3 prediction that high-imagery words would have a stronger imagery-provoking effect than low-imagery words on the processing of English was supported. Third, for low imagery words, the Chinese subjects generated more images ($M=4.13$) than did the American subjects ($M=2.13, F(1, 28)=42.667, p<.01$); but there was no significant difference between the Chinese subjects ($M=4.38$) and the American subjects ($M=3.88, F(1, 28)=2.667, p>.1$) under high-imagery words condition. So the H2 prediction that Chinese subjects tend to generate more images than do American subjects under all conditions was only partially supported. Chinese subjects only generated more images when reading low-imagery words.

Discussion. The effect of language differences on subjects' ability to generate images was generally supported by my findings. Chinese subjects were not influenced by the manipulation of messages (H1). They generated about the same number of images in their mind when reading different messages. In contrast, messages have a great impact on American subjects. They generated more images in their mind when reading high-imagery words than when reading low-imagery words (H3). Generally, the Chinese subjects generated more images than did the American subjects. But the effect was only significant under low-imagery word condition (H2). So H2 was only partially supported.

Although experiment 1 provided general support to my theoretical frameworks, other factors, such as different cognitions, which are not considered in experiment 1 may influence subjects' ability to generate images. My findings would be enhanced if the experiment would show that subjects have different imagery-provoking ability when reading different languages. In order to confirm my result in experiment 1, experiment 2 was used to test whether subjects had different imagery-provoking ability when reading different languages.

OVERVIEW OF EXPERIMENT 2

Findings from experiment 1 supported my hypotheses that language has a strong impact on subjects' ability to generate images. But in experiment 1, Chinese subjects only read Chinese messages and American subjects only read English messages. So if language does matter, subjects' ability to generate images should differ when they read different languages. In other words, the high imagery-provoking ability of Chinese might be inhibited by reading English because the processing of English is dominated by phonological coding, not by visual codes. So the purpose of experiment 2 is to test whether the Chinese subjects' ability to generate images differs when they read different languages (Chinese and English).

Design of Experiment

16 Chinese subjects who were not involved in experiment 1 were selected. The experiment relied on a 2 (Language: Chinese vs. English) X 2 (message: high vs. low imagery words) between-subject design. Stimuli, message and procedures were the same as those used in experiment 1, except that only Chinese subjects were involved in experiment 2 and they only read English messages (high/low imagery words). Results of Chinese subjects from experiment 1 were combined with results from experiment 2 to conduct an ANOVA analysis.

Manipulation Check. An analysis of variance of the imagery index with languages and message as fixed factors only revealed a significant interaction effect ($F(1, 28)=7.206, p<.05$). Since the interaction effect was significant, simple effect tests were performed. Pooled error was used for simple effect tests. As expected, when reading English, Chinese subjects rated high-imagery messages higher on the imagery index ($M=7.63$) than low-imagery messages ($M=5.38, F(1, 28)=8.827, p<.01$, see table 3); but when reading Chinese, Chinese subjects gave about the same rate to high-imagery messages ($M=6.96$) and low-imagery messages ($M=7.58, F(1, 28)=1.002, p>.1$).

RESULTS

Generated Images. Two judges who were blind to the purpose of this study counted the images generated in the subjects' minds. The judges agreed on their number of 90% of the images. Disagreements were resolved by mutual discussion. The generated images were reported in table 3.

An ANOVA was performed on the number of generated images with languages and message as fixed factors. The ANOVA revealed significant main effects for language ($F(1, 28)=24.138, p<.01$) and message ($F(1, 28)=8.690, p<.01$). The ANOVA also showed a marginal significant interaction effect ($F(1, 28)=3.862, p<.1$). Since the interaction effect was significant, simple effect tests were conducted. Pooled error was used for simple effect tests.

TABLE 2
Means for Imagery Index and Generated Images of Chinese Subjects

Measure	English Message		Chinese Message	
	High Imagery	Low Imagery	High Imagery	Low Imagery
Imagery Index	7.63	5.38	6.96	7.58
Generated Images	3.63	2.38	4.38	4.13
n	8	8	8	8

The simple effect tests indicated that when reading English, Chinese subjects generated more images in their minds when reading high-imagery words ($M=3.63$) than when reading low-imagery words ($M=2.38$, $F(1, 28)=12.066$, $p<.01$). In contrast, when reading Chinese, Chinese subjects generated about the same images for high-imagery words ($M=4.38$) and low-imagery words ($M=4.13$, $F(1, 28)=0.483$, $p>.1$). Under the high-imagery words situation, Chinese subjects generated more images when reading Chinese messages ($M=4.38$) than when reading English messages ($M=3.63$, $F(1, 28)=4.34$, $p<.05$). Under the low-imagery words situation, Chinese subjects generated more images when reading Chinese messages ($M=4.13$) than when reading English messages ($M=2.38$, $F(1, 28)=23.649$, $p<.01$).

Discussion. The findings from experiment 2 indicated that the image-generation ability of the Chinese subjects differed when exposed to different languages. Chinese subjects' ability to generate images was inhibited when reading English. They generated fewer images under all message conditions when reading English than when reading Chinese. Moreover, when reading English, Chinese subjects were influenced greatly by the manipulation of different messages, whereas they were not influenced by messages when reading Chinese versions. So the results from experiment 2 confirmed my findings in experiment 1: language does have a strong impact on subjects' ability to generate images.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Findings from both experiments showed that language does have a strong effect on subjects' ability to generate images. Ideographic languages, in which the visual codes dominate, tend to spark subjects to generate more images in their minds than do alphabetic languages, in which phonological codes dominate. High-imagery words generally do not have a significant effect over low-imagery words on subjects' image-generation ability under Chinese conditions although high-imagery words do have a stronger imagery-provoking effect under English conditions. An interesting finding from experiment 2 is that the imagery-provoking ability of Chinese subjects was inhibited when they read English messages. So Chinese subjects generated more images when reading Chinese messages than when reading English messages. One possible explanation is that Chinese subjects might devote more mental resource to processing phonological codes, so their imagery-provoking ability was inhibited.

As with all research studies, this study has some limitations. First, I did not measure the effect of individual differences on imagery-provoking ability. Researchers have developed several categories for studying individual differences in imagery processing (Ernest 1977; Sheehan et al. 1983; MacInnis and Price 1987). The four basic categories are scales of imagery ability (vividness and controllability), scales of imagery content, scales of spatial

ability, and scales of imagery vs. verbal processing styles. A future study may focus on how individual differences can drive the imagery-provoking ability of subjects from different cultures. Second, I only examined the imagery-provoking ability of Chinese subjects when reading different languages. I did not investigate whether the image-generation ability of Americans also differs when they read different languages. A future study may explore whether Americans have different abilities to generate images when exposed to different languages. Third, I did not collect the measures for ad and brand evaluation in this study. The effect of imagery on ad and brand evaluation should be examined in future studies. Fourth, I did not examine the effect of imagery on memory. A future study should examine whether the effect of imagery on memory is similar across cultures. Fifth, I did not explore the mechanism underlying the effects of imagery and words. A future study can explore this issue. Sixth, the effect of addition picture is not examined in my study. A further study that examines the effect of addition picture can be conducted.

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Media Technologies: Mediated Families

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary lived experiences, as products of countless possible life-worlds, are ever evolving and thus many may remain outside existing conceptual boundaries (Thompson, Locander and Pollio 1990). Fluidity in means and modes of consumption allows a consumer to use any of the countless permutations and combinations of social, cultural and technological components to create a unique life-world (Bauman 2000). The dynamic nature of contemporary social, cultural and technological orders allows the creation of new 'social collectivities' (Holt 1997) around consumption that challenge the structure and dynamics of established social institutions (Kaslow 2001).

It can be argued that the problems and challenges faced by social units such as families are microsystemic representations of the larger contextual dynamism of economic, technological and socio-political orders. Experimentation with newer modes and forms of consumption (such as in cyberspace) creates a 'phenomenologically-global' that effectively erodes the control of the 'geographically-local' (Gergen 1991). Cyberspace has emerged as a new consumption enabler and, as a consumption space within Computer Mediated Environments (CMEs), acts as a locus of social and cultural existence for individuals and communities of consumption in trans-global social spaces. There are polarised views regarding the social impacts of cyberspatial consumption; resonant themes like consumer empowerment are countervailed by arguments that cyberspatial social ties negatively affect an individual's geographically-local social involvement (Kraut et. el. 1998).

Within consumer research, consumption of technology in familial contexts has been an under researched topic, and its impacts have thus not been fully explored. Families choosing to consume in CME are perhaps what Canniford (2005) calls an unconceptualised group. This research is aimed at addressing some of these voids by seeking to understand how individual acts of consumption in CME affect both family structure and dynamics.

In this paper, the possible roles consumption in CME plays in transforming family dynamics are examined through an ethnographic study carried out in Ireland. In the following sections, family consumption in general is contextualized. The methodology is then discussed, followed by some ideographic data. The four major themes that emerged out of data analysis are first presented independently, and are then placed in a family structure context to illustrate the impacts such forms of consumption can have. The paper concludes by discussing the applicability of such micro-level findings on society at large.

Conceptualizing Contemporary Family and Consumption

The traditional notion of a family is hierarchically structured around legally and biologically related individuals, with each individual assigned a certain role (parent, homemaker, breadwinner and child) and associated expected behaviour (Bloom and Bennett 1986, Blossfeld and Huinink 1991). However, newer socio/psychodynamic paradigms are defining the contemporary family; no longer limited to union through heterosexual marriage and biological offspring alone, contemporary families are best defined as groups of individuals living together with social, emotional or legal ties and mutual commitments (Ambry 1992, Kaslow 1995, Barnett and Hyde 2001, Lee and Schninger 2002). Changes in family structure and dynamics alter the consumption context for its members. Where consumption practices of traditional family

units are influenced by the presence of young children (Wilkes 1995), non-traditional family structures and composition yield unique family consumption behaviours (Schaninger and Danko 1993), driven more by self-fulfilling individual choices than by collective actions and commitments (Rindfleisch, Burroughs and Denton 1997).

METHODOLOGY

Deviations and re-alignments from social and cultural norms and structures are often exhibited at a geographically local level. Although consumption in a mediated environment, as a purely cyberspatial phenomenon, is not geographically bounded, it has profound impacts at the local level (Escobar 1994). Both Netnography (Kozinets 1998 and 2002) and traditional ethnography (Miller and Slater 2000) have been effectively used to explore many dimensions of consumption in CME. Studying social clusters such as families requires a geographically local approach. I thus chose traditional ethnography to explicate the impacts of consumption of CME technologies on family structure.

The data for this year long study was collected during my residency in a suburban housing scheme in Mullingar, about 60 miles west of Dublin. Twenty households were accessed during the study period (between August 2004 and July 2005). Immediate neighbours were the initial target group, but as happens with any longitudinal study, the target population shrank with time. All subject families with two exceptions boasted a traditional familial structure (married couples with children). The two exceptions were one divorced single mother and one unmarried couple. All subject families were upper-middle-class households possessing at least one computer with an online connection. Nine of these families had more than one computer and a broadband connection as well, and all except one had other immersive interactive consumption platforms like Play-station or Xbox console. Close liaison and contact with the subject families enabled access to all the members as well as some individuals from their extended social circle.

The dataset comprised several short and depth interviews, field notes from several participant observation sessions and notes on frequent front-door chit-chat highlighting the goings-on in daily lives. Many of the interviews and observation sessions were impromptu, informal and un-structured, and most were either transcribed longhand or recorded through field notes later.

Transcripts and field notes were periodically coded and interpreted to detect patterns of behaviour or identify themes. Sometimes when a strong theme or pattern was identified, the emic view was placed against the etic and new lines of enquiry were established. This evolving ethnographic approach using the emic-etic interplay to guide the process of data collection (Kozinets et.al. 2004), made reference and review of literature a permanent part of the study. Periodically, themes were pruned and readjusted and insignificant themes were replaced by newer stronger ones. However, since most data collection was naturalistic in a small sample of population, enquiry and explication along themes of interest was not always possible and thus some themes did remain unsaturated.

DATA SET

This section presents ideographic demographics (Table 1) and observational accounts through family sketches (Exhibit A). The intention behind presenting such an account is only to capture the

TABLE 1

Sample Family Demographics				
	Age/ gender	Status in family	Main occupation	Favourite passtime
Mike's				
Mike	34/M	Father / Spouse	IT Trainer	Gardening, woodwork
Lisa	30/F	Mother/ spouse	Secretary (Part time)	Gardening
Eric	4/M	Child	Growing up	Playing
Ben	2/M	Child	Growing up	Drooling
Adam's				
Adam	45/M	Father, Spouse	Engineer	Golfing, socialization
Sheila	42/F	Mother, Sister, Spouse	Secretary (part time)	Homemaking, socialization
Zoey	5/F	Child	Student	Barbies
Lorraine	17/F	Sheila's Sister	Student	Socialization
Jack	21/M	Lorraine's boyfriend	Salesperson	Rugby
Marks's				
Mark	40/M	Father, Spouse	Salesperson	Family
Lorna	31/F	Mother, Spouse	Homemaker	Children
Breda	9/F	Child	Student	Dancing
Kit	2/F	Child	Growing up	Watching Breda dance
Jackie's				
Jackie	45/F	Single mother	Estate management / Masseur	Literature reading
Kevin	13/M	Eldest son	Student	Videogaming, Karate
Nathan	12/M	Son	Student	Karate
Aisling	9/F	Daughter	Student	Ballet
John's				
John	45/M	Partner/guardian	Security supervisor	Motorcycles, online surfing,
Jennifer	44/F	Mother, Partner	Homemaking	Online Poker
Jill	9/F	Child	Student	Music
Jack	7/M	Child	Student	videogaming

ethn
 totality of the ethnographic narrative. A non-analytical approach is used in preparation of this largely observational account and emic view, lived experiences and interrelationships between acts and impacts are presented and discussed later.

DATA ANALYSIS

In keeping with evolving ethnographic study, data collection and analysis in this study were concurrent activities. Although some observed behavioural and interactional phenomena were unique in contextual terms, there were similarities in the way they impacted on different families. Collective patterns emerged where diverse acts and situations enacted and experienced by different actors were observed as having similar impacts on the family as a unit. As themes emerged from this collective analytical process, they became part of a framework. Each time new data were analysed, this analytical framework was refined and updated. This procedure was repeated till saturation was reached for most themes. At the end of this process the thematic framework constituted of the following four themes.

1. Empowerment–Disempowerment
2. Social Aggregation–Social Alienation
3. Immersion–Disengagement
4. Experimentation–Deviation

These themes are presented as pairs where the first component highlights the operative condition and the second its possible resultant impact. Empowerment of an individual changes his relative position in the immediate social group which might manifest

ther
 individual. Social encounters and ties in cyberspace often alter the composition of an individual's social reference group and may result in social alienation with immediate family members. The phenomenological nature of immersive experiential consumption in cyberspace disengages an individual from his physical world, and finally experimentation in the virtual domain can manifest itself as social and cultural deviation. These themes are discussed in detail in the following.

1. Empowerment–Disempowerment

This theme highlights the empowerment accorded to consumers by CME technologies and the relative polar position of disempowerment. The internet has evolved as a social and commercial enabler. It empowers a consumer to work from home, shop from his bed; run errands while keeping children company; conduct research as well as entertain himself from the comfort of his home. But consumers who choose not to, or are unable to negotiate cyberspace, are disadvantaged by not being able to enjoy the convenience and benefits online marketplaces offer.

Within a familial context, computer proficiency can be an empowering resource for an individual. Conversely, inadequacy in the new technological realm may increase co-dependence in relationships. This is illustrated by the case of Sheila, wife of Adam. Her computer proficiency altered the status of co-dependence in their relationship.

Yeah, I got this NCT booking done online for my car. I also pay road tax online, I mean now that it is so easy, and can be done from home—I am not dependant on Adam in this way, In fact,

EXHIBIT A

Two family sketches

The Adam's: Adam's are a highly social and outgoing family. An avid golfer and Liverpool football club fan, 45 year old Adam works as an engineer in Dublin. His day starts at dawn as he has to travel 100 km to work. Occasionally he returns early and tends to his cars or garden. They are a three car family and Adam loves his brand new BMW convertible. Sheila is 40 and works part-time as a secretary in Mullingar town. Five year old Zoey is a precious child of the family as she had been diagnosed with cardiac dysfunction very early on. Like her parents she exhibits social tendencies and often holds her own children parties on the front lawn on summer evenings. Lorraine, Sheila's sister is a final year high school student and has recently got emotionally involved with Jack. Their house and garden are always kept very well maintained and cars always sparkling clean. Sheila likes flowers and her front porch is always full of season's best. Sheila likes to entertain as well as attend parties. Adam likes to spend his Saturdays on the local golf course and evenings at the pub watching and betting on football. Their social circle is wide and varied as they know how to entertain diverse groups. They often have over a dozen visitors on Saturday evenings, Sheila's sisters and their families; Lorraine's boyfriend as well as Adam's golfing partners all assemble together for dinner. Occasionally Jack stays over till Sunday morning, as do some of Adam's friends. They are a two computer family and have a broadband connection. Lorraine has her own computer in her bedroom and the family computer is in the living room, which has very infrequent use. Sheila and Adam are somewhat computer challenged and thus their computer time is generally task driven.

The Mikes: 34 year old Mike is an IT professional and works as a trainer for IBM Ireland. He commutes three to four times a week to Liexlip, about 70 Km from his home. His wife Lisa is a 30 year old mother of two and works part time as a secretary in Mullingar town. Eric is four and two year old Ben is the baby of the family. Since Lisa doesn't drive, they are a single car family, which is unusual for a working couple household in the neighbourhood. They have made child-minding a fulltime responsibility above their career or professional aspirations, and they work in alternate shifts so that one is always home to mind the children. Mike is a doting husband and a devoted father and has very few friends outside the family's social circle. They do their groceries on Saturday morning and occasionally attend the mass on Sundays. Since Mike usually works weekend evenings they have limited outdoor social life. They have a very large backyard with a large playhouse and patio. Because Mike partly telecommutes, his computer is almost always on, which Lisa occasionally uses. She is not very keen on media technologies and generally prefers tangible toys over video games for her children. Mike's time and relationship with his computer are variable; at times he may spend several hours at a stretch on his computer, while at others he may not touch it for a week. He occasionally plays online games and conduct random searches, but mostly his computer time is goal directed. Because he had been a builder (construction worker) for many years, he often spends his spare time in house repairs and maintenance.

Exhibit A

I do a few things for him.... like recently we were up for insurance renewal, I saw that ad on TV and went online and I found a much cheaper quote—for his car as well..... well yeah, now he says you go do it, may be he has realized that I can do it better. (Sheila)

Where at one level Sheila's computer proficiency had enhanced her stature in her co-dependant relationship with her husband, at another level this empowerment had given her a feeling of 'being better'. This somewhat competitive feeling of being better at some tasks often shifts the role and responsibility structures in families. It was observed that a few computer literate women were either delegated to, or themselves took the responsibility for performing online tasks like banking, paying bills and taxes, booking flights, hotel and appointments as well as buying cinema tickets.

Online product search and shopping is another significant area within this theme. Consumers who would normally find it difficult to negotiate the maze of supermarkets' brand constellations may become easily accustomed to the online format. Although shopping was evidently an interdependent family activity in the core informant group, there were also indications that use of the internet was mediating these interdependencies to some extent. As an illustration, in the early stages of the study, it was observed that because our informant Lisa did not drive, she was dependant on her husband Mike to take her shopping. Mike however, was mostly a passive participant in such shopping trips and depended on Lisa to make all decisions. Towards the end of the study, Lisa had started product searching and shopping online and Mike had now become an active

participant in this exercise. When probed, it became evident that technology's mediation was a significant contributor to this change.

It's not shopping, choosing what to buy is tricky, stressful really, and I make so many mistakes, but it's not like your car or machines where there are specifications to compare, yeah, but may be its cathartic to women I suppose (household shopping), they are natural at it, —online, it's a man's ball game—now you have tools to compare them side by side, I guess it's a good thing these days. (Mike)

But Mike's use of technology to negotiate the supermarket maze was not unique, as another informant Mark, employed the same means to a different end. Mark and his wife Lorna's use of online shopping was fairly sophisticated, as they had made shopping baskets of their preferred brands and products which they used in their shopping selection. They had discovered that with each online order their shopping baskets got more precise as the software remembered their usual requirements of weekly consumables, automatically adding them to their order, which they could modify if required. Lorna felt that online grocery shopping had not only reduced 'oh I forgot to get that' occurrences resulting in constant revisits to the store, but had also allowed her more time with her kids.

However, not all online shopping activities are so clearly goal directed and produce tangible life effecting results. Our informant John worked as a security supervisor in a Dublin bar and found his job physically and emotionally exhausting. He seldom participated

in household chores and specially did not like to participate in family shopping. However, as a keen surfer, he found bargain hunting through online auctions and clearance sales a very interesting activity. Although he would still not go shopping himself, he would compare prices on various store sites and provide tips to his partner Jennifer, who on the other hand, found such an exercise futile.

O Come on, I mean you don't buy things unseen, and you know what John does, he opens up a few sites, Aldi and Lidl and Tesco and Argos and he give me a summary, Oh its much cheaper there, this is new and that's a bargain, well do we really need it? And who knows about the quality—that's not how you shop! It's like his hobby you know, and I am happy for him. (Jennifer)

Here Jennifer is apparently dismissive of John's well meaning efforts to participate in family shopping decisions through his online search of supermarket sites. Her classification of his contribution as 'hobby' suggests that, in their household at least, the impact of online activity on the existing shopping power structure may be quite limited. Her espousal of 'real-world' shopping may well have more to do with maintaining this status-quo than with extolling the merits of one specific mode of shopping. On the other hand, because this 'online window shopping' was part of John's larger recreational use of internet, we can also see it as an attempt to buffer his job stresses by making him feel successful in finding bargains and being useful to the family (Barnett and Hyde 2001).

Work-life balance is one of the key quests in contemporary families. CME technologies empower individuals to enhance their work-life balance by working from home. Telecommuting allowed one informant to commit more emotional resources to his family. Mike, who worked partially from home (see exhibit A), felt the simultaneous multi-tasking in physical and cyber space was beneficial to him.

Well I could go five days a week, but why? Saves me driving, and allows me to be home more. I do have the computer on during the day and sort of keep an eye on the mail, you know, so they know I am available — I know it's a lifestyle thing, but I think its all about balance between your work and your family. (Mike)

Telecommuting in his case was empowering both spouses, enabling them to share parental and wage-earner roles. Where it allowed Mike to spend more time at home with their very young children, it empowered his wife to take up part-time employment. What is also important to note here is that working from home through telecommuting may offer a lot more potential than just working, as it has the propensity to become a lifestyle.

A majority of our cohort of informants considered that providing knowledge and information was a home computer's primary function, and on several occasions parents were observed encouraging children to go to the internet for information first. Some of these parents were also struggling to keep up with their children's quest for knowledge, occasionally finding them inadequately equipped. Home computers have been around for a few years now, and some teenagers in this study had been using them since early childhood. However, these 'generation txt' (Thurlow 2003a) teenagers, like Lorraine, have come to a point now where they would rather go to the 'net' than ask their parents.

'no it's much easier to find it on the net, isn't it? and then I mean I doubt the older generation know as much about what's out there now, I mean what's cool and what's passé (Lorraine)

Knowing what's cool and what is passé have always been at the forefront of social desirability for the youngest adult generation. Where permissive parents in our group acknowledged the existence of these generational gaps and were thus willing to allow their children's online activities, at the same time they did make a conscious effort to control the content their children accessed.

They are not allowed to go wild on the internet, at least not in this house. I mean kids, they have to be told their limits—now Nathan is good in this way, he knows what he is allowed. Kevin (pause) likes to explore, and so I have made Nathan the internet sheriff—to keep an eye on things when I am not there. (Jackie)

Jackie was not alone, as I found other parents trying to supervise their children's online activities by employing all possible means. Where Jackie had delegated this responsibility to one of the siblings by according him the status of a third parent, others had installed supervision software. Cyberspace, however, is a social world, and children may soon become entangled in the web and separated from their parent's reach and knowledge spheres. Internet thus empowers children to widen the generational gap at their discretion, and even disenfranchise parents from being a part of this process. Exploring the web independently, children may also try to evade adult company or supervision during the activity. The dilemmas parents face in trying to keep the situation under control is amply evident from Adam's response below.

Broadband, internet, it's funny but I find it very much like this world, you know, there are good things about it, and bad things on it.

And how do you deal with it?

Turn the freaking thing off, I suppose what else? I mean you have doors, right, and then you shut them to keep the evil out.... for your kids. Internet to my mind is that evil that got in through the doors, it's in your house now, and you have little control. (Adam)

Controlling and mediating the social and cultural encounters is one of the primary parental responsibilities. Parents do so by limiting and controlling the social exposure and children are discouraged from talking to strangers or watching adult television programs. Adam's feeling of loss of control over internet access represents the common parental fear of subversion of authority in terms of regulation of social exposure. The cyberworld, like a real world in virtual settings, can impact on an individual through social and cultural encounters. Unaware of their children's online social and cultural encounters, parents are unable to mediate this exposure and channel this learning process. In this study parents who would normally have debriefed children after independent social encounters like school, parties or playground sessions, would often fail to practice such a debriefing after online or video game sessions.

In summing up all the dimensions examined under this theme, it appears that family members can benefit from the products and services available in the CME by removing and overcoming many of their inadequacies and by becoming able to assume additional roles. Since empowerment is a relative position, this role assump-

tion can be complementary and facilitative as well as competitive in the family. It may also appear that in some cases one member's empowerment is at another's expense, and the empowered can thus assume stronger roles in the family.

2. Social Aggregation–Social Alienation

This theme contextualizes the social alienation family members sometimes experience when they utilize the aggregation potential of cyberspace to expand their social sphere. Because many members of a family also have biological relationships, their emotional ties to each other are qualitatively different from other types of social associations. Family members have always been considered a strong and closely knit social group because of the interdependencies and sharing in their collective lives. Sharing of values and heritage, space, objects and possessions as well as time makes their experiential repository similar in many ways.

With the advent of new modes of mediated consumption, the phenomenology of a consumption experience has become partly independent of the tangible environment. By dissolving the distinction of place, sense of time and value of objects, a mediated environment may allow an individual to create independent social worlds through networked communications (Schau and Gilly 2003) while still sharing space, objects and possessions with other family members. Social encounters and ties in cyberspace often alter the composition of an individual's social reference group and may result in social alienation from immediate family members (Kraut et. al. 1998). Distinctiveness and exclusivity is an inherent component of many familial relationships. Cyber-relationships take diverse forms and some cyber-emotional ties can compete for emotional space within a family. However, some informants believed that because of the ethereal nature of cyberspatial social ties, any emotional investment in this technologically created social order did not impact their familial bonds.

It's all about choices isn't it, I mean between my job and travelling, I have limited time for other things, you know what I mean, and my time on the net is my entertainment—so to say, I don't think I would be spending more time with Jen or kids if not online, ah but, ah maybe watch teevee or something. Can TV do the same for you?
Oooo No sure, no, maybe not, I mean net is alive, tv to me is a dead thing you know. I mean you meet people, see what they are doin, find new things— so it's it's a lot more interesting to me? Do so much more than sitting watching tv with the kids.
(John)

John's desire for social encounters in cyberspace is justified through presenting it both as a preferred and as a richer source of social aggregation. For John TV watching en' famille was apparently a disliked and disputed activity and furnished him with a rationale for opting for online engagement in its place. However, consumption in CME as a solitary immersive activity exhibits itself as 'being away while at home'. John's justification for 'doing more than watching TV with the kids' perhaps represents the separation in the family through his choice to spend the collective social time in a solitary activity.

In my observation of families, the strains on available resources of time and emotions were visible at many other times when an investment of these was made in cyberspace. Although the use of cyberspace as an alternate social platform varied considerably within our extended group of families, there were consistent indications that such social ties were impacting the family as a whole. The overall perspective of most of my informant families was that

they would like to have a balanced approach towards this alternate use of private time, and thus excessive solitary immersive activities (such as chatting sessions or video gaming) by an individual were often overtly disapproved of by other members. Jonathan's family was a case in point, where his wife Nora continually complained about his overtures on chat forums and considered it a minor form of infidelity.

Familial context is considered to have the greatest influence on consumer socialization and leaves lifelong imprints (Moschis 1985). Levels of family communication are indicative of close familial bonds and affect family members' independent consumption choices (Carlson, Walsh, Lacznik and Grossbart 1994). Such communication between family members is also conducive to social learning and patterning, and parents often use it to warn of undesirable external influences. However, digital textuality has altered the mode, form and content of communications of 'generation txt', and parents are often unable to communicate with their children because they simply speak a different language (Thurlow 2003b).

This digital lifestyle is apparently irreversible, and young people are increasingly socializing through digital means. It was observed that such socialization trends started as text chatting in children as young as 10 and, by the time they were 14, most were communicating and socializing through the internet on a regular basis. Cyberspatial socialization is not always entirely experiential and virtual, as in Irish chatrooms, it is quite common to be invited by strangers for a rendezvous. Forming new relationships in such a dramatic fashion appeared to fascinate one teenage informant:

Oh yeah, off and on you get this guy who wants to meet up. And have you ever met someone this way?
O gosh no, I have no reason, now I am not saying I might never will, who knows about the future (pause) now my friend met her boyfriend like that, through the net I mean, so I know you can meet some really nice guys like that. (Lorraine)

New relationships in cyberspace can either be manifested as real person to person social or emotional ties or seemingly innocuous cyber-chitchat with online others. Individuals' social and emotional involvements are relative to each other and each time an investment in new cyber-bond is made, familial bonds may risk deterioration.

3. Immersion–Disengagement

This theme is about separation of the phenomenal world from the physical, and the impact such separation has on both individuals and family. CME, because of its multi-sensory captive immersive ability (Biocca 1997), is a very potent platform for experiential consumption. Consumers have now come to accept simulations in lieu of the real, and multi-sensory immersion has thus become an alternate mode of consumption. The most common immersive applications of CME in my observation were the videogames, and I found our informant Lisa very concerned about the nature and content of this mode of consumption.

Its not all Barney and Barbie stuff out there is it, I mean most games are death and fire and destruction and kill kill, shhhhhh ... you should look at their faces when they are playing it. Lisa

When video-gaming is opted for as an alternative to a physical activity it may affect the way an individual perceives and reacts to his physical world. In a positive constructive manner, simulators using similar technology have long been used in training and practice for many sports and professions. However, recreational

videogames are not primarily aimed at imparting skills in a simulated environment. One of the critical reflections emanating from observations of video gaming sessions in participating households was that the majority of these games were hyperreal glorifications of violence in which gory aggression was presented as a form of sport. Although difficult to critically evaluate and empirically establish on the basis of existing data, one field note suggested that such violent video game players became *'disengaged from their immediate physical and social world'*.

I found Kevin (13) an extreme video-gamer. At the time of this study he was also learning Karate at the local gym. There were indications that his videogame obsession was disengaging him from real life as well as conditioning his responses. He had become so used-to surprise combatants in his video-games that he had started to live in fear of the next surprise appearance of a deadly foe in his real life. He once had a panic attack during his karate training sessions. It was a wonderful summer that year, but during this phase he seldom ventured out of the house. His mother told me that he was sleeping through the day and was scared of going into unknown buildings like new grocery stores or shopping malls. On occasions that I did see him outdoors, he was constantly looking over his shoulders and changing positions and would involuntarily hit siblings when they approached him.

4. Experimentation–Deviation

Cyberspace has emerged as a playground for experimenting consumers. Because cyberspace allows individuals to pursue their hobbies and fantasies in alternate social dimensions, ever since Rheingold (1993), it has continually been depicted as a domain largely populated by emancipated 'nerds' and wayward 'geeks' satiating their countercultural urges. However, I was observing and interacting with a very 'normal' segment of the society in 'traditional' social clusters, and within my cohort I observed diverse ways of experimental cyber-consumption; where cyber-sexual experimentation was a lifestyle for some, online gambling and competition was a source of recreation for others. Our informant Jennifer was an avid online poker fan and her partner John liked online adult content. The following dialogue between John and Jennifer highlights some of the contrasting views consumers may have regarding experimental consumption in cyberspace.

John: *she is the gambler*

Jennifer: *no I am not, poker, it's called poker and it's not gambling*

John: *you bet money, it's gamble*

Jennifer: *your eBay gamble too? you bet money there!*

John: *Yeah but I am sure to get something in the end—it's not a zero-sum game*

Here John's labelling of Jennifer's passion as gambling is an attempt to portray it as deviation from his own social and cultural viewpoint, and Jennifer's attempt to equate bargain hunting with poker is perhaps towards claiming legitimacy for her own actions. Technology has always been at the forefront of gambling and marketers now use it to control the odds and position it in larger segments of population. With the advent of new media technologies gambling as a form of consumption has entered traditional households and I found that Irish women were increasingly experimenting with it.

Sexual experimentation is another form of consumption in cyberspace. Ireland has its share of adult content websites and chat forums which have tens of thousands of members. John was one of these members, and he gave his view about a particular Irish website as follows.

Oh I love them, I mean if you look at the content, it's far richer than what your TV or videos or magazines would give you, and everything is on-demand and instant, well sort of, but most of it free anyway—yeah I'd say, go try one of them daily tips you have on www.xxxxxxxx (site identity concealed by authors), some are gags really, but there are gooduns as well. (John)

A cursory examination of adult sites reveals that some of them are designed to target teenagers and young adults. Many Irish teenagers access such sites for sexual information. Our informant Lorraine however denied accessing such sites on a regular basis.

Jesus no I don't, I mean I don't have the need, ah but I know my friends do... I mean, I mean Jack does, and, and sometimes he would be on the net and IM me to check something out—but then if I am home I can't risk going to such sites (pause), ah so normally I don't' (Lorraine)

Her crafty third person reportage of sexual experimentation in cyberspace indicates the pervasiveness of such form of consumption among teenagers. Concerns that children's access to such information reduces parental control over sex-education and awareness have been resonating in Irish print media for some time now. It has been argued that teenager visits to such sites affect the role adults play in their sex-education. Asked if such was the case with her, Lorraine commented:

Well Sheila (sister) is very supportive, more like a friend, but I really never had these many questions when I was young, I don't know but I mean maybe girls are not that crazy about sexual information, they take it as it comes and if they fancy I mean they would go with a guy, and I don't know—is it not getting very private now? (Lorraine)

Notions of not having questions and not caring about the answers generally indicate an independent path to discovery. Teenagers in the twenty-first century are empowered by their computer prowess to explore and experiment to their heart's content. However, very few of my informants (only after reaching a certain level of trust and comfort) did reveal such 'secrets', adding to my repository of revelatory moments and information, but such revelations were neither guaranteed nor forthcoming in all cases. I still feel that there are certain gaps in my understanding of this mode of consumption and that at least a few of my informants did have lives in the virtual world that I were not privy to.

DISCUSSION: CONSUMPTION IN CME TRANSFORMS FAMILIAL ROLES

Viewed from the position that consumption in mediated environments is often not shared but a solitary activity (Kraut et al. 1998), the four structural components of our thematic framework (Empowerment–Disempowerment, Social Aggregation–Social Alienation, Immersion–Disengagement, Experimentation–Deviation) appear to directly impact the structure of participating families in a variety of ways. In this section I argue that our four themes highlight the impacts families may face as a result of individual acts of consumption in CME by altering the functional roles and emotional spaces in family structure. I argue that in a dormant mode these roles are contested, and in an active mode conflicts may arise due to this contest; empowerment can result in role increment, as well as decrement, or role sharing and enhancement.

From the structural perspective, roles are the culturally defined norms—rights, duties, expectations and standards for behaviour—associated with a given social position. Although some

theorists argue that nature does not enforce gender-differentiated roles (Barnett and Hyde 2001), such roles have historically been a cultural norm in family structure. Family structures, however, have also been historically dynamic in nature; diversity and multiplicity of roles has constantly redefined family structure (Belch and Willis 2001). Such role transformation has been considered healthy for the emotional and physical wellbeing of its members on the basis of the argument that liberation from such an ideological standpoint through mutual acceptance and division of work results in strengthening of the family structure and relationships. Barnett and Hyde (2001) propose that “*the extent to which one holds traditional or non-traditional attitudes about the proper social roles of women and men moderates the relationship between multiple roles and a host of outcome variables*” (2001, p 789).

As our first theme of empowerment-disempowerment indicates, CME empowers individuals to assume additional roles in the family thus enhancing their sense of wellbeing. Telecommuting allows men to stay home and contribute towards cooking, cleaning and childrearing. Finding it easier to navigate the online environment, both men and women feel empowered to share additional household chores. Working women who break free from the traditional cultural role of a mother and homemaker by adopting a now socially acceptable ‘juggling supermom’ lifestyle (Thompson 1996) are also empowered in CME. Adjusting and adapting to the exigencies of contemporary society expose these juggling Supermoms to stressors of negotiating multiple roles through compromises and concessions to their primary roles. As a working single mother, our informant Jackie found CME empowering as she could perform a few tasks late in the evenings in the company of her children, without compromising her parental role.

Disempowerment, at both real and perceived levels, may also transform an individual’s roles in the family. Our informant Mike’s decision to partially work from home allowed his wife Lisa to work first shift. Although at the surface this may appear empowering to both the spouses, I found him feeling disempowered through assumption of this additional responsibility because of his belief that childcare was a mother’s responsibility.

Multiplicity of roles and social intertwining of contemporary work and family contexts can also become sources of conflict for both working men and women (Major, Klien and Ehrhart 2002). Flexibility and acceptance of gender diffusion and multiplicity of roles are prerequisites in resolving such conflicts. Men in dual earner couples who adhere to traditional gender role beliefs are more vulnerable to psychological distress when their work situations are troubled (James, Barnett and Brennan 1998). Our informant Adam who held traditional gender role beliefs was apparently in a constant state of stress. He believed that certain household responsibilities were solely the man’s domain. However, Sheila’s use of internet enabled her to handle many tasks that remained outstanding because of Adam’s demanding job schedule and habit of procrastination.

Although rigid distinctions in division of labour in child rearing are eroding (Nugent 1991), the father often plays the role of guardian and mentor in terms of introduction to economic, political and technological systems and mother supervises the social and cultural grooming (Coltrane 1988). With changes in the technological order it was apparent that in many situations neither of the parents in this study could assume their proper roles. Some of our informants felt disempowered by being unable to fully assume the roles of guardian and mentor when it came to CME technologies. Because children spent long hours online and were better versed in computer technology than their parents, parents were unable to monitor and mediate their social and cultural online encounters.

Children themselves have a significant role in the traditional family structure. Besides acting as an emotional nucleus for both parents, they are also given the responsibility for many menial household tasks (Gager, Cooney and Call 1999). CME technologies affect the children’s task-performing role in two ways. First, because children and young adults gain proficiency in using internet quicker than their parents, in many households teenagers have assumed the role of a technology supervisor and moderator. Such role enhancement arguably increases a child’s stature in the family structure. Second, many parents think that a child’s time online is being spent in the most useful way. This apparent empowerment either automatically exempts them from performing menial tasks when online or, because of the disengagement children feel while in CME, they may actually decline performing such tasks.

Decision to consume in CME: Why? Viewing consumption as a social phenomenon, we can argue that many alternates exist in social orders simultaneously and an individual’s choice reflects her position in her social world. Because consumption practices within a family often correspond between members, the role an individual is assigned or herself assumes within the family impacts her current and future consumption practices (Gager, Cooney and Call 1999).

I found that there is a symbiotic relationship between consumption in CME and family structure. Family dynamics at times initiate the move of a family member to cyberspace; equally, immersion of a family member in cyberspace can affect family dynamics at large. It was an observation that members from close knit family structures with strong social and emotional bonds used CME only as a partial extension of their total social and emotional sphere. On the other hand there were fragmented family units exhibiting multiple computers in the household with highly individualized CME consumption patterns that accelerated the pace of social and emotional isolation among family members.

MACRO-LEVEL IMPLICATIONS OF THE ARGUMENT

Domestication of technologies modifies and reforms societies permanently (Pantzar 1993 and 1997). CME technologies, through their systems and networks are dynamically evolving at a pace incomparable to any other ‘medium’ technology of the past. However, it is the non-technological social-content manipulated within this medium that has created a new social ‘life-form’ (Miller and Slater 2000). CME technologies have reached a level of domestication where consumers can now focus on the content and ignore the technology (BinsBergen 1998). Contemporary shifts in family consumption behaviour towards individualistic values and self-fulfilling aspirations at the expense of a decline in familial and religious values have been labelled as the core of the postmodern libertarian ethos (Gergen 1991). Consumption in CME accelerates this process of liberation by separating physical from the phenomenological, social from the geographically local, thereby altering social structures at both macro and micro level.

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Live From Shopping Malls: Blogs and Chinese Consumer Desire

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ABSTRACT

In this exploratory study, we examine a particular type of blog [web log] on which young Chinese consumers passionately write about their daily lives and consumption experiences, such as trips to shopping malls, dining experiences at restaurants, holiday travels, and clothing purchases. We seek to understand how such blogs function to spread consumer culture in cyberspace and among Chinese consumers who read and write consumption-oriented blogs.

INTRODUCTION

Started as a list of annotated links to other web sites, blogs [web logs] are gaining momentum in recent years (Serfaty 2004). They are different from other online resources such as BBS, online discussion groups, and personal web pages examined in prior research (Kozinets 2002; Shau and Gilly 2003). The blog is a form of online diary accompanied by up-to-date photos and music. Our focus on China and Chinese blogs is justified by the rapid growth of incomes and consumer culture in urban China (e.g., Davis 2000). After English, Chinese is now the most common language of the Internet. The same is true of blogs which have become a very popular collective forum among Chinese people around the globe. Consumption-oriented blogs are online diaries dedicated to the bloggers' everyday consumption activities, such as a trip to the shopping mall or an enjoyable dinner at a fancy restaurant. For example, "Jessie" updates the world on her blog about new additions to her private closet, and discusses her favorite possessions ranging from a pair of Converse shoes to Abercrombie shirts. She writes about what she already has and laments what she could not afford to have. Blogs like this spread knowledge about the latest fashion trends and the hottest products and brands. They not only record the blogger's everyday consumption, but also provide introspective accounts of how the products are connected to their lives. Consumption-oriented blogs thus provide a unique context in which to examine global consumer culture and the cultivation of consumer desire in the cyberspace. In this exploratory study, we take a discovery-oriented approach (Wells 1993) and seek to understand why consumers read, write, and post their private shopping experiences in blogs.

THE LITERATURE: CONSUMERISM

Consumerism is the value system in which consumption is naturalized as the source of meaning and happiness in life, and material goods are avidly desired for their extra-utilitarian values, such as hedonic value, envy provocative, and status-seeking (Belk 1998; Stearns 2001). Consumerism has been celebrated by some for its potential stimulation of cultural rebellion and social democracy, for its role in constructing meaningful life experiences, and for being conducive to social well being (e.g., Miller 1987; Wilk 1993). More often, consumerism is subject to criticism and held responsible for reproducing and establishing social stratification through consumption, precipitating epidemics of depression, and leading to anomie, commodity fetishism, exploitation of women, and the commercialization of culture (e.g., Adorno and Horkheimer 1944; Bourdieu 1984). The rise of consumerism around the globe has attracted multidisciplinary interest (e.g., Brewer and Porter 1993; Campbell 1987; Stearns 2001). However, most research is focused on traditional institutions of consumerism such as department

stores (e.g., Leach 1983) and advertising (e.g., Lears 1994; Marchand 1985). Comparatively little attention is given to the spread of consumer culture and cultivation of consumer desire in the cyberspace (e.g., Kozinets 1999; Giesler forthcoming). Consumption-oriented blogs provide such a context to examine such important issues.

METHODS

Netnography is an interpretive method for examining consumers and the culture of consumption present on the Internet (Kozinets 1998, 2002). It is a written account resulting from fieldwork studying the cultures and communities that emerge from on-line, computer-mediated, Internet-based communications, where both the field work and the textual account are methodologically informed by the traditions and techniques of cultural anthropology and market-oriented ethnography (Arnould and Wallendorf 1994; Kozinets 1998). Netnography adapts ethnographic research techniques to virtual communities (Kozinets 2002, p.62). It allows researchers to observe consumers in a naturally occurring environment in a way that is less intrusive than traditional market-oriented ethnography (e.g., Arnould and Wallendorf 1994). Our data collection follows the instructions of Kozinets (1998, 2002) and included two sources. First, consumption-oriented blogs were directly copied from blog web sites such as Blogcn, Blogbus, MSN Blog and Blog City, and then saved for analysis. Initial blogs were identified through the index pages on these website and other blogs were found through the links on the initial blogs. Secondly, our reflective fields notes based on observations of the bloggers communications [many blogs allow posting comments by readers] were recorded. Data collection continued until no new insights about our topic of interest were generated. Data interpretation was informed by Arnould and Wallendorf (1994), Spiggle (1994), and Thompson (1997). Attention was given to various consumer identity constructions and representations by the bloggers.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Consumption-oriented blogs describe bloggers' everyday consumption experience. They provide rich retrospective accounts of the bloggers' trips to shopping malls, dining experience at restaurants, clothing purchases, and holiday travels. Bloggers also discuss the movies, TV programs, fashion shows, and magazines they enjoy watching and reading. Most blogs in our study are maintained by Chinese women in their twenties and thirties, not only within China but also overseas. Some blogs are dedicated to one type of consumption such as food, but more common are blogs covering several subjects. We structure our analysis by first describing different types of consumption blogs commonly seen in the blogosphere, and then proceeding to exemplify some common themes related to the construction of consumer identity across these different types of blogs. In our conclusion we provide an account of consumption meanings revealed by a single blog across time.

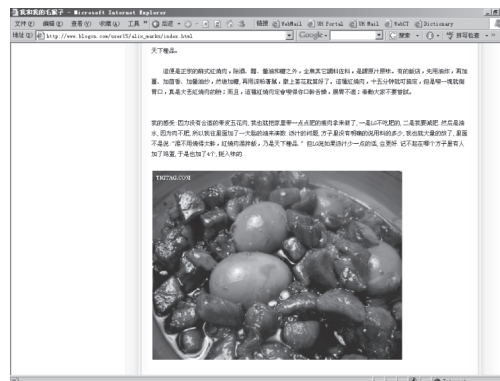
Blogosphere and Food Consumption

The blogs on food consumption symbolically extend the sharing of food beyond the geographic immediacy of neighborhood. Remote audiences and the blogger are connected by the vivid images of food images on these sites. One type of food blog describes the blogger's trips to restaurants and their dining

FIGURE 1
Food Blog with Dish Intro



FIGURE 2
Food Blog with Cooking Instruction



experiences there, usually accompanied by comments about and pictures of the meals they had, as well as images of the restaurants. Figure 1 is such a food blog maintained by “Michelle,” a female Chinese correspondent in Shanghai. Michelle writes about her dining experiences with restaurants in Shanghai, the majority of which are Western style restaurants. Another type of food blog posts tempting pictures of the food cooked by the blogger and provides detailed information about how the food was prepared, sometimes even with pictures of each step. This food is usually prepared for family members. Figure 2 is such a blog by a Chinese woman married to an American husband. The blog even provides detailed stories about the historical origins of the dishes she cooked.

Blogsphere and Consumption of Fashion

Fashion goods such as clothing, shoes, and cosmetics are popular items on consumption-oriented blogs. One type of fashion blog describes the blogger’s new purchase and recent trips to shopping malls. The blogger writes about the process of buying an item and discusses the latest fashion trends. “Versus,” a Chinese woman, who recently moved to Taipei from Beijing to work for IBM, documented one of her trips to a local fashion mall in Figure 3:

A second type of fashion blog discusses the blogger’s fashion collection, usually with images of their favorite possessions. Figure 4 is such a blog by “QiuQiu,” a female blogger in Shanghai

currently in search of a new job. In her March 3 blog of 2006, QiuQiu posts pictures of some of her summer and winter collection of different shoes and describes the different occasions for which she bought them. Each pair of shoes is accompanied by detailed description about how she could match the shoes with different clothes. Some of the shoes are even brand new, never worn, ones that go directly to her closet from shopping trips. She also describes things that happened in her life while wearing some of the shoes.

A third type of fashion blog is compiled with images of dream products that would be bought if the blogger were not constrained by money. Such blogs are usually packed with pictures that the bloggers found from advertising posters, fashion magazines, and various online resources. Figure 5 is “Ericyyoung’s” blog about the latest fashions for Spring on her blog of March 3 2006. Other fashion blogs also discuss the bloggers’ trips to fashion shows, exhibits, and street observations of the latest trends. The blogger also posts photos of these events. Figure 6 is such a blog that records “Camille’s” (a female Chinese student in France) trip to Thierry Mugler’s recently opened perfume boutique in Paris.

Blogsphere and Travel

Travel blogs are usually compiled with pictures of places the blogger has been to. Some bloggers write about their trips to remote exotic places such as Tibet and China’s national parks. Another type of travel blog is packed with pictures of the blogger’s overseas

FIGURE 3
Versus Trip to Fashion Mall



FIGURE 4
QiuQiu's Shoe Collection



FIGURE 5
Ericyoung Spring Dream Fashion



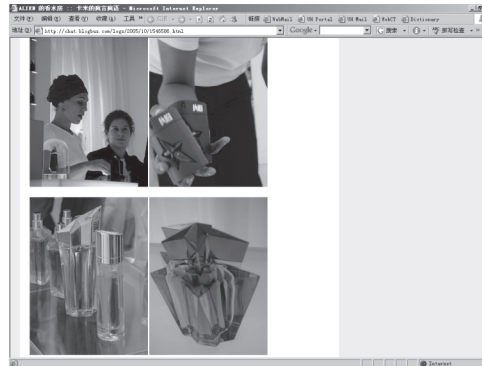
travel and many bloggers of this type are overseas Chinese students. A third type of travel blogger posts images of new discoveries in the familiar places where they live.

Live from Mall: Consumers in the Blogosphere

Consumption-oriented blogs construct various images of savvy consumers: the saving housewives who can always find sales products; the urban chic-seekers who know every detail about the latest fashion trends on the streets; the nostalgic dreamers whose purchases are often romanticized by connections to an idealized past era; the impulsive warriors who seem to never worry about the

financial consequences of impulsive buying; the photographer gourmands who are in constant search for the fanciest restaurant in town and always take tempting pictures of the foods before eating them; the cosmopolitan nomads who are always on the go and post photos of their trips; the energized party enthusiasts who are familiar with the most recently opened nightclubs; and the media guru who regularly review the latest movies and TV shows in real time. Bloggers also reveal multiple identities when it comes to different items on their must-have lists. The above categorizations are meant to exemplify rather than providing a comprehensive list of all consumer types in the blogosphere. In the following section,

FIGURE 6
Camille's Trip to Alien Boutique



we will demonstrate a few instances of these blogosphere consumer types.

For saving housewives, what matters is the money saved from regular prices, as seen in the following account from a blog maintained by an overseas female Chinese student in the U.S.:

“After buying the pot, we stopped by the liquor store. Wow, regular price \$39.99 and now it sells at only \$19.99, we can save \$15! For a person like me, how can I skip this? I grabbed two bottles of this type. There is another one that is also on sale, \$9.00 off the regular price. I took two of those too. When we checked out, the cashier said if there was 10% off if we bought 6 bottles in total. Wines won’t go bad anyway, so I grabbed a champion and something else. It cost about \$80 in total. On our way home, I thought of this and found I saved more than \$70 this time!”

As Miller (1998) found in the UK, such shoppers focus on how much they save rather than how much they spend.

The urban chic-seekers not only describe their private collections, but also comment about the latest fashions they see in magazines, movies, and on the streets. The following excerpt is from a female blogger currently pursuing her PhD in the U.S.:

“I am not the girly girl, I like the gorgeous Armani evening dress, but I seldom buy long skirts, bohemian tops, heels etc. The best summer look means comfortable yet trendy for me. This year it is white shirt+cut off shorts or Bermuda shorts+chunky bead necklace. If anyone has the legs for the cut off shorts, it’s those super models like Kate Moss, Gemma Ward...”

Clearly there is some self-fashioning going on here.

Food, fashions, movies, daily shopping trips, and nearly everything on the shopping blogs of nostalgic dreamers are represented as having mysterious connections with a romanticized past. “Wasa” is a female Chinese student in Paris. Her purchase of breakfast cookies results in an entry recalling her childhood experience of eating at a street-side eatery in China:

“Eating cookies with cocoa powder is like eating the fried Tofu when we were kids. We all knew that you could not put a lot of sauce on the small piece of fried Tofu, but we always asked for more and more. In the end, even the wraps were infused with the source so we could put it on the wall. Usually the one

who was willing to give us more sauce to put on the fried Tofu was most popular shop, although they always told us not to waste. French people in Paris know the secret of eating, they always give you lots of sauces, much more than needed. They are never frugal on this, usually they have more dressing on a salad than the salad per se, which is good.”

There are shades of Proust and *Remembrance of Things Past* here.

Blogs also construct images of impulsive warriors who usually buy stuff as a result of swift decisions. “QiuQiu” in Shanghai records on her blog of March 3, 2006, that she bought one of her favorite pairs of shoes while waiting for her friend to go dinner; the account is accompanied by a picture of her wearing her favorite jeans and the new shoes. QiuQiu is a shoe lover and posts pictures of her shoe collection (Figure 4) on her blog.

“Friday. Tonight Joanne and I are going to have dinner together. I bought this pair of shoes while I was waiting for her. It is coffee brown and looks perfect for my jeans. The color, the style, and everything, it is just right. I don’t know where these shoes will take me in the future, but all the memories they have brought me, good or bad, will be with me for ever.”

The shoes are considered to be a record of her cherished past, and are expected to bring her transcendental experiences in the future:

The energized party enthusiasts write about their clubbing experiences and comment on the hottest parties in town. In her blog, “Supermonica” described her weekend in Shanghai:

“There are all kinds of parties on weekends in Shanghai. This weekend the hottest one is definitely Sasha’s party at VIP (a night club in Shanghai). People in Shanghai love parties. You can imagine that no one would skip this one. VIP is packed with people, and the admission is RMB250. The private room costs RMB3500, although they only charge RMB1500 in regular times. Before we came to VIP, we also went to Pub 36 at Shangri-La Hotel to have a lychee martinithe night scene there is gorgeous, much better than the Cloud 9 at Hyatt. The music at Pub 36 is fabulous and even their restroom is full of surprises.”

So after being seen by the beautiful people at the club, Supermonica can be seen by others on her blog.

If I was a Rich Girl: Insights from Jessica's Blog

"Jessica's" blog is named "If I was a rich girl". Under this slogan are her favorable brands, TV show, and dream car: True Religion Jeans, the East Hamptons, Marc Jacobs, San Francisco, Puma, Sex and the City, Cadillac Escalade. Jessica is a Chinese student currently living in the U.S. In her blog on MSN Space, she writes about her daily life and her shopping experiences. The blogs are packed with images of the latest fashions, both from her own closet and from fashion magazines and advertisements. Jessica differentiates herself from those whom she considers as pseudo fashion experts. She does this by writing blogs about what she considers as real fashion and fine taste and through criticizing others' blogs. The central theme that emerges from her blogs is the importance of up-to-date knowledge of and access to the latest and authentic fashion magazines, movies, advertisements, entertainment, travel, and foods. These are not readily available and have only become the target of emulation and discussion by Chinese bloggers recently. Being in U.S., Jessica seems more intrigued by European fashion but she also displays her knowledge of the fashion trend in the U.S. as seen in her Feb 18 entry of 2006:

"As usual, I went to read Elle UK Edition, Vogue, and In Style UK Edition on the weekend. They are the magazines that I like and enjoy reading. I also like Teen Vogue, and Elle Girl, though they are a bit naïve. I just don't feel interested in the fashion magazines for general American adults. Nylon is so-so but Vogue and Elle (American Edition) are not worthy of even mentioning."

Hollywood blockbusters and Chinese TV programs are other sources from which Jessica demonstrates her knowledge of what is "in." Jessica also evaluates movies based on the fashions in the films:

"I've seen Brokeback Mountain. The trailer is moving but watching the movie was a great pain. We got there late and could only find a seat in the very front row. They spoke English with a heavy Southern accent and I couldn't understand it much. Especially that Heath who always spoke in low voice and I couldn't understand him at all... The Producers are lousy and I don't like it. The next movie I saw recently is King Kong, although everybody liked it, I don't find it very interesting. They simply wasted too much time on the island and I even went out to grab a pretzel in between... For all the recent movies, I like Match Point very much. I like this type of film, as well as Closer. Scarlet Johansson looks great in the white gown... A few words about Casanova, I am not good at London accents either, but I really like Sienna Miller."

Jessica not only looks for fashion trends through reading magazines and watching movies, but also criticizes the readily available marketplace discourse of fashion. Although the use of counter-discourses has been considered as providing consumers with alternative means to negotiate the power relationship constructed by marketplace discourses (Thompson 2004), Jessica's critique of fashion is aimed toward both market communications and other people's fashion beliefs. This confirms her identity as a knowledgeable urban chic-seeker who has her own fashion preferences. The intent of criticizing marketplace discourses is thus not to oppose to or escape from the marketplace (Kozinets 2002), but to affirm consumerist values by presenting what Jessica considers as "real" fashion. Nevertheless, there exists a tension between a self-assured urban chic-seeker and risky digression from what the mainstream fashion demands. This can be seen from the following

excerpt in which Jessica fluctuates between using makeup promoted by the dominant marketplace discourses and her preference of not using cosmetics:

"I seldom put any makeup on my face because of my super sensitive skin. And actually I don't like gals with too much makeup; I think they are way too fake. But whenever I read those fashion magazines, I so love the model's look: the fresh skin, the very kissable lips, the peach cheek and the sexy eyes. The only thing I don't like is tan or fake tan, cause I will never do tan I guess :-). Anyway, I am still a girl and I could not help spending money in Sephora. I bought foundation from Prescriptive, lip gloss from Lancome, shimmering powder from MAC, pinch blush from Origins.... But now I'm gonna give it all up. I did not put anything on my face for a month since I'm back from Shanghai, and my skin never looked so perfect as now!!! Simple is the most important rule in skin care, well, or should I say those makeups, including Biotherm and Clinique will make my skin even worse."

Few Chinese would think of tanning, as clear light skin is the Asian ideal. Another strategy of constructing and maintaining the urban chic-seeker identity revealed by Jessica's blog is through commenting on fashions in China, most of which is considered as not "real fashion" by her, especially when it threatens her unique sense of self.

Jessica writes about her love of Abercrombie and Fitch in her blogs, and is apparently annoyed by the cheap knockoff products that other bloggers post in their blogs as seen from the following excerpts. In the first entry Jessie expresses her passion for Abercrombie and Fitch, while in the second one she comments on other bloggers' purchase of this brand. The difference is between the purchase in the mall as more authentic love for Abercrombie and Fitch, whereas to get the brand on the streets at cheaper price is fake:

Excerpt 1: "I definitely became a denim addict. I love all kinds of jeans, the flare, the destroyed, the boot, even the straight leg, though I know I am not skinny enough and I never wear heels. The only style I hate is super flare or wide leg. I tried one pair of wide leg from 7 For All Mankind. Very funny, I don't know how to walk with those jeans. Every time I step into the mall, I will go directly to Abercrombie and the Fitch. I dunno how much money I've spent on that store." *Excerpt 2:* "Recently Qipu District (a shopping area) is getting hot in Shanghai, especially the Wangjiang Mansion. It is said there are lots of excess products originally for export, such as the jeans and sweaters from Abercrombie and Fitch. I've seen pictures of some blogs, and found it so ridiculous. Any clothing, as long as they put a moose sign or print a sign of 1892, is called Abercrombie. And the price is so cheap. The \$79.50 original jean is only sold for less than RMB100 [less than \$20] or cheaper..."

However, to construct an identity of a tasteful urban-chic seeker around the latest fashions requires considerable financial support. This constitutes a moral paradox between the pleasure of being the urban-chic seeker and a sense of guilt due to excessive spending. The desire to remain consistent with the ideal self often overcomes the concerns of over-consumption. Nevertheless, writing blogs and expressing such conflicting feelings toward consumption enables Jessica to symbolically write off the sense of guilt and resolve the moral conflicts, as seen from her blog entry on Sep 7 in 2005. The motivation for purchase was evoked by reading fashion magazines:

"Today I bought probably the most expensive shirt I've ever had. I liked the style of bubble shirt so much. I would have looked much better if I was skimmer. I felt regret right after I bought this shirt. After all, it is too expensive. With this trend, many other

brands will have the same style soon. I know there is something similar in H&M and I like this type of skirt that is just above the knee. But I couldn't find it today. I happened to find this Marc by Marc Jacobs that I've seen in magazines at least three times. I just couldn't resist it... I also found two pairs of Marc by Marc Jacobs shoes: one is red patent leather, it will look great with skinny jeans; the other one is golden flat, it can dress up or down. But I can't afford it. Money is a wonderful thing, how wonderful it would be if I could print money myself."

Seen from the excerpts discussed here, Jessica incorporates various elements available in the marketplace in her blog to construct and maintain her blogosphere identity as an urban-chic seeker. Images of various consumer goods and discussions of her consumption experiences are used to define her evolving self-identity. Writing blogs thus confirms consumerist values supporting the late capitalism, and the blog is an important means through which consumerism is reproduced and internalized. Blogs also constitute a symbolic consumption space onto which the bloggers' dreams and idealized consumerist selves can be projected. Blogs also blur the boundary between private self and public self. Presenting a consumerist public self that is acceptable to the blogger's audience, reinforces and internalizes the blogger's identification with consumer culture. Blog writing also connects a blogger's past and future, which is essential in the construction of a person's identity (Belk 1991). The past recorded in pictures of consumption experiences constitutes a self defined in terms of consumption.

DISCUSSION

Although these bloggers usually have an audience in mind while writing what they feel passionate about—shopping, consumption-oriented blogs are characterized by spontaneity and sudden bursts of creativity. Bloggers have worked blogs into their lifestyles, and thus what they record offers a unique opportunity to examine the personalized consumerist values of an emerging consumer society. Consumption-oriented blogs can be seen as a way of cultivating consumer desire and consumer culture through conspicuous consumption (Veblen 1899) in cyberspace. Such public displays of possessions and consumption experiences also contest the theory of envy-control through sharing or modesty (Douglas and Isherwood 1979). The blog invites the envy of its audience. Bloggers actively seek images and discourses to present their idealized selves (Schau and Gilly 2003). Similar to advertising that celebrates idealized images of consumers; consumption-oriented blogs construct various blogosphere consumer types, but through the endeavor of consumers rather than marketers. It is a self-fashioning in public.

Bloggers take pictures of what they already have, then post and passionately discuss them on their blogs. Writing blogs can be seen as a possession ritual through which the cultural meanings of products are transferred to the blogger (McCracken 1986). Writing blogs provides an opportunity for consumers to internalize the symbolic meanings embedded in products. On the other hand, posting possessions on blogs also constitutes a symbolic divestment ritual. To keep blogs updated, bloggers apparently need to go shopping more often and constantly post new acquisitions. The same clothing is rarely posted again and an item is symbolically abandoned in the blogosphere once it is made public. The blogger always sets out to find something new and the audience even leaves comments requesting updates. The bloggers are thus under pressure to symbolically divest the possessions and to search for novelty.

Consumption-oriented blogs also provide a context in which to examine the framework of extended self in the cyberspace. People are what they have and their material possessions constitute an extended part of the self (Belk 1988). Researchers have

investigated extended self experienced concretely through possessions in home settings (Belk 2001; Mehta and Belk 1991; Wallendorf and Arnould 1988) and in the workplace (Belk and Watson 1998; Tian and Belk 2005). Prior research on extended self is mostly focused on material possessions in real life. The Internet provides a new means of self-extension through posting images of the ideal self that the blogger aspires to identify with, thus going beyond the blogger's material and geographical constraints. By posting pictures of the goods that are too expensive to buy, the bloggers symbolically take possession of them and describe them in a way similar to the way they discuss their material possessions. Such symbolic possession through visual consumption in the cyberspace can potentially facilitate the extension of self. Our analysis here is descriptive and is restricted to the text of consumption-oriented blogs. Future research needs to take into consideration the bloggers' interpretations of their own blogs.

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Virtual Onscreen Assistants: A Viable Strategy to Support Online Customer Relationship Building?

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ABSTRACT

The benefits of customer-salesperson relationships are difficult to obtain on retail websites when the interaction lacks direct human contact. This study verifies an association between the presence of a virtual Onscreen Assistant (OSA) and perceptions of functional and social relational benefits by potential customers. This has not previously been established. A theoretical model of relationships between relational benefit perceptions, trust building and patronage expectations is derived and tested. There is considerable potential for OSA use to build relational benefit perceptions but participants were only moderately positive about present OSA capabilities. Substantial technological development is still needed to support social interaction.

INTRODUCTION

Fostering relationships between companies and customers is of interest to both parties. Salespeople are important in producing and maintaining customer allegiance to a firm (Crosby et al. 1990). For retailing, Beatty et al. (1996) find the relationship between a salesperson and customer associated with customer loyalty, purchasing and positive word of mouth activity (Reynolds and Beatty 1999).

Customer relationship building is also important to e-commerce website profitability (Reichheld, Markey, and Hopton 2000). However, although Yen and Gwinner (2003) demonstrate some offline customer relational benefits are mirrored in the e-commerce context, the lack of opportunities for interaction lead them to explicitly exclude social benefits. Selnes and Hansen (2001) conclude that the removal of the 'social-bond mechanism' (p 88) in self-service technologies may damage customer loyalty. Thus, the additional benefits of customer-salesperson relationships are difficult to obtain online when the interaction lacks direct human contact.

In an effort to promote customer social relationship building, online organisations have tried e-mail response systems, live telephone support or text chat through Instant Messaging systems and building online communities (Reichheld et al. 2000). Unfortunately, whilst reasonably successful, these require human intervention and can prove to be an "*expensive step backward from the lower operating costs that were part of the web's promise*" (Demery 2003).

An alternative strategy is to help replace the customer-salesperson interaction with a believable, engaging, synthetic salesperson or salescharacter on computer screens. We argue that the possibility for interactions added by the presence of an OSA on a retail website that remind customers of face to face communication will stimulate customer perceptions of social relationship benefits. Consequently, as offline, a form of relationship building can be used to help the online business achieve the financial benefits of loyal customers but with reduced overheads. There are some published studies on the use of OSAs on retail websites but little, if any, information on the relational benefits perceived by customers from such a strategy.

The aims of this study, therefore, are twofold. First, to confirm an association between OSA presence on a website and perceptions

of relational benefits by potential customers; this has not previously been established. Yen and Gwinner (2003) excluded social benefits from their study of relationship benefit relevance in online retailing. Thus, we particularly seek to determine whether customers recognise potential for social benefits from the presence of an OSA on a retail website.

Second, to develop and test a theoretical model of the effects of relational benefits derived from an OSA on trust building and expectations of using a website. If customers feel that the presence of an OSA suggests relational benefits, then we need to understand and model relationships between such perceptions, trust building and interest in purchasing from the site. If such a model is developed and tested, the addition of an OSA represents an additional strategy for online retailers considering building social relationships with their customers.

THE POTENTIAL OF ONSCREEN ASSISTANTS

Characters representing the brand can be used to transfer meaning and positive attitudes to the products in the minds of the consumers; the use of animated spokes-characters is associated with brand preference and increased attention to advertising (Callcott and Phillips 1996). This suggests that introducing an OSA to a retail website will tap a familiar and attractive concept to customers with "remarkable endorsement power in modern commerce" (Stafford, Stafford, and Day 2002).

Furthermore, research suggests that customers will apply social rules and social expectations when interacting with computer technologies (Sundar and Nass 2000).

Despite this promising background and a broad literature on the study of animated interface agents generally, academic studies concerning the application of the OSA in e-retail are relatively sparse. Nevertheless, there is some agreement that on-screen characters can be more engaging and motivating for the user. In a study of female college students, Wood, Solomon, and Englis (2005) find the potential 'promising' as more than half were willing to use an OSA for online apparel product information for raincoats, lingerie and bathrobes. On the negative side, questions also arise about overall usefulness beyond novelty and entertainment; Sivaramakrishnan and Tang (2002) conclude that the OSA does not increase product evaluation or purchase intention.

A number of potential dangers are also highlighted. For example, Witkowski, Neville, and Pitt (2003) find great disappointment when characters with human features raise expectations about high quality interactions that are not fulfilled. Interaction characteristics or OSA appearance found inappropriate to the context can lead to negative responses from users (Keeling et al. 2004). Thus, mere presence of an OSA is not enough to improve human-computer interaction or increase purchase intentions (Sivaramakrishnan and Tang 2002).

RELATIONAL BENEFITS

Customer benefits are related firstly to the core product/service and secondly, to benefits that come through the relationship itself (Gwinner, Gremler, and Bitner 1998; Reynolds and Beatty 1999). In the context of customer relationships with service compa-

nies, Gwinner, Gremler, and Bitner (1998) suggest a typology of three relational benefit outcomes that are positively associated with customer loyalty and word of mouth. Confidence benefits follow from experience of successful transactions, with a company or salesperson, these help a customer to reduce uncertainty and risk about future transactions. Social benefits are drawn from social support and personal reassurance given by a salesperson. Special treatment benefits include advantages such as price savings, time-savings, preferential treatment, and additional services.

However, for retail settings, Beatty et al. (1996) and Reynolds and Beatty (1999) consider that just two types of benefits (functional and social) best explain customer perceptions. Reynolds and Beatty (1999) consider functional benefits to cover both confidence and special treatment benefits as found in service settings by Gwinner et al. (1998).

MODEL DEVELOPMENT

Offline Preferences

Hennig-Thurau et al. (2002) suggest customer relational preferences as a potential moderator of relational benefits and Beatty et al. (1996) advise that relationship motivation could be an important categorisation variable. Some customers may opt for self-service to avoid employee contact (Beatty et al., 1996). Thus, in the context of online shopping, customer preferences for assistance when shopping offline may be a significant factor in the perception of relational benefits from the presence of an OSA. For some online customers, the impersonal, efficient, and structured nature of the typical website 'interaction' may be an attraction, removing the need for time-consuming pleasantries or avoiding persistent shop assistants.

On the other hand, it is intuitive that those customers who prefer to interact with a salesperson during offline shopping should be more attracted to a situation that offers the potential to interact with an onscreen sales assistant. We propose that those who prefer salesperson assistance when shopping offline are more likely to associate the presence of an OSA on a retail website with potential relational benefits. Beatty et al. (1996) identify that customers engage in relationships with salespeople for functional and social benefits and also recognize the vital role of trust in the customer-salesperson relationship. Therefore, we expect that offline preference for assistance will be positively related to perceptions of functional and social benefits (see figure 1).

H1: There is a positive relationship between offline preference for help and perception of functional relational benefits.

H2: There is a positive relationship between offline preference for help and perception of social relational benefits

Online Relational Benefits

Online social benefits and onscreen assistants. In off-line retailing, the salesperson plays an important part in forming buyer-seller relationships (Beatty et al. 1996). The familiarity of the concept of a spokesperson/person (Callcott and Phillips 1996) and the automatic use of established 'rules' of communication suggests these characters should make the website appear friendlier, and customer interaction with the website more natural and appealing. The opportunities for shared interaction could also reintroduce customer perceptions of social benefits in what otherwise may be perceived as an impersonal experience. We define online social benefits as the perceptions of a friendlier, less impersonal experience where the retailer manifests a personal interest in

the customer and there are enjoyable social aspects to the website visit.

Online functional benefits and onscreen assistants. Offline functional benefits include time saving, convenience and better purchase decisions (Reynolds and Beatty 1999). Customers as decision makers have a bias to efficiency and reduced effort suggesting that a major benefit to customers would be to reduce search costs during online shopping (Semararo et al. 2003). Offline, the salesperson can substitute for customer effort; Beatty et al. (1996) find that customers engage in relationships with salespeople who help with problem solving. An early expectation of online shopping was that it would also provide time savings through easy product search and comparison and make recommendations based on previous purchases. Kim and Stoel (2003) confirm that these attributes are significant predictors of online purchase intent but that many online retailers are "failing to offer satisfactory online shopping experiences to their customers". Some customers may have concerns that a retail website interface will be difficult to navigate or that search facilities will be inflexible and inadequate to their needs. For these customers, an OSA could help refine their needs and find products and compare prices in a more timely and familiar way, through interactions resembling those with offline assistants. We define functional benefits online as perceptions of time saving through finding products that meet purchaser needs more quickly and better purchase decisions through finding best prices or special deals.

Trust and Confidence

Yen and Gwinner (2003) identify an additional role for building confidence benefits during online shopping. Confidence and trust are considered essential in online shopping because it is an environment with high performance ambiguity and considerable perceived risk. The chance to interact with an OSA may enhance trust perceptions as salesperson-customer interaction plays a significant role in building trust (Beatty et al. 1997). The interactive characteristics of the OSA produce familiar cues associated with social interaction and are thus likely to promote trust building (Bickmore and Cassell 2001) and could help the consumer build confidence in the integrity and security of a website. Trust is associated with loyalty because of the importance of confidence in security and privacy issues in online transactions (Park and Kim 2003). Beatty et al. (1996) suggest that interpersonal interaction between salespersons and customers facilitates the understanding and thus the fulfilment of customer needs. Consequently, social benefits can be associated with better fulfilment of functional benefits. Beatty et al. (1996) posit a further association between higher social and functional benefits and building customer trust.

Consequently, we hypothesise that (see figure 1):

H3: There is a positive relationship between perceptions of social benefits and perceptions of functional benefits

H4: There is a positive relationship between perceptions of social benefits and perceptions of trust/confidence

H5: There is a positive relationship between perceptions of functional benefits and perceptions of trust/confidence

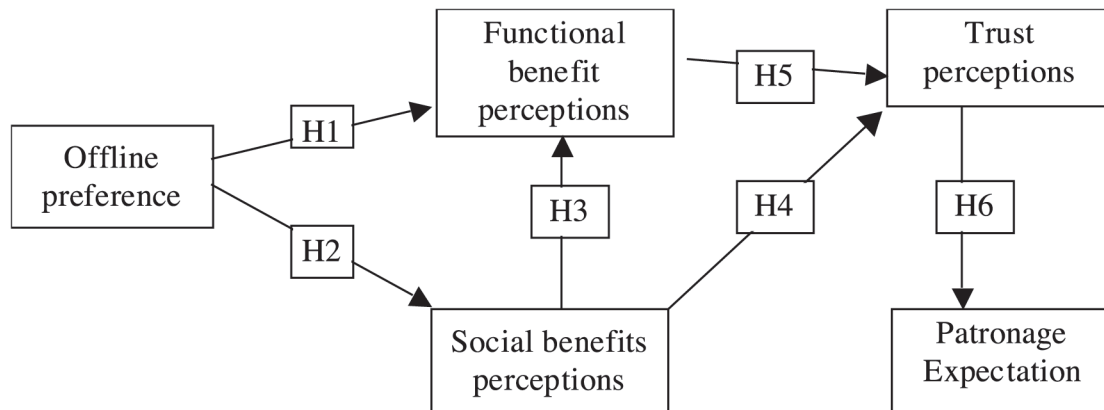
H6: There is positive relationship between perceptions of trust and patronage expectations.

METHOD

Online Assistant Pre-testing and Product Choice

User preferences for an OSA are very individual, so presenting respondents with no choice of OSA risks confounding perceptions

FIGURE 1
MODEL OF HYPOTHESISED RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PERCEPTIONS OF FUNCTIONAL BENEFITS,
SOCIAL BENEFITS, TRUST AND PATRONAGE EXPECTATIONS



of possible relational advantages with the effects of user preference. Consequently, pilot work comprising interviews with a convenience sample of 30 Internet shoppers followed by a preliminary web-based study with 450 participants determined the most generally acceptable representations of online assistant for two product types: books/CDs and travel insurance. For this study, participants had the choice of a male or female human photograph, a male or female cartoon and a cartoon character (either bookworm or globe depending on site). Books/CDs and travel insurance product types provided a contrast on the search-experience-credence continuum; books and CDs are search goods, while travel insurance is a credence good.

Procedure and Measure Development

Using a dedicated website, www.screenresearch.co.uk, participants in the experimental study were randomly assigned to two specially constructed Internet shopping sites, purporting to sell books/CDs and travel insurance. For each site visited, respondents choose either no assistant or one online assistant out of the five described above. Those who chose an online assistant responded to items about perceptions of functional and social benefits resulting from having an online assistant. Interviews with Internet shoppers in the initial studies provided some of these items, others were adapted from Gwinner et al. (1998), Hennig-Thurau et al. (2002) and Yen and Gwinner (2003). Respondents also assessed their perceptions of confidence and trust as well as increased/decreased likelihood of visiting, purchasing and recommending the website (patronage expectations) and gave information on Internet shopping experience, preferences for salesperson assistance when shopping offline and brief demographics.

Respondent Sample

Data were collected through a) e-mails sent to 2286 addresses on an opt-in mailing list on the www.screenresearch.co.uk website; b) a sample of 427 males and 503 females from the UK obtained through a commercial company. A prize draw was offered as an incentive. Of the 2114 Internet user respondents, 62% were female (1314) and 57% were aged between 25 and 44. The largest percentage (57%) was from the UK, with 21% from North America. Most respondents (92%) bought goods online; 57.3% of these for three years or more.

RESULTS

Choosing No Online Assistant

The 124 participants (just under 6%) who chose not to have an online assistant on either site provided at least one reason for their choice, altogether, 264 reasons were listed. More experienced online shoppers were less likely to choose an OSA for either the book site ($\chi^2=38.49$, df 4, $p<.001$) or the travel insurance site ($\chi^2=34.77$, df 4, $p<.001$). This effect of expertise holds true for both genders.

The majority of reasons (93.2%) fell into one of six groups of negative outcomes: arousal of negative emotions; offer no advantage to the user; interfere with the task or not compatible with preferred methods of accomplishing task; and incompatibility of appearance or with self-image of user (see table 1). These are broadly representative of many of the negative issues surrounding OSA use outlined previously.

Groups one, two and three signify severe aversion to previous poorly planned, inappropriate interactions. These were experiences with OSAs where expectations were not met, the interaction thought inappropriate, or worse, interfered with user task achievement. Violations of interaction expectancies seem to produce negative emotional reactions (annoying, irritating, patronising) that prejudice subsequent evaluations resulting in rejection of future OSA interaction.

For some, the mere presence of an OSA generated perceptions of possible negative consequences. Group five comments illustrate the consequence of inappropriate appearance; group four comments indicate these users may be using online retailers to suit their preference for shopping without assistance. Together with group six, the comments underline the need for care in OSA selection and giving customers the choice not to use an OSA at all.

Consequences of Choosing an OSA: Perceived Relational Benefits

A majority (94.1%) chose an online assistant for at least one of the sites, (91.7% travel insurance; 88.4% books/CD) and 85.9% chose an OSA for both sites. Most popular on either site and for both genders were the non-human OSA characters (globe and bookworm). The second most popular were human female photographs. (Wood, Solomon, and Englis (2005) found an idealistic female

TABLE 1
REASONS FOR NOT CHOOSING AN ONLINE ASSISTANT

Reason (no.)	Examples (no.)	Illustrative quotes
1. Arousal of negative emotions (69).	Online assistants are annoying (23), irritating (18), patronizing (12), disliked (11), confusing (2), offensive, creepy, misleading (1 each).	"I find that stupid paperclip and his alternates more annoying than words can say." "Flash animations etc. are the work of the devil ..."
2. No advantage in using OSA (62).	Online assistants are not needed (35), no help (11), pointless (8), a useless gimmick (6), wouldn't use it (2)	"I don' t see the point."
3. Interfere with task completion (47).	Distracting (20), online assistants add clutter (11), slow things down (6), intrusive (5), are a hindrance (3), add complications (2).	"They keep popping up and delaying what I' m doing." "I find them more of a hindrance than a help."
4. Not compatible with preferred task accomplishment (36).	Prefer to use FAQ or help (11), a search engine that is easy to use (12), to do it myself (8), information that speaks for itself (3), prefer reading details (2).	"I would prefer a help button if I got stuck." "I much prefer a logical search engine-i.e. decent Boolean search facilities."
5. Appearance not compatible with task (17).	Didn't like choice (11), not attractive/friendly/professional enough (5), not representative (1).	"None of the characters appealed to me ..." "Assistants do not look professional enough."
6. Not compatible with self-image (15).	Not the sort of person who needs an online assistant (10), experienced enough not to need one (5).	"Experienced web user-do not require assistant." "I am not an idiot."

photograph to be most popular but did not offer a non-human character as a choice).

Participants evaluated several outcomes relevant to potential relational benefits on five point Likert-type scales ($1 = disagree strongly$, $5 = agree strongly$). Means and standard deviations are shown in table 2.

The measurement model. The research model depicted in figure 1 was tested using Structural Equation Modelling (LISREL 8.7). At the initial analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) of the constructs of offline preference, functional and social benefits, trust/confidence and patronage expectations indicated the measurement model was an acceptable fit to the data but two items were deleted as poor indicators of their latent constructs (for items, see table 2). The chi square statistic can be distorted by sample size; thus table 3 reports three additional fit indices that all indicate a good fit of the data and the factor structure is taken as an acceptable fit of the data. Further, the composite reliability (corresponding to Cronbach alpha), and the R^2 values for all measures suggest an adequate overall fit, no further modification of the measurement model was considered necessary.

Test of model and hypotheses. The test of the structural model estimates the fit of the hypothesised model to the data. The first analysis provided a moderate fit to data on the fit indices (see table 3). Hypothesis one is upheld. In the presence of an OSA, offline preferences are reflected in perceptions of functional benefits. However, there is a stronger association from offline preferences to social benefit perceptions (hypothesis two). Hypothesis three is also upheld; there is a strong relationship between perceptions of

social benefits and perceptions of functional benefits. Thus it appears potential customers may believe that, as offline, social interaction will facilitate understanding of their needs and the retail transaction (Beatty et al. 1996).

Hypothesis four is confirmed, perceptions of social benefits influence perceptions of trust and confidence. However, there is a much stronger impact of functional benefits on trust/confidence, confirming hypothesis five. Hypothesis six, the proposed positive relationship between trust/confidence and patronage expectations is accepted; perceptions of trust and confidence in the online vendor are associated with website patronage.

Perceptions of functional benefits are fully mediated by trust/confidence benefits and influence patronage expectations through their effect on trust. However, the modification indices strongly suggested the addition of a direct path from perceived social benefits to patronage expectations resulting in a significantly improved fit of the data on the fit indices (see table 3). Thus, in this study, perceptions of social benefits have both indirect and direct effects on patronage expectations (see figure 2). Perceptions of social benefits in themselves may be a powerful motivator for website patronage.

DISCUSSION

Firstly, the results confirm an association between OSA presence on a website and perceptions of relational benefits by potential customers. This had not previously been established. In particular, we show that customers recognise potential for social benefits from the presence of an OSA on a retail website. Consequently, this work

TABLE 2
MEASUREMENT MODEL: ITEM MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATION, STANDARDISED FACTOR LOADINGS, RELIABILITY

Construct	Reliability	Item	Mean	SD	λ	var	R ²
Trust/ confidence	0.85	Less risk of something going wrong	3.32	0.97	.74	.45	.55
		More confidence	3.32	0.98	.82	.32	.68
		Trust the website provider	3.23	0.63	.72	.48	.52
		I would feel reassured	2.89	0.95	.77	.40	.60
Social benefits	0.85	More friendly shopping site	3.89	0.81	.82	.32	.68
		Social aspects to enjoy	3.38	1.02	.70	.51	.49
		Interested in me	3.46	0.97	.83	.32	.68
		Less impersonal*	3.46	0.96			
Functional benefits	0.86	Find best prices or special deals	3.27	0.99	.78	.39	.61
		Find more quickly	3.52	0.91	.86	.27	.73
		Help to define my needs	3.43	0.88	.82	.33	.67
Patronage expectation	0.90	Make a purchase	3.28	0.61	.82	.33	.67
		Choose the website for a visit	3.55	0.72	.87	.25	.75
		Recommend the website	3.55	0.73	.91	.18	.82
Offline preference	0.73	Like help with books	2.40	0.99	.71	.49	.51
		Prefer to shop without help	3.68	0.93	.70	.52	.48
		Find out things by myself	3.71	0.91	.66	.57	.43
		Like help with travel insurance*	3.40	1.02			

λ =standardised factor loading; reliability= $(\sum\lambda)^2 / ((\sum\lambda)^2 + \sum \text{variance})$; * removed

FIGURE 2
AMENDED STRUCTURAL MODEL:-EXTRA PATH FROM SOCIAL BENEFITS TO PATRONAGE EXPECTATIONS.

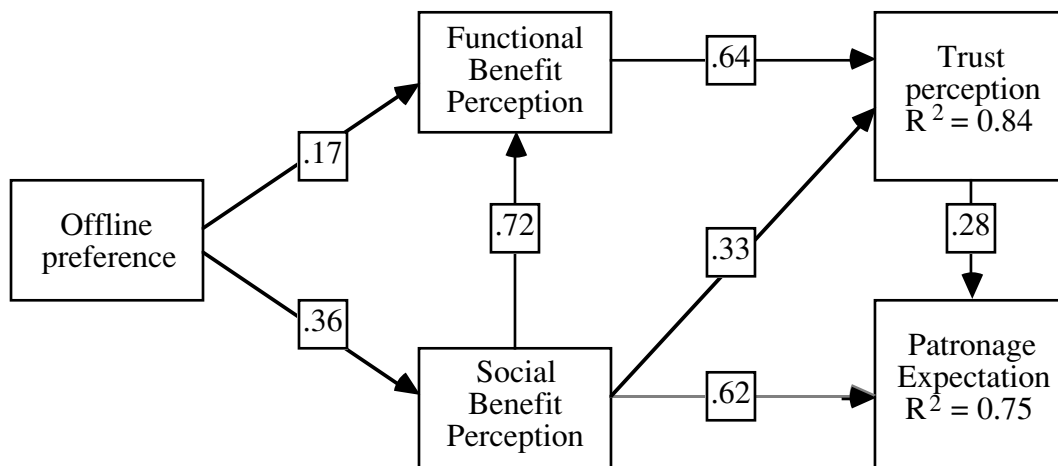


TABLE 3
FIT INDICES FOR CFA AND STRUCTURAL MODEL
(GUIDELINES FOR GOOD FIT GIVEN IN FIRST LINE)

	Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square	RMSEA .05	CFI .95	NNFI .90
Confirmatory measurement model	581.59 (p<0.01)	0.047 (p =0.92)	.99	.99
Structural model	635.77 (p<0.01)	0.053 (p=0.14)	.99	.99
¹ Added path: social to patronage expectations	512.91 (p<0.01)	0.046 (p=0.93)	.99	.99

RMSEA=Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; CFI=Comparative Fit Index;

NNFI=Non-Normed Fit Index

¹Chi-Square for the difference in models=122.86; df =1 (p<0.01)

extends Yin and Gwinner (2003) to include the recognition of social benefits in online services and retailing in addition to confidence and special treatment benefits.

Second, this study proposes a theoretically derived model of the relationships between offline preferences, customer perceptions of social and functional relational benefits and trust building and patronage expectations. The model is a good fit to the data and all hypothesised paths are statistically significant suggesting the viability of this model (see table 3). Offline preferences are reflected in online perceptions, the stronger the preferences for salesperson help offline, then the stronger the perception of possible relational benefits from an OSA. The impact of perceptions of functional benefits on patronage expectations is wholly mediated by trust/confidence (see figure 2). The inference is that interaction with an OSA could facilitate the customer information seeking and purchasing task and that this builds customer confidence in the service, reassuring them about buying from the site and supporting the formation of trust. The strength of the relationships found in this study indicates a more modest role for social benefits in trust building than the role of functional benefits. The implication is that a design of OSA interaction that concentrates on task help that customers find useful is most likely to facilitate the formation of trust. Social benefits have a less strong direct effect on trust but play a strong part in building perceptions of functional benefits, so have an indirect effect as well.

Perceptions of trust fully mediate any effects of functional benefits on patronage expectations but not social benefits. The strongest effect on patronage expectations is the extra path from social benefit perceptions. An explanation for this may be found in Beatty et al. (1996) that the formation of friendship in itself is a driver of repeat patronage. The relationship strength suggests that many online customers miss the social and interpersonal aspects of shopping and do not believe present interfaces meet their needs. They judge an OSA has the potential to improve their experience in this regard. Another possibility is the attraction of the novelty value of an OSA. Potential customers may find the website friendly and appealing but not associate this with anything but increased pleasure in visiting the website. Either way, this attraction acts, at least in part, independently of feelings of trust.

A further contribution is evidence that offline preferences for salesperson assistance are associated with preferences for the presence and particular types of help that could be given by an OSA.

Well-learned offline routines carry over into the online environment, that is, many customers will try to apply their offline expectations, prejudices and strategies for shopping to the online shopping task. Recognising and facilitating these can help alleviate difficulties with the use of retail websites and encourage website patronage.

Nonetheless, caution is advised in OSA use on retail websites for social relationship building. Whilst the relationships in figure 2 suggest considerable potential for relationship benefits to add to customer trust and interest in the site, the means for the individual items (table 2) indicate that participants were only moderately positive about present OSA capabilities. The 6% of participants choosing not to have an online assistant provide additional insights. The OSA purpose must be clear to the user and the interactions planned around making the shopping task easier rather than to attract customer attention. Currently the optimum role for an OSA is probably to enhance relationships by providing advice and help to the customer with less emphasis on social features unless there is substantial technological development to support the less predictable aspects of social interaction.

Further, this study confirms that social rules and social expectations are easily engendered, raising concerns that OSA interaction could be used to exploit social mechanisms. Shoppers might be persuaded that it is safe and financially prudent to make purchases or to omit the search for more concrete cues to trustworthiness. Even with the best intentions, there is a fine line between helping people overcome inaccurate risk perceptions and reducing risk perceptions too far.

The major limitation of this study is that respondents did not interact with the proposed OSA. Therefore, perceptions are of the potential for relational benefits offered by an OSA, not the reality. However, at this stage of OSA development, we feel this is defensible as we, amongst others, have already noted the capacity for disappointment or annoyance when onscreen characters do not live up to their promise. This was an experimental study using just two examples of online retailing, albeit popular and reflecting the credence-search goods continuum. OSA presence may be more or less welcome on other types of retail website. Further, the respondents in this study were mostly from the UK or Northern America. Thus, further research is needed to test the model and clarify the potential for OSA presence on other types of retail website and with customers from other countries.

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Consuming Hyperplaces: Servicescape, Service-Escape, and the Production of the Servicespace

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study develops a new theoretical perspective on the marketplace, one grounded in Ascher's (2003) model of the hypermodern society, Henri Lefebvre's (1974/1991) work on space, and existential phenomenology. These views on the concept of space, even though never the object of a comparative analysis, revealed to be complementary.

According to Ascher (2003; 2004), increased mobility and new technologies have led to a "hypermodern society" where "sequences of activities overlap and interweave, a society where social ties are chosen, constructed, formed, but also dissolved more freely. This hypermodern society generates new places—hyperplaces" (Ascher 2003). A hyperplace is a "space of connectivity" (Desportes 2005), not a space of physical, Euclidian contiguity. In hyperplaces, individuals can, if they want, participate in different activities quasi simultaneously in multiple social fields, and with the people they have chosen to be with, whether they are actually or virtually present.

According to existential phenomenology, the Euclidian (i.e., three-dimensional) view on space is a scientific reduction which does not reflect the complexity of the concept. More precisely, Lefebvre (1974/1991) sees space as produced through spatial practices (i.e., the set of actions taken by the space user). Space conceivers (e.g., urbanists, store managers) can influence space consumers' "production" of space by suggesting specific spatial practices (e.g., pathways in a store). However, the space consumers usually prefer to avoid such guidance, and will try to experience instead a "fully lived space", i.e., a space emancipated from any spatial practices required or suggested by the space conceivers.

Based on these perspectives on space, a new model of the marketplace was developed, in which the space of retail experienced by the shoppers (referred to as the *servicespace*) is "produced" by the shoppers themselves. The production of this *servicespace* is naturally influenced by the three-dimensional *servicescape* designed by marketers. However the *servicespace*, as lived by those consuming it (i.e., the shoppers) is also based on elements located beyond the physical walls of the tangible, three-dimensional *servicescape* (in an "Elsewhere" of the shopping experience so far left unexplored in consumer research). Three different types of spatial practices (labeled "hyperspatial practices") involving elements located outside of the *servicescape* (i.e., in what is referred to as the "outscape") were identified during the fieldwork. Firstly, shoppers may decide to "Reach for Information"—i.e., reach for the outspace in an attempt to bring product- or service-related expertise into the inscape. Secondly, they may connect to the outspace (i.e., to "service-escape" the *servicescape*) whenever their immediate physical environment does not provide an optimized level of arousal and/or pleasure (a hyperspatial practice labeled "Reaching for Affect"). Thirdly, shoppers may decide to tap into their (physically) distant social contacts (for utilitarian reasons, or simply as a reassuring reminder of their "place" in the social fabric). Lastly, by combining at will these three new types of spatial practices, shoppers can "reach for hyperplaceness", i.e., for a liminal and intangible space, a *servicespace* that is much richer, in its social, informational, and affective dimensions than the ordinary *servicescape* suggested by *servicescape* conceivers.

Multiple data collection processes were used during the fieldwork—participant and nonparticipant observation, depth interviews, autodiving interviews, and focus group. In total, the fieldwork resulted in 541 pages of single-spaced pages of transcribed interviews, 30 pages of field notes, 1,661 photographs, and 69 hours of videotaped observation. The age of the five informants (four female and one male) ranged from 19 to 32.

The methodology developed for this research, the "Day-In-The-Life" (DITL) protocol, borrows from the Shopping-With-Consumers (SWC) protocol (Otnes, McGrath, and Lowrey 1995), but also extends its scope by allowing the researcher to study the shopping experience in its everyday-life context: as the informants went through their entire day (from dawn to dusk), the researcher stayed a couple of feet behind them, so that he could observe and take still photos of the informants' various activities. In addition, during the follow-up interviews, informants were shown, to prime their memory, a set of photographs taken during the fieldwork. An average of 208 still captions were presented to the informants during each of the depth interviews.

By introducing a new conceptualization of the marketplace, this research sheds a new light on the meaning creation and re-appropriation processes to which shoppers have access: in the proverbial consumer/producer struggle for the domination of the marketplace, with the *servicescape* finally "de-secluded", space users can now leverage elements (e.g., flux of information) located in the outspace. Once a "ontological place" (Heidegger 1927), the *servicespace* has now become a ontical place.

Lastly, this research contributes to the ongoing debate on the type of sociality consumers want to experience in the marketplace, by assessing whether a sense of place and its accompanying sociality is still perceived by shoppers as a valuable element of the *servicespace*, or is just part of a self-reassuring (and self-deceiving) discourse on "the *servicescape* as a modern bazaar" or "the *servicescape* as the new utopia" held by *servicescape* producers and marketers.

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ROUNDTABLE

Grant Funding Opportunities and Challenges for Transformative Consumer Research

Cornelia Pechmann, University of California, Irvine, USA

Eric Johnson, Columbia University, USA

Last year's ACR president David Mick identified the need for scholarship in ACR which is "purposely designed for and directly conveyed to consumers" (see <http://www.acrwebsite.org/vanessa/TaskForceonTCR.doc>). Mick labeled this type of research "transformative consumer research" because of its potential to have an "important and constructive influence, including the potential for uplifting change." Mick convened an ACR task force on transformative consumer research which then identified a need for grant funding to support academic research on topics such as vulnerable consumer groups (e.g., people in poverty, children, the elderly, handicapped), behaviors that are personally or socially negative (e.g., tobacco use, drug abuse, compulsive buying), and positive or prosocial behaviors (e.g., recycling, sustainable consumption, organ donation).

The aim of this roundtable was to provide guidance to academics who are interested in obtaining grant funding for transformative consumer research, or other related types of consumer research. The roundtable brought together experts from major U.S. funding agencies (National Science Foundation, Marketing Science Institute, Advertising Research Foundation), academics from different academic disciplines (marketing, psychology, communication) who have received substantial grant funding, and academics who have not yet received funding but are interested in possibly applying for it. Fifteen individuals participated, including David Mick who discussed ACR's transformative consumer research grant initiative. Participants shared personal experiences and discussed grants that they have applied for and/or reviewed.

The following specific topics were discussed:

1. Realistically, which agencies or entities are most likely to provide funding for transformative consumer research or related consumer research, both nationally and internationally? Which agencies have funded the roundtable participants' research? Can businesses help to fund transformative consumer research, or must we rely on government and nonprofit groups? Potential sources of funding that were listed in the ACR transformative consumer research task force report are:
 - USA National Science Institute
 - USA National Institute of Health
 - USA Center for Disease Control
 - Marketing Science Institute
 - American Association of Retired Persons
 - International bodies such as the World Trade Organization and the World Health Organization
 - Foundations such as Robert Wood Johnson, Ford, MacArthur, Sloane, Fetzer, Templeton, Rockefeller, and Gates
 - Corporations such as Body Shop, Ben and Jerry's, Anheuser Busch, and Philip Morris
2. What are the elements of a successful grant proposal? Participants addressed issues such as these:
 - identification of specific research aims
 - need for pilot tests and power analyses

- sample characteristics and sample size
- research methods (e.g., survey vs. experiment vs. modeling)
- research measures (e.g., attitude vs. intent vs. behavior)
- focus on theory vs. substantive issues
- focus on internal vs. external validity
- consultants

3. Should grant writing be undertaken using the more traditional "single principal investigator" approach or the emerging multi-investigator, multi-disciplinary approach? Some of the ACR transformative consumer research task force members opined as follows: "Many of the potential funding organizations are only seeking research highly pertinent to their stated missions and goals (e.g., poverty, health, children), and may be less likely to support general proposals for non-specified research topics under the general umbrella of transformative consumer research. Hence, it was suggested that the most effective strategy might be for consumer researchers, facilitated by ACR, to come together as teams that hold strong interests in particular topics within transformative consumer research. The teams could then write collective grants to the organizations or agencies that best suit their topics." (See <http://www.acrwebsite.org/vanessa/TaskForceonTCR.doc>.) What are the strengths and weaknesses of this multi-investigator approach, as opposed to the more traditional "single investigator" approach? What has worked for the roundtable participants?
4. If a research grant is obtained, how can it be implemented effectively? For instance, how can the investigators minimize the time spent on hiring staff, budgets, IRB, and report paperwork? What has worked for the roundtable participants?

In sum, this roundtable brought together funding agency representatives and junior and senior academics to identify more and less effective approaches for obtaining and managing grant funds for transdisciplinary consumer research and related consumer research.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Cultural Identity and Judgment—To Bias or not to Bias

Cristel Antonia Russell, San Diego State University, USA
Ana Valenzuela, Baruch College, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

This session demonstrates when and how cultural identity affects how consumers make decisions, respond to consumption situations, and react to persuasive communications. The rationale behind cultural identity-based research is that exposure to different ecological factors and social structures perpetuates different cultural values and ideals and thus certain judgment “biases” are likely to be more prevalent in one culture than another (Triandis 1995). The lack of systematic research in this domain has left us with little understanding of why such an identity variable may matter. This session provides a theoretical understanding of these phenomena using existing models of information processing.

All papers draw from experimental findings to demonstrate how cultural identity affects consumers’ decision-making (1st paper), persuasion (2nd paper), and choice (3rd paper). However, each paper differs in the insights it provides on these effects. The Valenzuela, Darke and Briley paper documents and explains why consumers of different cultural identities (here American vs. Chinese) also differ in how they make decisions. The focus is on differences in control orientations that lead to different sensitivity to luck and in turn impact decision-making. The Briley and Aaker paper demonstrates the boundaries of when cultural identity affects persuasion and judgment by studying the conditions affecting consumers’ reliance on cultural versus personal knowledge when forming judgments. Finally, the Russell and Russell paper documents the potential for cultural identity prompts to activate animosity toward another culture and in turn affect consumer choices, thus demonstrating that cultural identity salience can be manipulated and in turn affect choice.

Collectively, these papers provide a coherent message about these beliefs that are universally held and have an impact on memory, motivation, decision making and performance. Angela Lee, the discussion leader, draws from her research in the area of cross-cultural consumer behaviour to synthesize the findings of the different papers and develop an agenda for future research. Moreover, her insights help underscore how theoretical research can advance our understanding of different judgment and decision biases.

“Cultural Identity and the Antecedents of Risky Decision-Making: Am I Good or Lucky?”

Ana Valenzuela, Baruch College

Peter Darke, University of British Columbia

Donnel Briley, University of Sydney

Previous literature has found that lucky experiences have a paradoxical effect on expectations of future performance (Darke and Freedman 1997). Subjects who thought luck was a personal, stable factor reacted to a lucky event with higher expectations for performance, while those who perceived luck as completely random had lower expectations following initial luck. As a consequence, beliefs in good luck may buffer people from feelings of uncertainty and enhance risk taking. These results are quite similar to findings in the self-esteem literature concerning ego-threat (e.g., Baumeister et al. 1993). In fact, self-esteem has been shown to predict risk-taking particularly in the domain of gains (Josephs, Larrick, Steele and Nisbett 1992). However, respondents’ cultural identity is expected to moderate these effects. People have implicit

theories about whether behavior is driven merely by an individual’s ability (internal locus of control) or by situational forces (external locus of control). Individual responses to success or failure are likely to differ depending on the theory to which they subscribe. Individuals that believe in external locus of control may be more likely to shift their expectations for future performance depending on whether they are lucky or not (Hong and Chiu 1988). Research by Weisz, Rothbaum and Blackburn (1984) indicates that East Asians tend to exhibit more external locus of control than North Americans. Additionally, Heine and Lehman (1997) also identified cultural differences in self-esteem maintenance for Japanese vs. North Americans. They found that many self-esteem related effects such as post-decisional dissonance occur with North Americans but not with Japanese. As a consequence, we expect that individuals who subscribe to different implicit theories of behavior (North American vs. Chinese) will differ in their sensitivity to luck and self-esteem in risky decision-making. In other words, people seem to use important dimensions of their self-concept as a buffer against different kinds of threats—in this case the risk of getting no money when taking a chance on winning a larger sum of money. Self-affirmation on the dimension of ability should be more effective in buffering the risk of the gamble in western cultures while self-affirmation on personal luck should be more effective in buffering risk in the eastern cultures. Three studies investigate this proposition.

In Study 1, we use a risky decision task to analyze whether cultures differ in their sensitivity to luck and self-esteem. Subjects were asked to choose between an option with a certain outcome and another option (or prospect) with a probabilistic outcome. Despite differences in the level of risk involved, the expected outcomes were the same for both options. In addition, decisions pertained to either gains or losses, depending on the decision frame. For example, a positively framed decision would give subjects a choice between a sure gain of \$30 and an 85 percent chance to gain \$45; whereas a negatively framed decision would give subjects a choice between a sure loss of \$30 and an 85 percent chance of losing \$45. We ran the study using undergraduate students from both Canada and Hong Kong. Subjects completed a set of 10 decisions (5 with a gain frame and 5 with a loss frame) presented on a computer screen. The order was randomized by subject. The alternatives in each decision differed only in terms of the amount of risk involved. When subjects chose a risky option, the final outcome was determined using a lottery procedure. There was also an initial luck manipulation: Half of the subject got \$5 from the start while half had to participate in a lottery to win them (although everyone won). We measured Beliefs in Good Luck (Darke and Freedman 1997) and self-esteem (Rosenberg 1965).

Results show that neither self-esteem nor beliefs in luck affect behavior in loss domains for either culture. People seem to be so averse to losses that individual differences are just not that important. In other words, loss aversion seems to be universally felt, though gain pursuit was not. In the gain domain, Canadian (but not Hong Kong) respondents chose the risky option more often when they rated high on self-esteem. Also in the gain domain, Hong Kong (but not Canadian) respondents chose more risky options when they had stronger beliefs in good luck. Only in Canada did the initial luck manipulation interact with self-esteem: High self-esteem subjects

took more risks after winning the initial lottery. In the case of Hong Kong, the initial luck manipulation did not interact with individual's beliefs in good luck. Instead, those who believed in luck tended to take more risks regardless of context induced by initial luck.

Study 2 replicated Study 1's design (without the initial luck manipulation) and added a between-subjects priming manipulation. U.S. Caucasian and Hong Kong undergraduate students were primed to think either about their good luck or their strong ability by describing a situation in which they were either lucky or skillful. The results showed that U.S. Caucasian respondents that were primed to think about their skill tended to choose more risky options than those that were primed about luck. Respondents that had to describe a skill-based situation felt that they were describing something more important about themselves than those that described a high ability situation. In the case of Hong Kong students, luck-beliefs priming did not enhance the effect of individual's beliefs in good luck, which again support the idea that beliefs in good luck are not as context-dependent as individual self-esteem.

In sum, our results support the idea that cultures differ in the way people deal with uncertainty in everyday life (Weisz, Rothbaum and Blackburn 1984). North Americans tend to believe in their own capability to control the situation. As a consequence, they are willing to make more risky decisions when a positive event enhances their self-esteem. In contrast, Asian cultures tend to assess the favorability of the situation and take more risk when they believe their personal good luck will put the situation in their favor. In addition, the effects of self-esteem on risk taking seem to be more context-dependent than beliefs in good luck. Further study in risky domains that are skill-based instead of luck-based would bring more light to this research question.

“When Does Culture Matter? Effects of Personal Knowledge on the Correction of Culture-based Judgments”

Donnel A. Briley, University of Sydney

Jennifer Aaker, Stanford University

You need a new computer. You log onto the Web and spend time thoughtfully perusing various vendor sites to determine the best fit for your needs. You think you've made up your mind. But then you're whizzing down the highway and pass a billboard touting a different computer. You only have a few seconds to absorb the advertising message, but you're swayed in ways you hadn't anticipated. What's going on? According to new research, it may have to do your cultural biases. Or, to be more specific, the instances in which culture matters—and the times it doesn't.

When *does* culture influence consumer purchasing decisions? Four experiments reported in this research show that culture-based differences are found when information is processed in a cursory and spontaneous manner. So when you passed that roadside billboard, you were likely to be influenced by advertising that appealed to values held in high regard in your particular culture. But when you had the time to deliberate more—such as examining information on the Web—attempts by advertisers to rely on cultural factors are less likely to be successful.

For example, in a pilot study, students at a California university with an ethnically diverse population (both Anglo and Asian Americans) were asked to view advertisements for Welch's grape juice. Some participants were instructed to give their immediate reactions to the advertisements, while others were told to think more carefully before evaluating the effectiveness of the ads. Half of the ads were “promotion” in their appeal-focused on the benefits that could be gained by drinking the juice (e.g., higher energy levels, great-tasting as well as energizing, fun to drink). The other

ads had preventive appeals, highlighting problems that could be avoided by drinking Welch's (e.g., the risk of some cancers and heart disease, helps keep arteries clear so that blood can flow freely, and is healthy to drink).

The results were instructive. When participants gave their immediate reactions to the advertisements, Asian American participants heavily favored the prevention messages; Anglo Americans had the opposite reaction, rating the promotion messages as more effective. This tallied with the researchers' theories that Americans, who value achievement, accomplishment, and independent thinking, would focus on the positive consequences of their purchasing decisions. On the other hand, Chinese subjects, who tend to value protection and security, and have more interdependent ways of viewing the world, were expected to concentrate on the negative consequences of their actions or decisions. All this bore out when subjects gave only a cursory glance at the ads. Yet, importantly this disparity disappeared when participants engaged in more thoughtful deliberations. There were simply no significant differences in how the two groups rated the effectiveness of the advertising when asked to be more careful in their evaluations. So what determines whether culture matters? A key factor is the extent to which you draw upon cultural versus personal knowledge when making purchasing decisions.

General cultural knowledge includes implicit theories about the world we live in that are largely shared by the members of our society. But in addition to this shared set of ideas, we also have personal knowledge that can conflict with accepted, culturally derived practices. For example, a boy growing up in China may generally accept the importance of his relationships with others, and therefore seek to keep harmony with family members. But more personal knowledge—such as being exposed to pictures of American cultural icons like Green Day or Madonna—may lead him to sometimes wear clothes that his parents don't like. In other words, when pressured to form a quick judgment, we generally rely on cultural norms as a “default.” But when making a thoughtful deliberation, we're more likely to engage in an internal debate, and waver. These results underscore the idea that culture simply does not exert the constant, unwavering effect on consumer judgments as previously thought.

As the perceived importance of cultural issues increases, fueled by new technologies that allow marketers to reach consumers across country boundaries, this research has important implications. Marketers are spending increasing amounts of time and effort trying to understand subtle cultural differences. But for a message to be effective, they must understand not only how to tailor a message to a particular culture, but *when* such cultural-values-based messages are most effective. Additionally, the finding that culture sometimes guides consumer judgments and behaviors, and at other times does not, helps to understand conflicting findings in extant research. For example, although numerous studies have found cultural differences matter significantly to consumers, in other studies such differences sometimes fail to appear. Such failures tend to offer uninteresting findings, and often remain unpublished. The present research suggests that such null effects may be due to differences in the conditions under which participants provide their responses. Researchers may also want to consider the distinction between personal and cultural knowledge. When will personal knowledge override socio-cultural norms? Answers to such questions will further illuminate the psychology of consumers across cultural contexts, and shed insight on what types of global marketing efforts may be most effective.

“Cultural Identity Salience as a Catalyst of Consumer Resistance”

Dale W. Russell, INSEAD

Cristel Antonia Russell, San Diego State University

This research explores the possibility that feelings of animosity may be latent and resistance due to animosity may occur through implicit as opposed to explicit means. In particular, the potential for cultural identity prompts to serve as catalysts of animosity is tested. Previous research suggests that consumer resistance usually requires strong awareness or deep resentment (Ger and Belk 1996). Yet, at the same time, some evidence suggests that consumers may be able to separate their feelings toward a nation from their purchasing behavior. The underlying construct of consumer resistance against products from a particular country is animosity, which reflects the “remnants of antipathy related to previous or ongoing military, political, or economic events” (Klein et al. 1998, p. 90) and can adversely impact the consumption of products from another country. This research compares two catalysts of animosity: an explicit experimental scenario designed to enhance or reduce animosity and an implicit catalyst, cultural identity salience (Aaker and Lee 2001; Briley and Wyer 2002). The consumer psychology literature suggests that calling people’s attention to their own cultural identity induces feelings of allegiance to one’s country and increases the tendencies to espouse values common in that culture (Briley and Wyer 2002). Thus, making one’s own cultural identity salient could increase one’s attention to products from their own country. Similarly, prompting another culture could impact resistance to foreign products but, unlike an explicit scenario designed to openly activate animosity, it might do so in a more implicit fashion. In particular, making salient a culture perceived as invasive might increase the threat of cultural incursions and render consumers more defensive and resistant to foreign products.

These propositions were tested experimentally with consumer movie choices, a context especially fitting given the threat of worldwide domination by Hollywood and the presumed cultural homogenization by the U.S. through film and television (Mathy 2000; Ger and Belk 1996). The research was conducted in France where triggering animosity toward a country perceived as invasive or detrimental to the local culture was posited to foster resistance. It was predicted that combining a U.S. high animosity manipulation with exposure to a U.S. film synopsis would trigger resistance to American productions. This condition, making the cultural threat of Hollywood salient, was expected to activate a prevention-focus amongst French consumers (Briley and Wyer 2002), who should revert to domestic movies.

In a first study, French participants were randomly assigned to a 2 (animosity: high vs. low) X 2 (movie origin: U.S. or France) between-subjects experiment with the incentive of free movie tickets. Animosity was manipulated explicitly by having respondents read a press article about trade relations between the two countries before participating in a movie survey sponsored by either the American or the French Film Institute. The key dependent variable, movie ticket choice was an actual choice task at the outset of the study. Results showed evidence of cultural resistance: choices were equally split between domestic and U.S. movie tickets except in the high animosity-U.S. movie condition. In that condition, the majority (58.3%) selected domestic movies and fewer (31.7%) selected U.S. movies compared to the other conditions where between 39.7% and 45.1% opted for U.S. movies. As expected, preference for domestic movies increased when French consumers’ animosity toward the U.S. was heightened and they were reminded of the U.S.’s presence in their movie industry.

The second experiment relied on a cultural salience prompt as an implicit resistance catalyst. It was proposed that making another

culture salient may operate similarly to the high animosity manipulation used in the first study, if that other culture is perceived as invasive or detrimental to the local culture. The study was on a 2 (cultural salience: France vs. U.S.) X 2 (movie origin: French vs. U.S.) between-subject experiment with participants randomly assigned to conditions and offered the incentive of free movie tickets of their choice. Cultural salience and movie origin were manipulated by exposing participants to a picture association task prompting their own or the other culture (Briley and Wyer 2002; Hong et al. 2000), before introducing them to either the fictional American or French Film Institute survey. As expected, the U.S. cultural prompt-U.S. movie condition triggered animosity and generated cultural resistance: participants in that condition were more likely to favor domestic movies than those exposed to a U.S. culture prompt and a French movie (82.6% vs. 55.6%). Thus, exposure to a U.S. cultural prompt and a U.S. movie synopsis served as implicit catalysts of resistance, awaking French consumers’ animosity toward the U.S. and in turn increasing their preference for French movies.

Not only do these experiments demonstrate that animosity can be manipulated and its effects on consumer behavior tested experimentally, they also extend cultural identity research by showing that making salient a culturally threatening nation can generate resistance and induce feelings of allegiance to one’s own country and its products.

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150 / Cultural Identity and Judgment—To Bias or not to Bias

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY
“New Thoughts and New Possibilities”:
Frontiers in Consumers’ Interpretations of New Products

Reetika Gupta, Lehigh University, USA
Sankar Sen, Baruch College/CUNY, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

How do consumers make sense of new products? Consumer research has largely focused on new product interpretations based on a single categorization cue (e.g. New product is a PDA) or a single analogical cue (e.g. New product is like a PDA). However, with the abundance of new products in the marketplace that defy straightforward categorization (e.g. hybrid products), single cue based interpretation is often insufficient. Recent research in psychology posits that the “ability to combine concepts in novel ways allows us to think new thoughts and imagine new possibilities” (Costello and Keane 2001). The purpose of this session is to present ongoing research that examines how consumers combine or compare multiple concepts or categories to construct interpretations of new products.

Together, the papers provide a broad perspective on how consumers combine and align multiple concepts to derive property or relation based meanings for novel products. Further, the papers provide insights into the factors that influence the interpretations, the processes underlying the interpretations, as well as the outcomes resulting from the interpretations. The papers shed light on several new product scenarios in the marketplace ranging from instances where the new product is a combination of multiple concepts (e.g. PDA phones) to instances where the new product is compared to analogous concepts (e.g. New product is like a Jacuzzi and a Therapist).

The first paper by Moreau, Dale and Kirmani, analyzes data from two experiments to demonstrate that the similarity of concepts, the category level of the concepts (basic vs. superordinate), and the order in which the concepts are presented influence the nature of interpretations (property vs. relational) and preferences for the new product. The second paper by Rajagopal and Burnkrant, analyzes data from two experiments to illustrate that the nature of interpretation strategy primed (property vs. relational), leads to differences in the new product inferences (multiple category vs. single category). Finally, the paper by Gupta and Sen, analyzes data from three experiments to investigate how and why the distance between analogous concepts (far vs. near) used to describe the new product, influences the interpretations and preferences for it.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“From Combination Products to Brand Alliances: How Conceptual Combination Influences Consumers’ Preferences”

Page Moreau, University of Colorado, Boulder

Jen Dale, University of Colorado, Boulder

Amna Kirmani, University of Maryland, College Park

Consumers encounter a variety of novel combinations in the marketplace, including hybrid products (e.g., PDA phones; camera pens; GPS radios) and brand alliances (e.g., Hewlett Packard and Starbucks). In most cases, consumers are familiar with each element of the combination but have not considered the meaning of their union. As shown in recent work in psychology, the way in which consumers construct a representation for the new product or fused brand will influence their preferences for it.

Under the heading of conceptual combination, psychologists have examined the cognitive processes that people engage in when trying to make sense of novel word combinations. Costello and Keane (2000) identified five classes of interpretations: relational (a relation is asserted between the two objects), property (a property of one object is asserted onto the other), hybrid (a blend of both objects), conjunctive (a combination of both concepts), or known-concept (focuses on a known-concept related to the two objects). The majority of interpretations fall in the relational or property categories, with hybrid, conjunctive and known-concept interpretations occurring only rarely. However, little research has examined the conditions under which these different interpretations occur. We hypothesize that similarity of the words, the category level of each noun (e.g., basic vs. superordinate), and the order in which the nouns are presented should influence how consumers interpret novel combinations.

Specifically, we predict that more abstract superordinate categories will enhance the likelihood of a relational interpretation while basic level categories will focus consumers more on concrete features, thereby increasing the likelihood of property interpretations. This effect should be more pronounced when the two nouns are more similar, because similarity should facilitate alignment in the comparison.

In perfect hybrids, word order should not matter (e.g., a drill screwdriver should have the same interpretation and preference as a screwdriver drill). In the marketplace, however, we expect that perfect hybrids are rare and that word order does matter. From conceptual combination theory, the header (i.e., the second word) has been shown to carry the categorization information with the modifier (i.e., the first word) providing more specific, descriptive information (Costello and Keane 2000). Even in the case of the drill/screwdriver combination or the HP/Starbucks alliance, we hypothesize that simply changing word order may change preferences via categorization processes because the word position (header vs. modifier) is likely to remain a powerful interpretation cue.

Study 1 assessed the impact of category level and noun similarity on consumers’ interpretations of conceptual combinations. The study was a mixed design with three factors manipulated between subjects: 2 (modifier category level: superordinate or basic) X 2 (header category level: superordinate or basic) X 2 (similarity: similar or dissimilar). 115 participants were presented with four novel noun-noun combinations and asked to provide two definitions for each combination. The category level of both the modifier and header were manipulated independently, with either being superordinate or basic. In addition, the relationship between the two nouns was either similar or dissimilar.

Two judges classified each definition into one of the five types. Judges also assessed the primary source of knowledge and assessed the type of information transferred from both the modifier and header to the new concept. Preliminary results indicate that the category level of the header, and the interaction between the category level of the modifier and the header significantly influenced the likelihood of relational and property interpretations. A superordinate header increased the likelihood of a relational interpretation ($F=19.33$, $p<.0001$), and this effect was enhanced when

the modifier was also superordinate ($F=6.87, p<.01$). Further, when the nouns were similar, relational interpretations were less frequent ($F=56.5, p>.0001$). When relational interpretations declined, property interpretations increased. Overall, the incidence of pure hybrid interpretations was low. Taken together, this study provides crucial understanding of the conditions under which different types of interpretations occur. However, the nouns participants saw were different across conditions. In the next study, we hold the nouns constant across all conditions but vary the order in which they are observed. This manipulation allows for a more controlled test of the influence of position (header vs. modifier) on interpretation.

Study 2 manipulated a single factor between-subjects (word order). Participants provided their own definitions of and preferences for each novel combination as well as plausibility ratings for a fixed set of possible definitions. Half the subjects saw one set of conceptual combinations (e.g., vitamin-coffee, laptop-projector, computer-purse, purse-sock, and chair-basket), while the other half saw the same set with the words reversed. The results show that word order significantly influences a) participants' interpretations of the conceptual combination, and more importantly for marketers, b) preferences for the combined concept.

"Conceptual Combination and Inferences about Ambiguous Products"

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A robust finding in the categorization literature has been the finding that inferences about an object are limited to a single category (Malt, Ross and Murphy 1995; Murphy and Ross 1996; Ross and Murphy 1994). For example, if an object is categorized as a cell phone, then inferences about the object will be limited to those appropriate for a cell phone and will not include any inferences from other categories. This finding suggests that people do not seem to hold multiple category inferences about single objects, i.e. they do not believe that an object can possess attributes of more than one category. However, many products that exist in today's marketplace are ambiguous with respect to the product category to which they belong and possess attributes of multiple categories. For example, products like the Handspring Treo possess features and functionalities of a cell phone and a PDA while crossover vehicles like the Nissan Murano and Chrysler Pacifica possess features of a minivan and a SUV. Success for such products depends to a large extent on being able to convince consumers that they possess features of more than one category. Hence the finding with respect to single category inferences needs to be re-examined to suggest how multiple category inferences can be induced. The current paper therefore aims at understanding how single category inferences can be extended to multiple categories so that a single object can be perceived to possess features of more than one category.

We refer to the literature on conceptual combinations to overcome the problem of single category inferences. The literature on conceptual combinations focuses on how people interpret novel noun-noun combinations such as "whale boat". Past research in this area has found that people predominantly interpret novel combinations in one of two ways—property interpretations and relational interpretations (Costello and Keane 2001). Under property interpretations, attributes from both nouns are transferred to the combination. For example, a whale boat could be a boat that is very large (like a whale). Under relational interpretations, thematic linkages are drawn between the two nouns and properties of only the head noun are retained in the combination. For example, a whale boat could be a boat that is used to watch whales. Property interpretations therefore lead to the presence of attributes from more than one

category in a single object. Hence, we suggest that priming respondents with property interpretations (versus relational interpretations) will enable them to make multiple category inferences.

We further explore why property interpretations induce multiple category inferences and suggest that greater attention is paid to both categories under property interpretations which allows for easy retrieval of both sets of category attributes during product judgments. Under relational interpretations, greater attention will be paid to the head category's attributes, leading to faster retrieval of only one category's attributes during product judgments.

Two empirical studies were conducted to test our research propositions. In Study 1, we primed respondents with different interpretation strategies (property vs. relational) and exposed them to information about an ambiguous product that was labeled as either a PDA or a Camera. As expected, we find that when primed with a property interpretation strategy, respondents are able to make multiple category inferences and believe that the product will possess attributes of both a PDA and a Camera. When primed with a relational interpretation strategy however, respondents make single category inferences and believe that the product will either possess features of a PDA or a Camera but not both. Hence, property interpretations appear capable of inducing multiple category inferences.

In Study 2, we examine why property interpretations induce multiple inferences by incorporating a response time variable to measure accessibility to information about the two categories. As predicted, we find that under property interpretations, respondents exhibit no differences in speed of retrieval of information about both categories while under relational interpretations, respondents are significantly faster at retrieving information about one category as compared to the second category.

From a theoretical standpoint, this research contributes to the literatures on categorization and conceptual combinations. We combine research from two different literature streams—traditional categorization theories and psycholinguistics—to examine how inferences about one category can be influenced by inferences from other categories. The finding that all product inferences are not derived solely through categorization, but also from the type of interpretation strategy used is a radical departure from traditional categorization theory findings, which predict that inferences are derived from a single category. From a managerial perspective, this research provides a better understanding of the comprehension processes of ambiguous products by consumers and suggests ways by which marketers can promote acceptance of their products.

"Learning and Liking through Comparison: The Influence of Multiple Analogies on New Product Interpretations and Preferences"

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Sankar Sen, Baruch College/CUNY

Previous research in marketing and psychology (e.g., Gentner, Ratterman, and Forbus 1993; Roehm and Sternthal 2002) has asserted that analogy cues with their emphasis on structural relations communicate the core functionality of a new product effectively. However, researchers have highlighted the shortcoming of a single analogy cue by showing that in the absence of surface similarity between the new product and an analogy cue, consumers may not be able to detect the common relation between the new product and analogy cue. This shortcoming can be eliminated and the unique benefits of analogies can be realized if consumers can compare the new product to multiple analogous concepts in a synergistic manner so that the underlying benefit is illuminated. Marketers of new products, which defy straightforward categoriza-

tion (e.g., Metronaps, Forerunner) could benefit from the use of multiple analogous concepts in their communication as it helps engender superior understanding of the new product and influence preferences for it.

Stemming from the structural alignment paradigm, the theory of analogical encoding (Ferguson 1994; Ferguson and Forbus 1998) suggests that if consumers are presented with two analogous concepts, their comparison and alignment illuminates the common underlying functionality, leading to superior knowledge transfer to the new product. However, in a new product context, the nature of analogous concepts used would determine if this process indeed occurs and how the interpretations influence the preferences for the new product. We hypothesize that the distance between the two analogous concepts (*far concepts*: shared functionality but no shared surface attributes vs. *near concepts*: shared functionality and shared surface attributes) used to describe the new product will influence consumers' interpretations and preferences for the new product.

Specifically, we predict that by comparing and aligning two far analogous concepts (e.g. jacuzzi and therapist), which have no shared attributes, consumers can identify the common alignable functionality (provides relaxation) while the use of two near analogous concepts (e.g. jacuzzi and sauna) focus consumers on the shared attributes (e.g. high temperatures) and shift attention away from the common alignable functionality.

At the same time, research has shown that the ability to categorize a product results in confidently held inferences (Gregan Paxton and Moreau 2003). Therefore, while the use of far concepts facilitates the transfer of the core functionality, the inability to categorize the new product weakens the effect of superior knowledge transfer, leading to lower preferences for the new product. On the other hand, when two near concepts are used, due to the focus on shared attributes, consumers have a tendency to categorize the new product into one of the two base categories, leading to greater preferences for the new product. We theorize that if the new product can be situated within a superordinate category (e.g. leisure product for far analogous concepts, jacuzzi and therapist), the uncertainty associated with the inability to categorize is eliminated, and the gains of analogical encoding are realized by reversing the preference patterns. In other words, when the consumer is no longer uncertain about the superordinate category in which to situate the new product, the deeper inferences drawn from the far analogy cues drive the positive evaluations towards the new product.

We further shed light on the underlying process of abstraction that leads to greater preferences for the new product, in the far concept condition. Using temporal construal theory (Liberman and Trope 1998), we suggest that when the new product purchase is construed in the distant future, the effects on preferences will be stronger, as the individual is primed to think at a more abstract relational level. In contrast, when the new product purchase is construed in the near future, the effects on preferences are undermined, as the individual is primed to focus on the concrete attributes.

Studies 1 and 2 exposed subjects to scenarios where the new product was compared to two analogous concepts of varying distance (near vs. far). In Study 1, participants were presented with four replicate scenarios and asked to provide descriptions of the new product in an open-ended format, based on the pair of analogous concepts. Judges assessed, if the shared functionality and shared features were transferred to interpret the new product. As expected, the far concepts facilitated a higher transfer of the common underlying functionality, while the near concepts resulted in a higher transfer of attributes. In Study 2, participants first

provided their own description, and subsequently responded to preference and certainty measures for that interpretation. The interpretation results of Study 1 were replicated. The ability to categorize provided a certainty for consumers in the near scenario resulting in greater preferences than in the far scenario. A closer analysis showed that in the near concept scenario there was a higher tendency to categorize the new product into one of the two base categories.

In Study 3, the scenarios were created based on an existing new product, and the superordinate category of the new product was provided to the participants. Further, the time construal of the new product purchase was varied (near future vs. distant future). The main effects revealed that with the elimination of the categorization uncertainty, the far concept scenario was preferred than the near concept scenario. Also, the interaction effects of time construal confirmed that the process of abstraction drives preferences towards the new product. Specifically, when primed with a distant future purchase, the far concept scenario reported a greater preference than the near concept scenario. In contrast, when primed with a near future purchase, there was no significant difference in preferences between the far and near concept scenarios.

Theoretically, these findings have implications for the theories of analogical processing and temporal construal. From a managerial perspective, these findings suggest effective means of communicating the core functionality of new products.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

From First to Second Generation: Moderated Nonconscious Behavior Effects

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SESSION SUMMARY

Consumer behavior researchers are becoming increasingly aware of the variety of nonconscious influences on behavior (e.g., Dijksterhuis, Smith, van Baaren, & Wigboldus, 2005; Chartrand, 2005; Simonson, 2005; Janisewski & van Osselear, 2005), and it is now generally acknowledged that stimuli can affect people's behavior without their intention or awareness. Research in this area is entering its second generation. Whereas most previous research was aimed at demonstrating that these effects occurred, more recent research is aimed at illuminating moderators for these general effects. Can the same prime have different effects on different groups of people? Can established effects be reversed? Can primes have the same effects on behavior, but operate via different mechanisms under different conditions and for different people? The present session outlines several individual difference and situational moderators of established automatic behavior effects. These moderators illustrate the boundary conditions that identify when and among whom these effects occur, but also lend evidence regarding their mechanism.

The first presentation, by Wheeler and Berger, shows that the same prime can have different, and sometimes opposite effects on choice, depending on the unique personal associations recipients have with the prime. Across three experiments and using both demographic and individual difference segmentation variables, they show that the effects of primes on choices of different groups of people can be predicted by understanding their personal prime associations. The experiments further demonstrate that the differential priming effects are mediated by the unique personal associations the recipients have with the prime.

The second presentation, by Dalton and Chartrand, examines how exposure to relationship partners affects goal pursuit. Whereas previous research has demonstrated that exposure to relationship partners leads to pursuit of the goals they have for the prime recipient, the current studies show that these effects can be reversed. The first study shows that accessibility of overly controlling relationship partners actually leads to pursuit of goals incompatible with those the relationship partner has for recipients, presumably in an attempt to restore personal freedom. The second study lends additional evidence for this account by showing that low reactance individuals pursue the goals of salient relationship partners, but high reactance individuals do not. Hence, reactance can automatically moderate nonconscious goal pursuit and can manifest both as a function of prime targets and individual differences.

The final presentation, by Smeesters, Wheeler, and Kay, examines direction of focus as a moderator of whether primes will affect behavior via perceptions of others or more directly. They hypothesized that when features promote focus on other individuals in the situation, perceptions of those individuals will be biased by activated constructs, and changes in behavior will be mediated by such perceptions. When features promote self-focus, on the other hand, behavioral changes will not be mediated by perceptions of other people. Across a series of studies, and using both manipulations and measurements of self-focus vs. other-focus, they supported these hypotheses. Their studies show that primes can generate the same effects on economic decisions, but via different mechanisms, depending on the level of other focus.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"Same Prime, Different Effects: Segmentation in Nonconscious Behavior Influence"

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Jonah Berger, Stanford University

Segmentation has long been recognized as a critical procedure in influencing consumer behavior. The varying needs, wants, experiences, and psychological characteristics of different consumer groups require individualized marketing attempts tailored to these subsets of people. Although the need for segmentation has been widely acknowledged for traditional marketing campaigns, the importance of segmentation for more non-conscious influence attempts has not been recognized. Indeed, one part of the power of such influence techniques is the assumed potential for them to influence different people in similar ways. Because such influence techniques rely on basic associative processes, it has been implicitly assumed that stimuli should exert consistent effects across different types of people.

In the present experiments, we demonstrate that the same primes can exert different, and sometimes opposite effects on recipients, depending on the unique personal associations they have to the primed stimulus. Much as unique experiences and associations can affect responses to more deliberate influence attempts, we show that they can also affect less overt influences. Across three studies, and using both demographic and individual difference segmentation variables, we show that different subgroups of consumers exhibit predictable differences in their responses to primes. Specifically, we show that primes can significantly affect consumer choice, but that the effects differ across subgroups of individuals who tend to have different prime associations.

The first experiment used the domain of clothing shopping. Pretests indicated that men and women have different shopping associations. Whereas men tend to be more "purpose-driven" or pragmatic and efficient, women tend to be more "possibility-driven" and browse just to see what is out there. We predicted that these different tendencies, once activated, would influence participants' subsequent choices in an unrelated task. Thus in the main experiment, men and women were randomly assigned to write about either clothes shopping or a control topic (i.e. geography).

Then in an ostensibly unrelated study they were asked to make a series of hypothetical choices, some of which between more “purpose-driven” and “possibility-driven” options (e.g., driving a direct route cross-country vs. taking the scenic route). Results indicated that the effect of the prime on subsequent choices differed based on participants’ gender; writing about shopping (versus geography) led women to make more possibility-driven choices in the subsequent context whereas it led men to make more purpose-driven choices.

The second experiment used the domain of formal events. Pretests indicated that when attending a formal event, men have a goal to dress rather similar to others, whereas women have a goal to dress rather differently from others. Thus in the main experiment, men and women were instructed to write about attending a formal event (or geography) before choosing between different products. Results again indicated different effects of the prime based on gender; women who wrote about the formal event (versus geography) subsequently chose more unique items whereas men who wrote about the formal event tended to choose more common items.

In the final experiment, introverts and extroverts were instructed to write about attending a party (or geography) before selecting different items they would like to receive in a drawing. Previous research has demonstrated that introverts and extroverts have different optimal levels of arousal. Introverts are aroused more easily than extroverts. As a result, they prefer lower-arousal situations and tend to be more easily over-aroused than extroverts. Consequently we predicted that thinking about a party would affect the subsequent choice of introverts and extraverts differently; introverts should be subsequently more likely to choose more low-arousal prizes, consistent with their desire to lower arousal at parties, whereas extroverts should be less affected by the prime. Results confirmed this hypothesis. Further, additional analyses showed that these different effects were mediated by the different associations (i.e. level of stimulation) that introverts and extroverts have with parties.

“Nonconscious Relationship Reactance: When Significant Others Prime Opposing Goals”

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Tanya Chartrand, Duke University

Numerous empirical investigations demonstrate that goals can be activated by the environment and pursued outside of individuals’ conscious awareness and intent (for a review, see Chartrand, Dalton, & Cheng, in press). Recent research demonstrates that one environmental antecedent of nonconscious goal pursuit is “significant others.” Fitzsimons and Bargh (2003) reported that filling out a questionnaire about a friend led participants to nonconsciously pursue an interpersonal goal to help others. Likewise, Shah (2003) found that subliminally priming the name of a significant other led participants to nonconsciously pursue a goal that a significant other had for them. These and other studies (Aarts, Gollwitzer, & Hassin, 2004; Anderson, Reznik, & Manzella, 1996) demonstrate that unobtrusively activating significant other representations can put associated goals into operation automatically. But do individuals always assimilate to the goals they associate with significant others? Can goal contrast occur, even at a nonconscious and automatic level?

Despite the importance of preserving social relationships (Shah, 2003; Fitzsimons & Bargh, 2003) and the strength of social influences in general (e.g., Milgram, 1963; Rosenthal, 1985), sometimes individuals behave in opposition to social influences. For instance, when individuals feel that social forces threaten their autonomy, they are compelled to behave in oppositional ways. This

motivational state and the resulting behavior have been labeled *reactance* (Brehm, 1966). We reason that the motivational state of reactance is not unlike other motivational states: the frequency and consistency with which one has experienced it in a particular situation will determine whether it can be nonconsciously activated. Therefore, individuals who have habitually experienced reactance while interacting with a significant other should come to have this motivational state automatically evoked upon exposure to the significant other. Following from this view, we conjecture that whether individuals’ goal pursuits automatically assimilate to, or contrast away from, their significant other’s wishes will depend on whether or not individuals perceive their significant others as threats to their personal freedoms. We test this hypothesis in two experiments.

Experiment 1

Embedded in a large mass testing session, students completed a Significant Others Questionnaire. In it, students indicated the first names of the people who most want them to work hard, have fun, and 8 other goals (included to hide the purpose), and then rated these people on various dimensions. Students were later recruited for the main experiment if they listed different people for the work hard and have fun goals, and if their ratings for those two people fell within the upper quartile of responses to the questions, “how much does that person trigger that motive or emotion in you?” and “how much does that person want to control you?”.

When they arrived for the experiment, participants were randomly assigned to be subliminally primed with the name of the significant other who wanted them to work hard or have fun, under the guise of a “visual acuity task.” Next, participants completed a 17-item anagram task, followed by a funneled debriefing that probed for suspicions about the experimental procedures.

We predicted that subliminal exposure to the name of a controlling significant other would produce automatic reactance, such that participants primed with the name of a controlling significant other would answer fewer anagrams correctly when that significant other wanted them to work hard compared to when that significant other wanted them to have fun. This is precisely what we found. Moreover, participants (in both Study 1 and 2) were not suspicious of the true relation between the experimental tasks or aware of the nature of the primes, suggesting that the significant other primes affected participants’ anagram performance nonconsciously. These results suggest that people who perceive a significant other as highly controlling automatically and nonconsciously reject the wishes of that significant other and instead pursue goals that oppose those wishes.

Experiment 2

We reasoned that people’s perceptions that their relationship partners are controlling might often be related to a more habitual tendency to believe that people in general wish to control them. Thus, rather than measuring the extent to which individuals perceived significant others as controlling, in Study 2 we measured trait reactance. In addition, we sought to examine the role of trait reactance as a moderator of the influence of significant other primes on goal-directed behavior, so we included participants who expressed reactant tendencies to varying degrees on an individual difference measure.

In the experiment, participants first completed the Significant Others Questionnaire. Next, in a so-called “divided attention task,” participants were subliminally primed with the name of the significant other who wanted them to work hard, relax, or an 8-letter string that did not resemble a word (control condition). Participants then

completed a 28-item anagram task, the 11-item Hong Refined Reactance Scale (Hong, 1992; Hong & Faedda, 1996), and finally, a funneled debriefing.

We predicted that trait reactance would moderate the effect of significant other priming on goal-directed behavior. As predicted, in response to significant other primes, low reactant participants pursued the goals their significant others had for them, while high reactant participants pursued opposing goals. Our results also showed that trait reactance was associated with perceptions of control: high reactant participants rated their significant others as more controlling than did low reactant participants. Therefore, although the triggers of reactance varied from other people (in Study 1) to individual differences in reactance (in Study 2), the data suggest that the mechanism underlying automatic reactance in both studies is the perception of significant others as threats to autonomy.

Conclusion

Our research demonstrates that it is possible for people to reject the wishes of significant others and engage in behaviors that directly oppose significant others' wishes, all without conscious intention or awareness. We have identified two triggers of this effect, both based on perceptions of control: (1) significant others perceived as controlling, and (2) individuals chronically high in reactant tendencies, who tend to see others as controlling. Both triggers result in automatic and nonconscious reactions against significant others' wishes.

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"Nonconscious Effects on Economic Decisions: The Role of Perceptual Construals in Mediating Priming-to-Behavior Effects"

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Recent consumer behavior literature has suggested that research should investigate to the extent to which behaviors thought to be deliberate can be influenced by non-conscious processes (e.g., Bargh, 2002; Dijksterhuis, Smith, Van Baaren, & Wigboldus, 2005). Many seemingly deliberative behaviors (e.g., answering quiz questions, Dijksterhuis & van Knippenberg, 1998) can be influenced by factors that operate outside of awareness. Although researchers have established a wide range of non-conscious influences, the mediational paths by which effects operate have received relatively little attention (Bargh, 2006; Wheeler & Petty, 2001). The present paper examines (a) to what extent decisions made in various economic decision-making situations (e.g., the ultimatum game) can be non-consciously influenced, and (b) potential mediational paths (e.g., perceptual construal of an interaction partner) for such effects. The present studies also provide evidence of moderated mediation; that is, our studies provide insight into when different mediational paths will be responsible for economic choices in these situations.

We have conducted several studies in which we examine how priming of cooperation-related constructs (e.g., kindness/unkindness, cooperation/competition) affects behavior in various economic decision-making situations. These situations are interpersonal—a decision maker must decide whether to make a relatively cooperative or competitive economic decision toward another person. In some cases, primes could affect these economic decisions indirectly by affecting perceptions of the other person (e.g., seeing them as more competitive) and hence one's own behavior (e.g., allocating less to them). In other cases, primes could affect these decisions through other routes (e.g., directly influencing behavior). A critical determinant of how primes may affect decisions in these contexts could be the extent to which the decision maker is focused on the other person (Neuberg & Fiske, 1987).

As the focus on the other person increases, the likelihood of the prime biasing perceptions of the other person should also increase. The extent to which one is other-focused can depend on the situation as well as dispositional factors. Some situations require greater focus on other people and some individuals are more chronically other-focused than others. We predicted that when other-focus is increased in economic decision-making situations, individuals will form impressions of the other person consistent with accessible constructs and these impressions will mediate their choices. For example, if one is primed with competitiveness, one will perceive the interaction partner to be more competitive, and as a result, act more competitively oneself (van Lange & Kuhlman, 1994). Therefore, when other focus is *high*, primes should *indirectly* affect decisions, mediated via perceptual construal of the interaction partner. On the other hand, when other-focus is *low*, primes should *directly* affect perceptions, without affecting perceptual construal of the interaction partner.

In our first study, participants were invited to play an ultimatum game. In this game, participants propose a division of money between themselves and an interaction partner. If the partner accepts the division, each person gets the proposed amount. If the partner refuses the division, neither person receives any money. We were interested in whether and how the primed constructs would affect their decisions. This study had a 2 (priming: unkind primes vs. neutral primes) x 2 (other focus: high vs. low) between-participants design. Participants were either subliminally primed

with unkind-related concepts or neutral concepts. In addition, participants were assigned to either the high or low other-focus condition. This was manipulated by using a translation task developed by Davis and Brock (1975), in which participants guess the meaning of foreign words using either first-person pronouns or third-person pronouns. We measured each participant's impression of their interaction partner as well as their level of cooperation in their allocation.

Results supported our hypotheses. In the low other-focus condition, the primes affected level of cooperation, but not impressions of the interaction partner. Participants were less cooperative when primed with the unkind words, but their impressions of their interaction partner were unaffected. In the high other-focus condition, the primes affected both level of cooperation and impressions of the interaction partner. Participants were less cooperative when primed with the unkind words, and they also perceived their interaction partner to be less kind. Mediation analyses showed that their allocations were mediated by their perceptions of the interaction partner. Thus, priming can both directly and indirectly affect behavior, depending on the level of other-focus.

Two additional studies replicated and extended these results using different situations (i.e., reciprocal and non-reciprocal dictator games), different primes (i.e., competition and cooperation primes), and an individual difference variable of other focus (i.e., communal orientation, Clark, et al., 1987). They illustrate that in games promoting high levels of other-focus (i.e., reciprocal dictator games), effects of primes on behavior are mediated by impressions of their interaction partner. In games with low levels of other focus (i.e., non-reciprocal dictator games), the effects of primes on behavior are *not* mediated by impressions of the interaction partner. They also find that the effects of the primes on behavior are mediated by perceptions of their interaction partner for individuals high, but not low, in communal orientation.

These studies show that behaviors traditionally assumed to be rational and deliberate can be non-consciously influenced by making cooperation/competition-related concepts more accessible. In support of Bargh's (2006) plea to outline the different pathways by which primes can affect social behavior, we demonstrated that primes can affect decisions in both direct and indirect ways depending on recipients' level of other-focus. This moderated mediation approach provides new and exciting insights into the multiple means through which accessible constructs can guide behavior as well as when each mechanism is likely to be in operation.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY
Variety, Expectations and Choice
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SESSION OVERVIEW

Consumer's choices, and the satisfaction consumers derive from these choices, are often dependent on the expectations they hold. This session uses consumer expectations as a foundation for investigating the role of product assortment and variety-seeking in consumer choice and satisfaction. Building on the existing literature (Chernev 2003a; Iyengar and Lepper 1999; Iyengar and Lepper 2000; Kahn and Wansink 2004), this session investigated the role of variety and consumer expectations as they affect the choices consumers make, the satisfaction consumers derive from their choices, as well as the satisfaction consumers derive from choices made on their behalf. The session unified the findings of the individual papers into a broader framework for conceptualizing the psychological mechanisms underlying the impact of consumer expectations on satisfaction and choice in a variety of different decision contexts. Specifically, the session addressed the following issues:

Research presented by Chernev and Hamilton examines how assortment size influences consumer choice among assortments and, in particular, how assortment attractiveness moderates this process. They propose that, based on consumer expectations of the attractiveness of the options comprising the available assortments, the preference for larger assortments is likely to decrease as the overall attractiveness of both assortments increases. The data from five experiments offer converging evidence in support of this prediction.

In the second paper, research by Diehl and Poyner examines the role of consumer expectations when choosing from assortments. In particular, they argue that larger assortments raise consumers' expectations of how well options from an assortment will fit their preferences. Higher expectations may give rise to negative disconfirmation when searching a particular assortment thus reducing satisfaction with any chosen option. Findings from three studies show that larger assortments can lead to lower satisfaction due to expectation-disconfirmation.

In the third paper, three experiments by Aggarwal and Botti investigate the role of expectations in consumer evaluations of an option from a given assortment that is self-chosen versus the same option if it were chosen for the consumer by the marketer. In particular, they argue that consumers' satisfaction with choice is a function of their expectations about the motivations driving the marketers' decision. These motivations, in turn, are inferred using the norms guiding the consumer-marketer relationship; satisfaction will be lower in the context of exchange relationships, which are based on the principle of *quid pro quo*, than in communal relationships, which are based on the principle of mutual concern for well-being.

At the end of the session, the discussion leader, Barbara Kahn, led a research dialogue to integrate the individual presentations into a more general framework. In doing so, she engaged the audience participants in a discussion aimed at facilitating a broader understanding of the role of consumer expectations in shaping preferences and satisfaction.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“Too Much of a Good Thing? Option Attractiveness and Assortment Choice”

Alexander Chernev, Northwestern University
Ryan Hamilton, Northwestern University

On a daily basis, consumers are faced with decisions that involve choosing among sets comprised of multiple options, such as choosing among the assortments offered by different retailers. These assortments may vary in size, defined by the number of available alternatives. Assortments may also vary in terms of the attractiveness of the options of which they are comprised. In this research, we examine how assortment size influences consumer choice among assortments and, in particular, how assortment attractiveness moderates this process.

Most prior assortment research has focused on understanding consumer decision processes associated with making choices from a given assortment (Hoch, Bradlow, and Wansink 1999; Kahn and Wansink 2004; Schwartz et al. 2002; for a review see Broniarczyk forthcoming). Relatively little research has examined how consumers make choices among assortments prior to selecting a particular option from one of the available assortments. In particular, the extant research on choice among assortments has focused on issues such as the role of preference uncertainty (Kahn and Lehmann 1991), choice set structure (Gourville and Soman 2005; Sood, Rottenstreich, and Brenner 2004), and decision focus (Chernev 2006). The question of how the attractiveness of the options comprising the available assortments influences consumer preferences for these assortments has remained largely overlooked by prior research.

Building on the notion that choice among assortments is a function of the balance of their advantages and disadvantages, we propose that the choice of an assortment is a function of the relative attractiveness of the options comprising the available assortments. In particular, we argue that when choosing among assortments, consumers aim to minimize the cost-benefit tradeoffs associated with selecting a particular assortment. Thus, on the benefit side, consumers expect larger assortments to offer a greater variety of options, which increases the probability of a better fit between a consumer's preferences and the available choice alternatives. On the cost side, consumers choosing from larger assortments might expect to expend greater cognitive effort in evaluating choice alternatives and have greater difficulty in making a choice.

In this context, we argue that the expected advantage of the larger assortment with respect to the smaller one is greater when assortment attractiveness of both assortments is low rather than when it is high. This proposition is based on the concavity of the value function, which implies that an increase in an object's value on a particular attribute will be associated with a decrease in this attribute's marginal utility, and, as a result, the perceived difference between two alternatives will decrease with the increase of the options' overall attractiveness.

The validity of this prediction is tested in a series of five empirical studies. The first experiment examines the impact of option attractiveness on choice among assortments by asking participants to choose between large or small assortments in a

variety of different consumer situations. This experiment documents that smaller assortments are more likely to be chosen when the attractiveness of the options in both sets is high rather than when it is low. In fact, the data show not only a decrease in the relative share of the larger assortment, but in some cases, also a preference reversal in which the choice share of the smaller assortment was actually greater than that of the larger assortment. Building on these findings, the second experiment lends further support to the experimental predictions by showing that the predicted relationship between attractiveness and assortment choice by matching the items in the choice sets with participants' previously revealed subjective preferences. The data from this experiment are consistent with the findings from experiment 1.

The third experiment directly tests the cost-benefit theory of the impact of option attractiveness on assortment choice by examining how the magnitude of the difference in the sizes of the larger and the smaller assortments moderates the impact of assortment attractiveness on choice. We argue that when choosing among assortments comprised of more attractive options (relative to assortments comprised of less attractive options), the marginal benefits of the extra options present only in the larger assortment are likely to be smaller, weakening the preference for the larger assortment. Experiment 3 tests this prediction by asking participants to choose between either more attractive or less attractive assortments of varying sizes. To illustrate, in this experiment, some participants chose between assortments of 9 and 18 options (small relative size difference) and other participants chose between assortments of 9 and 54 options (large relative size difference). The data show that not only was the smaller assortment more likely to be chosen when both assortments were comprised of relatively attractive options, but also that this effect was more pronounced when the relative size difference between the assortments was greater.

The fourth experiment examines how decision focus moderates the impact of option attractiveness on choice among assortments. Prior research has argued that the cognitive costs associated with choices from larger assortments are likely to be more salient when consumers shift their focus from the task of choosing an assortment to the task of choosing an item from the selected assortment. The results indicate that the assortment attractiveness effect reported in the first two studies is stronger when consumers are asked to justify their choice of an item from the selected assortment than when they are asked to justify their choice of an assortment.

In order to gain more insight into the decision processes underlying the observed effects, the fifth experiment examines respondents' information-search patterns. The results are consistent with the other experiments and show that the impact of assortment attractiveness on choice also extends to search behavior: participants were more attracted to larger rather than smaller assortments only when the attractiveness of the available assortments was low; when assortment attractiveness was high, the pattern of initial preferences was reversed in favor of smaller assortments.

This research demonstrates that choice among assortments is a function of the perceived attractiveness of these assortments, such that the relative preference for larger assortments is likely to decrease as the overall attractiveness of both assortments increases. In fact, the data show not only a decrease in the relative share of the larger assortment, but in some cases, also a preference reversal in which the choice share of the smaller assortment was actually greater than that of the larger assortment.

“Great Expectations?! Assortment Size, Expectations and Satisfaction”

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Cait Poyner, University of South Carolina

A long line of research demonstrates that consumers value greater selection (e.g., McAlister and Pessemier 1982) and that they react negatively to restrictions imposed on their selection (e.g., Fitzsimons 2000). Recently, however, researchers have demonstrated that consumers can experience too much choice. This stream of research shows that larger selections decrease purchase likelihood (Iyengar and Lepper 2000) as well as decision confidence (Chernev 2003b) and proposes choice overload and heightened decision complexity as the underlying drivers.

We demonstrate an additional downside of larger assortments, lowering satisfaction with the chosen option, and establish the underlying mechanism causing this effect. We suggest that larger assortments raise consumers' expectations of the degree of preference match they can achieve. Higher expectations can lead to greater disconfirmation when searching an assortment, thus reducing satisfaction with the choice. Findings from three studies show that larger assortments can lead to lower satisfaction due to expectation-disconfirmation over and above the effects of information overload.

Study 1 used a principal-agent task where participants imagined choosing a birthday card for a male coworker (see Diehl, Kornish, and Lynch 2003). Participants imagined going to a store that featured a selection of either 25 or 250 birthday cards (between subjects). All participants then saw the same, single option, pre-tested to be perceived as a good option. Participants were told they had chosen this card and were asked to indicate their satisfaction with the card as well as the extent of expectation-disconfirmation they experienced. Replicating prior findings, participants were less satisfied with the target card when this card ostensibly came from the larger as opposed to the smaller assortment. Moreover, the larger assortment led to significantly greater negative disconfirmation than did the smaller assortment, and expectation-disconfirmation mediated the effect of assortment size on satisfaction.

Study 1 isolates our proposed mechanism from any choice overload effect since all participants only saw a single option. Study 2 replicates the mediating effect of expectation-disconfirmation in a real choice situation, where participants actually experienced different assortment sizes. Study 2 asked participants to search and choose computer wallpaper for themselves. Before searching the assortment, participants indicated one of six categories from which they expected to choose. Participants wrote a brief description of their imagined wallpaper and also sketched a picture. Assortment size was manipulated between-subjects as either small (60) or large (300 wallpapers), with 10 or 50 wallpapers per category. Participants saw a list of all options, grouped by categories and identified by category and a number. Clicking on an option brought up a small thumbnail of the wallpaper. Participants searched as long and in any order they wanted. After choosing an option, they viewed their choice full screen, rated their satisfaction with the choice, choice difficulty, and their degree of expectation-disconfirmation.

Contrary to prior work on choice overload, assortment size did not affect perceived choice difficulty, perhaps due to the visual nature of the stimuli. Still, we statistically control for choice difficulty. Replicating study 1, participants were less satisfied if they chose from the larger assortment. Further, larger assortments led to greater expectation-disconfirmation than did smaller assortments and expectation-disconfirmation mediated the effect of size on satisfaction. Study 3 further teases apart the overload mecha-

nism from the expectation-disconfirmation mechanism we propose. We manipulate assortment size as well as the order of questions assessing satisfaction and overload. An overload account would suggest that asking participants to assess overload prior to rating satisfaction would prompt them to attribute at least parts of their negative state to the experience rather than the outcome, thus attenuating the negative effect of assortment size on choice satisfaction (Schwarz and Clore 1983). Our proposed mechanism, however, would predict no differential effect of question order on satisfaction: whether overload was assessed *a priori* or not, expectation-disconfirmation should still drive differences in satisfaction.

We test these predictions using a principal-agent task that asked participants to select a camcorder for work. Participants browsed a catalogue of 8 or 32 (between subjects) camcorders and made their selection. Participants either rated their satisfaction with their choice before rating how overwhelmed they felt or vice versa. As before, larger assortments decreased satisfaction with the chosen option, and here also increased feelings of overload. However, there was no interaction of size and question order, suggesting that asking about process dissatisfaction first did not alter outcome satisfaction. Further, assortment size had a significant effect on expectation disconfirmation, which in turn mediated the effect of size on satisfaction.

Recently, researchers have challenged the ideal that more choice is always desirable. Our work contributes to this stream by identifying an additional psychological mechanism triggered by choice abundance. By increasing consumers' expectations of what should be available and therefore what will be considered acceptable, consumers may grow more demanding and may become frustrated in an environment that seemingly offers a lot of choices, but still does not live up to their expectations.

“Do I Like It if You Choose for Me? The Influence of Relationship Norms on Consumer Satisfaction”

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Prior research has demonstrated that personally-made, as compared to externally-dictated, choices lead to greater task enjoyment, superior cognitive performances, and more positive affect (Brehm 1966; Festinger 1957; Langer 1975; Taylor and Brown 1988). Recent research, however, has found that cultural and social norms regulating interpersonal exchanges may moderate these beneficial effects of self-choice. The present research hypothesizes that the norms underlying different types of relationships between marketers and consumers moderate consumers' satisfaction with a self-chosen relative to a marketer-chosen outcome. This hypothesis draws on recent research suggesting that consumers' responses to the marketer's actions are a function of the relationship norms between the two (Aggarwal 2004; Fournier 1998). Two types of consumer-marketer relationships are examined: communal and exchange (Mills and Clark 1982). In a communal relationship, people give benefits to relationship partners due to a concern for their well-being. Thus, if in a communal relationship the marketer makes the choice, it is expected that it would have acted in the best interest of the consumer; consequently, the consumer is likely to be satisfied with this choice. Conversely, an exchange relationship is based on the principle of *quid pro quo*. People know that benefits are given in order to get something in return. As such, if in an exchange relationship the choice is made by the marketer, consumers will expect the marketer to be motivated by its own interests, and they will be less likely to be satisfied with it. We therefore hypothesize that the consumers' satisfaction with a marketer-chosen outcome will be lower compared to a self-chosen outcome when they have

an exchange relationship than when they have a communal relationship with the marketer.

Study 1 was a 2 (relationship: communal vs. exchange) x 2 (choice: self-made vs. marketer-made) between subject design, and scenario descriptions were used to manipulate the participants' relationship with a hypothetical bookstore. Participants were told that as part of a promotion the bookstore was giving away one of four novels to its customers. In the self-choice condition, participants selected a novel from this assortment, while in the marketer-choice condition the novel was chosen by the bookstore from the same assortment. Results showed that exchange participants experienced lower satisfaction with the marketer-chosen book than with the self-chosen book, while communal participants perceived no difference in satisfaction across the choice conditions. A thought protocol analysis provided further evidence by showing that when the choice was made by the marketer, exchange participants, relative to communal ones, expected the marketer to act more in its own interest and less in the consumers' interest.

Study 2 was designed to replicate these results and to rule out a reactance-based alternative explanation according to which participants in an exchange relationship would evaluate the marketer-chosen outcome less positively, not because of different attributions about the marketer's motivations but because of the greater perceived violation of their freedom to choose. To test this rival explanation, we allowed participants to either choose the novel themselves or let the marketer choose it. If the reactance account were driving the results of study 1, then we should observe a weaker or even a reverse effect in study 2, especially for participants in the exchange condition. However, if the attribution based account were the primary driver, then the results of study 2 should replicate those of study 1. Results yielded an interaction effect mirroring those of study 1 consistent with an attribution rather than a reactance explanation.

It was somewhat surprising that the exchange non-choosers experienced lower satisfaction than choosers in spite of their voluntary decision to relinquish the choice to the marketer. Could they have not foreseen this lower satisfaction, in which case they should not have relinquished their right to choose in the first place? It is likely that by providing the participants information about the four alternatives we gave them the opportunity to form 'own' preferences. When these preferences were not consistent with the marketer's choice, participants may have tried to explain this mismatch by using the relationship norms. Thus, communal consumers may have interpreted the mismatch as evidence of the marketer's knowledge of another, equally satisfying option, whereas exchange consumers may have interpreted the same mismatch as evidence of its selfish motivation.

Study 3 tests this explanation. Prior work on Deviance Regulation Theory (Blanton and Christie 2003) suggests that when people behave counter-normatively, they put greater weight on the positive features of that behavior. Given that exchange participants who gave up choice behaved counter-normatively, we expect them to evaluate the marketer-chosen alternative more positively if they cannot compare it with their own preferences. Thus, in this study we replicated the design of study 2 except that there was no information given about the four alternatives. Consistent with our hypothesis, we found a reversal of the effect for exchange non-choosers—who evaluated the final outcome more positively than exchange choosers—whereas no significant difference was observed between communal participants in the two relationship conditions. Further, this interaction was mediated by participants' expectations about the marketer's motivations, suggesting that these inferred attributions drove the differences.

Overall, consumers' satisfaction with the outcome of a self-chosen versus a marketer-chosen outcome depends on the norms underlying the consumer-marketer relationship, and the resultant differences in attributions made by the consumers.

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To Add or Not To Add? The Effects of Add-ons on Product Evaluation

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

“Add-ons” come in many shapes and sizes. For example, restaurant menus often list numerous toppings, condiments, spices, or other ingredients that patrons can add to a standard order. In the consumer electronics markets, manufacturers of goods such as digital cameras, portable music players, laptop computers, and video game consoles encourage consumers to “accessorize” with various types of plug-in modules, kits, expansion packs, and carrying cases. Similarly, car manufacturers sell accessory packages and extended warranties for most new vehicles; domestic airlines offer meal service and in-flight entertainment at additional cost to passengers; fitness centers charge separately for locker rental, towel service, and many supervised group activities; telephone companies market a range of value-added services such as caller ID, call waiting, and call forwarding; and so on across a wide variety of industries.

Given the widespread appeal of add-ons, it is becoming increasingly important to understand their impact on purchase behavior. From a marketing standpoint, the literature on product assortment suggests that consumers can benefit from the availability of add-on features as long as these provide greater variety in choice (Bayus and Putsis 1999; Hoch, Bradlow, and Wansink 1999; Kahn 1998). Another suggested advantage of add-ons is to offset competition on the sale of base products (Ellison 2005; Verboven 1999). While these perspectives certainly deal with some of the key issues underlying the popularity of add-ons, we believe that add-ons are also likely to influence the inferential process consumers engage in when evaluating product information. Recent studies have demonstrated that while people have a hard time assessing products in absolute terms, they are often attentive to relative values and respond to a variety of contextual cues (Ariely, Loewenstein, and Prelec 2003, 2006; Bettman, Luce, and Payne 1998; Tversky and Simonson 1993). The relevance of these findings becomes apparent when one considers the possibility that context effects are based on inferences about the marketplace (Wernerfelt 1995), and therefore that information from the mere presence (but not the purchase or use) of add-ons—their type, quality, etc.—may create a context that consumers use to form or update their preferences.

In the present research we develop this additional perspective. In particular, by characterizing the add-on space according to the type of augmentation supplied by the firm—*vertical* when the enhancement upgrades an existing attribute (e.g., extra memory for digital cameras), *horizontal* when the enhancement introduces a new feature (e.g., condiments for coffee)—we propose two independent effects: vertical add-ons influence product evaluation by inducing a reassessment of specific features while horizontal add-ons influence product evaluation by cuing inferences about overall product quality.

The objective of our studies is to demonstrate these effects and to specify conditions under which the presence of an add-on is beneficial or, more surprisingly, detrimental to product evaluation. In experiment 1 we show that offering an optional extension on an existing product attribute more attractive (a vertical add-on) can increase the reference level for that feature and, consequently, make the base product alone seem less appealing. Conversely, offering an optional reduction on an existing product attribute less attractive (a vertical “strip-down”) can decrease the reference level for that

feature and make the base product seem more appealing. A follow-up experiment demonstrates that both effects disappear when sufficient external information on appropriate attribute levels is provided.

In experiment 2, we turn our attention to horizontal add-ons and demonstrate that participants infer a positive correlation between the observed quality of the new feature and the unobserved quality of the base product, but that the effect is conditional on the perception of fit between the two objects. Finally, in experiment 3 we show that the negative effect of vertical add-ons and the positive effect of horizontal add-ons can occur on the same base product, a result which underscores the fact that not all the optional features that consumers may find inherently valuable should find their way into the marketplace. We conclude with a general discussion of the implications of our findings.

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Segmenting and Targeting American University Students to Promote Responsible Alcohol Use: A Case for Applying Social Marketing Principles

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Binge drinking at American colleges is widespread, and so are its consequences (Wechsler et al. 1994). Colleges, lawmakers, and surrounding communities have employed a variety of educational, legal, and skill-oriented programs over the last two decades to convince students to improve their drinking behaviors, but with limited success (Wechsler et al. 2002). The number of binge drinkers across 140 American campuses has remained steady since 1993. The campaigns have proven to be ineffective, perhaps because the campaign managers do not attempt to satisfy students' underlying need to drink, treat students as one undifferentiated group, and create homogeneous social change campaigns. To bring in a much needed target focus, this study employs social marketing principles. The author hopes that by segmenting students by their drinking habits and by profiling them by their reasons to drink, we would be able to evolve targeted social change solutions that effectively promote responsible alcohol use among university students.

An exploratory study of 37 freshmen and a survey among 294 freshmen and sophomores enrolled at a large mid-western university was conducted. Two alcohol-consumption behavior questions asked about "intention to consume a number of drinks in the next two-week period" and "frequency of intention to binge drink in the next two-week period." In addition to demographics, students were also asked questions related to Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control). Students were segmented based on the intended frequency to binge drink in the next two-week period. Four clusters emerged: responsible drinkers who do not intend to binge drink (23.5%), light binge drinkers who intend to binge drink once (25.2%), moderate binge drinkers who intend to binge drink two to three times (34.4%), and heavy binge drinkers who intend to binge drink four or more times in the next two-week period (17.0%). If students were not segmented by their drinking habits, the average frequency to binge drink for all students as well as binge-drinking students would have been similar to moderate binge drinkers.

Segments were profiled based on demographic and binge drinking related TPB variables. All segments had a sizeable representation of women (around 66%). In terms of ethnicity, fewer Caucasians were represented among responsible drinkers than the light binge drinkers. Responsible drinkers, light and moderate binge drinkers tended to live in dorms, while heavy binge drinkers tended to live in houses or apartments or private residence halls. Moderate and heavy binge drinkers had a higher membership in fraternities or sororities than responsible drinkers and light binge drinkers. Moderate binge drinkers and responsible drinkers reported higher religious intensity than heavy binge drinkers. TPB variables displayed consistent statistical differences among segments. In general, responsible drinkers differed from the other three segments.

Correlation was calculated among demographic and TPB variables with intention to drink in the next two-week period. Across segments, gender was positively correlated with drinking habits. Within each segment, men were likely to drink more than women. Among responsible drinkers, two attitude variables (useful and moral) were positively correlated with drinking habits. These variables had a negative mean score, and the negative usefulness

and moral association with drinking habits was having a desirable negative association with their drinking habits. Opinion of friends had a positive mean and was positively correlated with drinking habits. Finally, self-efficacy and presence of friends had a positive correlation with drinking habits of responsible drinkers. Similar to opinions of friends, presence of friends seemed to act as an encouragement to drink responsibly. This finding is contrary to the stereotype that friends only encourage drinking. Similarly, self-efficacy also played a positive role in promoting the responsible drinking habits among this segment.

Among light binge drinkers, opinions of friends, campus norms (percentage who drink same), and self-efficacy had a positive correlation with their drinking habits. Additionally, utility of binge drinking to socialize had a marginal positive relationship with drinking habits. Among moderate binge drinkers, religious intensity significantly negatively correlated with drinking habits. There was, however, a marginal negative relationship with morality to binge drink. Among both light and moderate binge drinkers, the association of the two campus norms scores with drinking habits revealed an interesting pattern. While the perception of students who drink the same had a positive association, the perception of students who drink more had a negative association. Students in these two segments are thus willing to drink at a level similar to others on the campus, but not more. Among heavy binge drinkers, self-efficacy had a positive significant correlation with their drinking habits. Perceived control was marginally associated.

Based on the group profiles, one can conclude that the primary reason why students drink is to socialize and conform with peers. Their beliefs about the utility of binge drinking to socialize were also built around perceptions that the majority of the students on the campus binge drink. Self-efficacy similarly had a strong association with drinking habits. Students seemed to have a strong sense of "I can do it" mentality with regard to their drinking habits. The exploratory study data also revealed that the perceptions about availability of alternative opportunities influence students' binge drinking habits. Alcohol-free alternatives are considered boring and not useful to socialize. Students believe that the only way to socialize on campus on weekend evenings is to visit a bar or a house party.

Based on the reasons to binge drink, appropriate social change strategies are proposed using Rothschild's (1999) framework of Education-Marketing-Law model. Among light binge drinkers, an education campaign rectifying social norms coupled with a marketing campaign promoting an alcohol-free dance club may be useful. Among moderate binge drinkers, it may be useful to run an education campaign that highlights the role of religion on practicing socially positive behaviors, and education campaign that rectifies social norms. Finally, for heavy binge drinkers it might be useful to promote counseling sessions based on personalized feedback and motivational interviewing.

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Money: A Bias for the Whole

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The role of money as a medium of exchange makes it an important element in consumer behavior and economic theories. However, little attention has been paid to how consumers perceive different currency denominations. We investigate if peoples' willingness to spend differs depending on whether they hold money in the form of a whole (a \$100 or \$50 bill) or in the form of parts (ten \$10 bills or ten \$5 bills). We report a consistent differential evaluation, which we call a 'bias for the whole', where people display less willingness to give up the whole (i.e., the bigger denomination) as compared to its constituent parts (i.e., monetarily equivalent smaller denominations) to acquire an object. The issue has both substantive economic importance (cash is used in \$1.3 trillion worth of retail transactions in the U.S. alone) and theoretical importance as such a bias violates the concept of descriptive invariance (Tversky, Sattath and Slovic 1988).

What is the underlying psychological process that might account for the bias for the whole? The Gestalt notion has been demonstrated in highly diverse domains ranging from summarized events (Ariely and Carmon 2000), extended experiences (Ariely and Zauberma 2003) and intertemporal choice (Loewenstein and Prelec 1993). We suggest that the bias for the whole occurs because money in the form of a whole possesses Gestalt properties of cohesion and economy and can be perceived and processed more rapidly than multiple bills. A single bill has a single interpretation of its value—e.g. a hundred dollars. On the other hand, an equivalent amount of money in parts (ten \$10 bills) does not possess these Gestalt properties as the parts retain their individual characteristics. Further, the parts can be combined together to form multiple value points—twenty, fifty or hundred dollars—hindering the processing of a unique overall meaning. Thus, money in the form of a whole is processed more fluently than the constituent parts. Past research has shown that processing fluency gives rise to positive affect (Bornstein and D'Agostino 1994). Thus, positive affect due to higher processing fluency results in a preference for money in the form of a whole.

We suggest that multiple bills combine to form multiple value points, hindering the processing of a unique overall value. Therefore, the more the value points, the larger will be the bias. Also, there is the alternate account of convenience. It could be argued that people prefer to spend with money in parts, so as to eliminate the clutter of carrying many bills of smaller denomination. Equivalent money in a larger denomination appears uncluttered and seems more convenient, reducing the willingness to part with it. To test this participants were either given a \$100 bill, five \$20 bills or a \$50, two \$20, and two \$5. The \$100 bill (the whole) formed just one value point. However for the remaining two conditions, while the amount of money and the total number of bills were the same, the five \$20 bills grouped together to form five different value points (\$20, \$40, \$60, \$80 and \$100) while the combination of \$50, two \$20 and two \$5 bills came together to form sixteen different value points (\$5, \$10, \$20, \$25, \$30, \$40, \$45, \$50, \$55, \$60, \$70, \$75, \$80, \$90, \$95, and \$100). Subsequently participants' willingness to buy three products was measured. Results were consistent with the proposed account. Participants with \$50, two \$20 and two \$5 indicated the highest willingness to buy, followed by participants with the five \$20, and participants with the \$100 bill were least

willing to buy the products. These results were inconsistent with the alternate account.

To demonstrate the role of processing fluency, in experiment 2 we primed either decreased or increased processing fluency with tasks that either had participants break whole objects into individual parts or group together parts to form whole objects. Priming grouping reduced the bias for the whole while priming breaking enhanced the bias for the whole. Affect ratings were also obtained and they showed that the influence of higher processing fluency on willingness to buy was mediated through positive affect.

Experiment 3 provided converging evidence for the role of processing fluency by moderating the bias for the whole with changes in stimulus familiarity. Past research has shown that stimulus familiarity increases its processing fluency (Whittlesea 1993). Thus, by increasing familiarity with smaller bills (which suffer from a lack of processing fluency), we were able to moderate this effect.

Experiment 4 explicated the role of affect. Using a misattribution paradigm (Reber, Schwarz and Winkielman 2004) the affective reactions arising due to processing fluency were rendered non-diagnostic, which in turn moderated the bias for the whole.

In sum, these findings suggest that money is not perceived as just a medium of exchange but as an object of evaluation in its own right, a finding of considerable interest to market-level theories as well as theories of individual consumer behavior.

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Shedding the Cocoon: A “Mortal Embodiment” Perspective of Organ Donation in Supporting and Enhancing Life

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores how potential female donors in the UK negotiate their ambivalent perceptions of cadaveric organ donation from a ‘mortal embodiment’ perspective. Specifically, we explore how the decision to dispossess body parts in the event of death challenges the notion of the body as the marker and annihilation of self under the contours of late modernity. Using a hermeneutic approach, multiple active interviews have been conducted with potential female donors, aged 21-30 who claim to harbour ambivalent perceptions towards organ donation. Through our ‘rich and thick data’ we reveal how potential donors actively rework socio-cultural constructs of the body by enacting various interpretive repertoires to make sense of their embodied self. We propose that the current organ donation promotional message of the “gift-of-life” should take into account the embodied self as an ongoing project of transitions and transformation that transcend biological death. Our paper therefore supports the research programs proposed by scholars of ‘Consumer Culture Theory’ and contributes to the recent call for ‘Transformative Consumer Research’.

INTRODUCTION

“Then, at the time of death, we shed this cocoon and are once again as free as the butterfly.”

-Elizabeth Kubler-Ross (1991), *On Life After Death*

The field of consumer research has reached its prime of life and increasingly academics are prompted to reflexively consider their roles in “*enhancing consumer welfare*”. The increasing interdependence between social agents within the discourse of consumption has led to an introspection to delve more deeply into the understanding of “*transformative consumer research*” (Mick 2006). This is exemplified by the recent establishment of the ACR Transformative Consumer Research task force where there is a call for

“investigations that are framed by a fundamental problem or opportunity, and that strive to respect, uphold, and improve life in relation to the myriad conditions, demands, potentialities and effects of consumption.” (Mick 2006: 2)

The task force identified organ donation as being one of the most pressing research agendas within “*transformative consumer research*”. In this paper, we reveal that the decision to become an organ donor is grounded within the broader sociocultural world that provides potential donors with a framework of meanings to negotiate their ambivalent perceptions towards cadaveric organ donation—further illuminating organ donation as a decision involving social interdependency.

This is reflected in the dominance of the “gift-of-life” discourse so prevalent within the promotional messages aiming to appeal to organ donors (Fox and Swazey 1992; Ohnuki-Tierney 1994). The meanings encoded within the “gift-of-life” discourse have intrinsically adopted a Judeo-Christian ideal of altruism, where potential donors are encouraged to donate the “gift-of-life” in the collective goal for common humanity (Ohnuki-Tierney

1994). Yet, the latest UK statistics indicate that while 90% of the population have expressed a willingness to donate their organs after their death, only 20% are registered on the NHS Organ Donor Register (BMA May 2004; UK Transplant 2004). Despite its altruistic connotation, Moloney and Walker (2002) argue that such hypothetical support expressed by potential donors tends to reflect the normative dimension of organ donation and fails to appreciate the existential tensions evoked by having to dispossess the embodied self through the act of organ donation (Robbins 1996).

Therefore to derive deeper understanding in encouraging organ donation, “*transformative consumer research*” needs to recognize potential donors as active interpretive agents, who are “*not simply consumers who are duped by medical ideology*” (Williams and Calnan 1996: 1632). There is a need to understand how potential donors’ interpretation processes unfold within their lifeworld. Our paper therefore supports the recent development of *Consumer Culture Theory* or CCT (Arnould and Thompson 2005)—CCT scholars contend that consumers are “*embodied interpretive agents*” who actively negotiate their consumption experience in the fashioning of their identity projects (Arnould and Thompson 2005; Thompson and Hirschman 1998; Patterson and Elliot 2002).

Despite the increasing interest in exploring the theory of ‘embodiment’ (e.g. Joy and Venkatesh 1994; Thompson and Hirschman 1998), the notion of “mortal embodiment” remains a relatively uncharted terrain within consumer research. The imminence of death becomes a constant threat, which reveals the ultimate futility of embodied projects within consumerist societies (Shilling 1993). Within the context of organ donation, potential donors are confronted with having to contemplate the meanings of *embodying mortality* and to consider dispossessing their embodied self in the event of death. The notion of embodied self poses a significant challenge for the altruistic ‘gift-of-life’ discourse—where transplantable body parts are regarded as disembodied “social gifts” devoid of identity (Lock 2002; Ohnuki-Tierney 1994).

This paper seeks to contribute to the exploration of organ donation from a ‘mortal embodiment’ perspective—specifically how the embodiment of mortality shapes ambivalence surrounding cadaveric organ donation among young British female potential donors. In so doing, it offers an alternative critical appraisal of the “gift-of-life” discourse ingrained within the marketing of organ donation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

We will critically review the literature concerning the existential contradictions of dispossessing the mortal body under the conditions of what Giddens (1991) calls late modernity. Specifically we will highlight how the decision to become a cadaveric organ donor is situated within the existential contradictions of *finitude* and *the continuity of self-identity*—which arise as a consequence of embodying mortality.

Dispossessing the Mortal Body in Late Modernity

Organ donation involves the decision of potential donors having to contemplate dispossessing their “*mortal body*” (Haddow 2000). This decision is rendered increasingly problematic in the

condition of late modernity¹—a post-traditional order in which modern trends have become radicalized (Williams and Bendelow 1998; Giddens 1991). The encroachment of modern technology within the consumerist landscape presents individuals with the possibility of exerting control over corporeal determinism (Bordo 1993) and to transform physical capital into symbolic capital (Shilling 1993; Bourdieu 1973). As a result, under the contours of late modernity, the body becomes increasingly malleable (Shilling 1993), plastic (Bordo 1993) and bionic (Synnott 1993). In other words, late modernity renders the body as the site for consumers to construct their self-identities. As Shilling (1993: 1-3) observes:

“The body becomes increasingly central to the modern person’s sense of self-identity...with the decline of religious frameworks which constructed and sustained existential and ontological certainties residing outside the individual, and the massive rise of the body in consumer culture as a bearer of symbolic value, there is a tendency for people in high modernity to place ever more importance on the body as constitutive of the self.”

Concurring, Belk’s theory of the extended self (1988, 1990)—where the body is conceived as the self or possession of the self—significantly challenges the biomedical notion of the body as machine—a metaphor which informs the “gift-of-life” discourse (Robbins 1996).

Additionally, Belk (1988; 1990) maintains that the centrality of body organs to the individual’s perceptions of self is related to *cathexis* (investment of emotional energy). Individuals in late modernity are increasingly involved in the *cathexis* of their body through various body projects (Thompson and Hirschman 1998; Shilling 1993), where the body becomes “a project to be worked at and accomplished as part of an individual’s self identity” (Shilling 1993:5).

Bauman (1992) argues that individuals engage in body projects—such as diet and exercise—as a strategy against mortality. He adds that “the more people prioritize issues relating to the self, the more they invest in their bodies, the more difficult it becomes for them to face up to and cope with their own demise” (Bauman 1992 in Williams and Bendelow 1998: 88).

The existential contradictions pertaining to the finitude and continuation of self-identity

As the self is increasingly embodied in late modernity, individuals are also becoming painfully subjected to “existential contradictions”—*the contradictory relation of human beings to nature, as finite creatures who are part of the organic world, yet set off against it* (Giddens 1991:55). According to Mick and Buhl (1992) existential concerns are represented by life themes, commonly born out of one’s sociocultural background and transformational experiences (e.g. death). Death becomes the ultimate betrayal of embodied projects—where the struggle between the “*time-binding mind*” and the “*time-bound fleshy casing*” (Bauman 1992) represent the ambivalence of embodying mortality. The paradox of embodying

corporeality lies with the obdurate fact that our material existence will one day come to an end (Seale 1998).

“The body is the ‘natural enemy’ of survival and the only uncontrived enemy. A paradox indeed—and the seat of perhaps the deepest and most hopeless of ambivalences: in the struggle aimed at the survival of the body, the would-be survivors meet the selfsame body as the arch-enemy.” (Bauman 1992: 36)

Consequently, organ donation requires potential donors to reflexively reorder the narratives of their self-identity (biography) around their ever-changing embodied self (Seale 1998; Thompson and Hirschman 1998). If the body is the marker of the self, it is not surprising that dispossessing body parts through organ donation conjures up ‘existential questions’² of *finitude* and the *continuity of self-identity* (Giddens 1991; Lock 2002) for potential donors.

Since one cannot “experience” death and live to talk about it (Bauman 1992), death is as Kierkegaard (1941) points out a “subjective death.” Subjective death is “*an absolute uncertainty*” (Shilling 1993: 184), which, by its very nature is difficult to conceive, as it is non-being (Tillich 1952). Thus, while biological death is a clinical certainty, “subjective death” raises questions about the persistence of the embodied self (Giddens 1991).

Giddens (1991) maintains that the subjective nature of death leaves room for the production of imaginary discourse (Lock 2002), where social constructions of the afterlife offer the possibility for individuals to transcend time and space. Lock contends that

“the departure of the soul, person, or spirit is socially constructed and depends on the conception of the relationship between the physical body and the soul or person.” (2002: 197)

Davies (1997) argues that this uncertainty and the fear of death have pushed humanity to generate a belief in an immortal soul, currently a dominant belief³ in Britain (Walter 1996; Davies 1997). This belief affirms the self as essentially indestructible (Tillich 1952). However, at the same time it evokes existential questions regarding the embodied status of the soul (Lock 2002). Additionally, Walter (2001) has found that the idea of reincarnation is being increasingly entertained in an emerging post-Christian West. The Western idea of reincarnation is appealing because it facilitates the continuity of the self beyond biological death through an infinite cycle of life trajectories (Lock 2002; Walter 2001).

Organ donation lies at the uneasy intersection between the materialist, rationalized view of death—“*when you are dead, you are dead*”—and the more ambiguous transcendental view of the afterlife. While it perhaps offer potential donors the chance to transcend biological death—through the symbolic resurrection of “living on” in the donor recipient’s body—(Lock 2002; Sharp 1995)—it leaves

²Existential questions “*concern basic parameters of human life*” (Giddens 1991: 55).

³However, it is important to note that most people do not hold fixed or coherent beliefs about the afterlife and are often weaving different ideas about it to fit into the circumstances of different contexts, life stage and experiences (Davies 1997; Walter 1996). The subjective nature of death means that afterlife beliefs are often a speculation and an expression of hope (Walter 1996; 2001) rather than a firm belief (though to a lesser extent among populations who hold firm religious beliefs).

¹We concur with Giddens (1991), where he refutes that we have moved into the epoch of postmodernity where we witness the collapse of grand-narratives (Lyotard 1979). Grand narratives such as the self and various social institutions (e.g. medical, religion) have not become redundant; rather they have become increasingly reflexive and radicalized under the contours of late modernity.

many unanswered questions about the status of the (dis)embodied 'self'.

Our review of the literature stresses the centrality of understanding the "human dimension" (Belk 1990) of organ donation through 'mortal embodiment'. This perspective posits that the "gift-of-life" discourse needs to recognize the

"shifting sand of sentiment regarding the proper disposal of bodies after death; a multi-layered concoction of religious, quasi-religious and superstitious beliefs that contradict the mind/body dichotomy and assert that the body is more than simply the sum of its physical parts...(These) confirm the importance of recognizing the embodiment of social, cultural and spiritual values." (Robbins 1996:191) [emphasis in original]

METHODOLOGY

In recognition of the polysemic meanings surrounding organ donation as being embedded within the human and cultural context (O'Connell 1996), we have adopted a hermeneutic-phenomenological approach (Thompson *et al.* 1994). This approach enabled us to become immersed in our participants' field of perception (Daymon and Holloway 2002) and to understand the contextualization of potential donors' embodied perceptions (Thompson *et al.* 1994)—since their backgrounds provide participants with a frame of reference to actively construct a personalized narrative using symbolic metaphors⁴ about their body and more specifically about organ donation (e.g. the gift-of-life message).

Accordingly, we adopted an active interviewing technique (Holstein and Gubrium 1995), enabling us to move beyond participants' superficial views of organ donation. The tenet of the active interview presumes participants to be active narrators who, together with the researcher, explore possible interpretive repertoires and experiential narratives—thereby enabling the participants to move beyond the minimalist level of interpretations (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). This has proven to be a particularly useful method to explore topics that are not casually topical, but socially relevant such as organ donation.

Multiple active interviews, of approximately 4 hours each, were conducted with 14 female potential organ donors, aged 21-30, who harbour ambivalent perceptions towards organ donation—generating extremely 'rich' and complex data. Participants were recruited using snowball sampling (Miles and Huberman 1994). All the interviews were audiotaped, transcribed verbatim, and analysed using the NVivo software. *Intratext* analysis was conducted, where individual transcripts were analysed in their entirety to gain a sense of the whole (Giorgi 1989 in Thompson 1997). Emerging themes are isolated as meaning units (Giorgi 1985) for further analysis against the participants' biographical particulars and sociocultural constructs of the body. We then conducted an *intertext* analysis, where we looked for contradictions across different interviews and the literature (Thompson 1997). NVivo eased the interaction between these interpretive cycles, enabling us to explore the countervailing meanings concerning organ donation, in a more holistic manner.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Our analysis reveals the emergence of multiple interpretive

repertoires, which expose the limitations of the Cartesian philosophy underpinning the "gift-of-life" message. This has been analyzed in greater depth elsewhere. Participants' narratives are marked by ambivalence and tensions which transgress the boundaries between the (1) Body As the Embodiment and Disembodiment of Self (2) Life and Death (3) Human and Non-Human (4) Nature and Culture and (5) Self and Other. In this paper we concentrate on the first theme (1) how the decision to dispossess the body in the event of death challenges the notion of the body as the marker and annihilation of self-identity—illustrated through the 'rich and thick' narratives of 6 participants.⁵

Willingness to Dispossess the Lived Body

In this study, participants seem to assume a strong body-self integrity which they identify as an impediment to organ donation. Participants foster relationship(s) with the lived bodies through the *cathexis* of body projects (Belk 1988; Shilling 1993). By enacting culturally familiar symbolic metaphors, participants illustrate how they form relationships with their bodies and how the notion of the embodied self has shaped their ambivalence towards organ donation as Estelle explains below:

"I just think it depends on how you see your body. If you are like, the body is just a shell, no part of me, then will be no problem at all being like, "oh I'll give them parts." That's absolutely fine. I am not that one-sided. I am more mixed. And like obviously, if you are a person who is like, "no, my body is my temple. It has looked after me really well." Then I can fully understand why obviously you wouldn't want to give your parts to someone else. I think people find it harder to answer that question just because we don't fully talk about death and don't fully understand about death." (Estelle, Age 21)

Here, Estelle locates her ambivalence as a potential donor within two opposing interpretive repertoires drawing on cultural metaphors such as *the body as a shell* and *the body as temple* (Belk 1988) to reinforce the centrality of the personhood ingrained within the mortal body. Estelle's narrative demonstrates that organ donation is imaginable from a disembodied perspective where it is devoid of the self (Lock 2002; Sharp 1995).

Late modernity presents participants with a vista of lifestyle choices to fashion their embodied self (Thompson and Hirschman 1998; Shilling 1993). For example participants are actively engaged in *self-care regimes* (dieting and exercising), *preventative health regime* (complementary medicine), *performance arts, sports* as well as *clothing*. Body projects enable them to participate in the world (Csordas 1994) and provide them with a meaning of life. As Sophie explains:

"Cause I feel that my body is me. So I express myself through everything I do with my body isn't it? At the end of the day, this is my body. This is how I am. This is what I am. And life and

⁴Symbolic metaphors are exemplary images or events that convey a nexus of assumptions, concerns, values and meanings that systematically emerge throughout the interview dialogue (Thompson *et al.* 1994)

⁵In order to present a thick analysis of participants' narratives, we have selected 6 participants whose account of embodiment and organ donation represent the theme of this paper—i.e. how the relationships they foster with their lived body impinge on their perceptions of the (dis)embodied nature of the afterlife. Participants have identified this theme to be salient in their ambivalence towards organ donation. Due to space limitations, we have decided to present the narratives of 6 participants to reflect the richness and depth of the data in fulfillment of the hermeneutic approach we adopted (Thompson 1997).

everything. But this is my body. This is me... This is my body, I don't want anybody that I don't want, invading my body." (Sophie, Age 23)

The recurrent view among most of the participants who engage in body projects, is the perception of 'if you look after the body, it will look after you'- thereby engendering the partnership between them and their bodies. As a result, this investment becomes an obstacle for them to confront the prospect of mortality—supporting the work of Williams and Bendelow (1998). Consequently organ donation comes to be perceived as a threat of disembodiment the self as portrayed by Carmen's narrative below:

"Definitely, again, it (the body) is your possession. The more you use it, the more you value it, the more prize possession it becomes, the less you want it harmed, or taken apart, or damaged or illness to come to you. So it could very much be connected with me not yet having an organ donation card because it is my body that I am maintaining, engineering and living in." (Carmen, Age 21) [emphasis added]

Carmen's narrative illustrates the way in which she resists the "gift-of-life" discourse, by actively weaving-into a personalized narrative-the contrasting symbolic metaphor of the *Body as Machine* and the *Body as Possessions* (Belk 1988). Carmen describes how her body has become her prized possession (*Body as Self*) through the cathexis of Body Projects. Organ donation "harms" and "damages" her prized body, and thus we can begin to understand why it becomes difficult for her to let go of her lived body-which she has mastered like a machine. Similarly, Sophie's life project has come to be intimately integrated with body projects:

"Well because obviously I am worried about fat and stuff. I have to like, get rid of all that. I have tried to make an effort with my body. I have tried to look after it. And I tried to maintain it as well as it can be. I feel like... because I have done that throughout my whole life, whatever age I decided to go. That you know... at the end of it, that is what I have done. That is my achievement to keep my body or go on as well as possible or whatever. And then to have it taken away, I wouldn't be happy. Yeah I would be kind of upset if they take my bits away... I have always wanted to be the way I want it to be and I don't want people to invade it. All that. And I think that has a big impact on what I do when I die. Even when I am dead... sounds really stupid but I still want my body to be me when I die. And I know it is going to disappear or whatever but I still, when I die, I want my body to stay as me." (Sophie, Age 23) [emphasis added]

Sophie's relationship with her embodied self is engendered by vigilantly working to 'maintain' and 'keep' her body the way she 'wants it to be.' She perceives organ donation as not only invading her body, but invading her 'self'. When contemplating the eventual disintegration of her body, Sophie is adamant that her body should be buried as a 'whole' as body integrity symbolizes the continuity of her embodied self—"I want my body to stay as me."

However, the control over the body does not always foster a close relationship between the body and the self. For participants who have developed an eating disorder, embodying the anorexic self binds them to the body in an ambivalent relationship as Neve's narrative demonstrates:

"Logically when you think about it, it seems reasonable to me that...because of the way I viewed my body and the way I really

kind of hate it, surely I'd want to get rid of it. And I'd be like...cut it up. Have what you want. But because it is so important to me and because it affects my life so much, that's why I am still really tied to it....My body is like my worst enemy but at the same time, I am pretty close to it cause it does affect my life in a really strong way" (Neve, Age 21) [our emphasis].

Neve views her body as an enemy (she refers to her body as "it"), with her mind holding a privileged position over it. Yet having to exercise unprecedented control over her body has meant that such a bond, albeit negative, remains difficult for Neve to relinquish. This echoes Bordo's (1993) observation of anorexic women where their ability to exert total mastery over their body becomes a symbol of accomplishment and independence and therefore a source of pride. While Neve perceives her existence as being chained to her 'unruly' flesh, Cyd—a recovered bulimic perceives the ability to control her body as an ally (friend) in the most difficult time of her life. The body, thus, becomes instrumental for Cyd to make sense of her self-identity. For Cyd, the body is at once an object and an extended-self (friend). Cyd describes:

"I wasn't happy with my body weight and my body, and how I look and stuff. And I think at that time in your life (adolescence), you don't feel in control of a lot of things. And so it starts with, "oh well. I can use this to lose a bit of weight." And then it turns into, "this is something I can control.".... Most aspect of my life is through this thing...it's erm...it became like a friend. It's like a thing... that's your thing. I'm not really sure why...I think it's...that's why. Because it was something I can control and what's going on around me were...my parents didn't have a lot of money and we moved and gone through that big upheaval of going to the States and...it was all really chaotic.... Because in a lot of sense, yes, the body is the enemy because you are trying to get rid of certain part of it that you don't like. Yeah. So it is the control aspect of it and the fact that you got control of it, that's the thing that become like a friend.... I want to end my life whole. And I think that's a big thing for me as well. I don't want anybody to take anything from me. I would like to die as I am and then, whatever happens, happen after that...I don't know what I really think (of organ donation). I think part of it might have to do with the fact that I saw that I have worked hard...for my body and the weight it is now and looked after it in the last few years. So I want it all (low tone). It is MINE (laugh)." (Cyd, Age 21)

Cyd insists that her body should remain intact in the event of death as her body has not only become an embodied project, but is also a friend to her in life. Therefore dispossessing her organs is tantamount to dispossessing a friend.

Although not all participants in this study engage in body projects, organ donation unsettles the existential questions regarding the *finitude* and *perceived continuity of the embodied self* (Thompson and Hirschman 1998; Giddens 1991). Organ donation requires participants to reorient their self-narratives by projecting into the future trajectory (Turley 1997) and construct imaginary discourse concerning the nature of (dis)embodiment in the afterlife (Lock 2002). This will now be discussed.

Finitude and Perceived Continuity of the Embodied Self

The subjective nature of death (Kierkegaard 1941) enables participants to explore and elaborate on various imaginary repertoires concerning the *finitude* and *perceived continuity of self-*

identity. Thus the ethereal realm becomes the site of constant negotiation between embodiment and disembodiment. Contemplating this, Carmen maintains:

“But when it comes to giving away your parts or saying you would after you die, it is a little difficult for people to, well for me to kind of like comprehend... Because of the view that when you die, you leave your body behind and your soul goes to heaven...erm or hell... Well it is difficult because I still see people... OK my vision of heaven still has people in the same embodiment as they were on the earth. But the actual...but the body doesn't disappear. It must stay on this earth and be dealt with in whatever way it is chosen to be dealt with. I didn't list organs to be taken out the day before being buried or burnt. There is a danger of, “do we need it?” Because on the one hand, it is left behind, on the other, “what do you have to live in, you know in the next life?” Or are we like reincarnated and come back as something else or in another body? No idea and if it is unknown, it is hard to make a decision.” (Carmen, Age 21)

Here Carmen is expressing the difficulties in comprehending the persistence of the embodied self in the afterlife. Carmen's speculations to remain embodied in the afterlife is not surprising as her body is a vehicle for her to experience the world while alive (Csordas 1994)—thus it becomes difficult to imagine a disembodied existence despite the “evidence” that our material existence is subjected to biological disintegration. Organ donation compels the participants to make a decision away from the locus of death (Horton 1991). Consequently, the ‘subjective’ nature of death (Tillich 1952) produces the interpretive repertoires where participants juggle between the *materialist* view (Walter 1996), which perceives the ultimate finitude for the embodied self, and the *transcendence* view—as Estelle's narrative illustrates:

“See that's the hang-up. Because when you die, is there a thereafter? Which there probably isn't? Erm...it doesn't matter anyway. But it is just the fact that because you have to make the decision when you are still needing the parts, I think that's the hardest thing. It's like, obviously, when you pass away, you don't need them. They are just objects that are no good being still in this body of yours. But when you are like, “oh my heart is actually beating now,” it is hard to think about giving it away because you are still picturing it as something that's needed for yourself type thing. Do you see what I mean? You can't picture it as being something you could give away. You think you need it forever which you don't.” (Estelle, Age 21)

Organ donation is conceivable from a materialist point of view as the embodied self is diminished—so at the point of death, donated organs can be objectified as merely biological entities (*just objects that are no good*). Estelle denotes that one's existence is reliant on one's embodied senses—therefore to reflect on the possibility of dispossessing her still-beating heart is symbolic to the annihilation of the self, forever engulfed in the void of nothingness. Estelle's anxiety of nothingness ensues in her speculation of the possibility of transcendence where retaining specific organs which embody her ‘self’ may ensure her continual existence in the ‘afterlife’ as she explains:

“And I just think the whole idea of there being nothing...the whole idea of nothingness is horrible. Because it is just like you are...you are no more. We are in a world where there is

everything everywhere. There is like now... (your) senses rely on it... Erm... Cause I don't really think there is a next life...not anymore...remember I said I did when I was younger. It will just be the one, the organs that mean the most to me that I'll have the most hang-ups about. I will still be a bit eerie if other parts of me are taken. But I don't think I would need the other parts as much as the ones (that's important to me). I won't be me anymore would I, if I pass away? So it is really confusing. That's why it is so hard because you are having to talk about a condition that you are only in when you are in it.” (Estelle, Age 21)

Estelle's narrative supports Belk's (1988) theory of extended self which argue that not all body parts are equally central to the self. Like Estelle, Kierra argues that the heart acquires cultural currency as a symbol of the ‘self’ (Manning Stevens 1997). Kierra postulates that the symbolic meanings attached to specific organs are culturally constructed. Therefore retaining the heart becomes symbolic to preserving the essence of the self.

“So you know... and you are dead, so in the afterlife, you may not need bits that don't...don't know...it all becomes...it all kind of become a bit silly. It does. I can hear myself and thinking, “God, what are you saying, woman?” ...but yeah, I know that I need everything to function now and I know that I need my eyes just as much as I need the toes for balancing or whatever. And one (organ) is slightly more important than the other. I guess it is in terms of identity and...because you know, culture kind of states that these organs are associated with identity and personality, which is internalized by you as the member of society. I think...you know, heart, you associate with identity, and heart that you associate with soul...but then that's stupid because you can't live without your liver you know. And it always...I don't know...I don't know what to say really.” (Kierra, Age 24)

Preserving organs perceived to embody the self is also essential for Kierra to attain a form of closure and resolution, thereby releasing the soul from the cocoon of the body. Kierra witnessed the passing of her Grandmother in which the discolourization of her body was perceived as the releasing of her soul (*she wasn't there anymore*). Kierra has also had a spiritual encounter where she saw butterflies landing on the portrait of her deceased Grandfather, where the vicar at the funeral told her that the butterflies were her Grandfather's soul taking flight. These experiences enable Kierra to weave together the ideas of the transmigration of the soul and reincarnation—supporting the work of Walter (1996, 2001) and Kubler-Ross (1991)—where the soul is perceived to go through stages like the metamorphosis of a butterfly. Kierra continues:

“I think being a donor, that doesn't have a final resolution at the end of someone's life...You don't have a kind of release or closure, or you are out of this world, it is always like you are in a kind of limbo, if you know what I mean... if there was an afterlife, whether my spirit will be whole without my heart. Whereas if it was a kidney or something, yeah, have it. No question asked. But brain and heart and eyes and things I feel very closely to my personal being, I am not sure of it. You know my Granddad kind of disappeared into butterflies and things. I want to get to that stage. And if I give it to somebody else, does it mean I will get there or not... So, I think, in order to get there, you need to go through certain stages like erm... your body is the only part left of you, isn't it? Your dead body...you may wander off and be a little ghost somewhere, looking like

you, and leave your body, like I felt with my Gran (Grandmother) maybe. She wasn't there anymore. Maybe she is herself, somewhere else. But then if someone took her heart, would she still be there? Would she still be Gran? Would my Gran be living in the body of somebody else? I'd be happy to know that the heart had gone and saved somebody. That's great. But I'd be worried that my Gran wouldn't be where she needed to be. I am not quite sure how I'd feel about it. I don't think I ever will be. I'll be happy that she saves someone but worry for her that she wouldn't be wherever she needs to be with all her bits (Laugh)." (Kierra, Age 24)

Kierra's narrative helps us to better understand her perceptions towards organ donation. For her the way in which the dead body is treated—such as the removal of organs—may interfere with the transmigration of the soul, subjecting it to a state of limbo. For Kierra, then, donating her organs threatens the coherent narrative (Giddens 1991) of her 'self' in the afterlife.

Kierra's thoughts are similar to those of the other participants, who believe that the body needs to be whole in order for it to be reunited with the soul. Accordingly the marring of the case/vessel (Belk 1990) through organ donation prevents the soul re-entering the body to create a united 'self'. Explaining the need for her body to be 'whole' in life and death, Neve states:

"I don't want my body to be tampered with in any way. It is just kind of like.....I know people when you die, like, the soul is released from your body, cause in that sense, the soul is literally just like.....sorry the body in that way is like just a case for your soul to live in. But at the same timecause I really believe obviously in the spirits like I say before and ghosts and stuff and the afterlife.....it is almost like if my body is not in the ground completely whole and it is been tampered with, then I won't be able to come back like even if it is in the spirit world. I will be missing...say...it is a head or a liver or stuff like that.....say if I am in heaven or my spirit is in heaven, I won't be me and I would be missing if I don't go into the ground as a whole." (Neve, Age 21)

For participants, the journey of the soul is far from a linear progression, but a circular transition occupying the liminal space of birth and death. For example, Carmen maintains:

"Unless organs of the body have been taken and put into another body to continue to give life..... It did extend life; you hear stories where people do finally get (an organ)... they have been waiting a long time, and they finally get an organ through. And then, they are over the moon and then they say, 'unfortunately somebody has to die because of it'. But it is all about the circle of life, and one life being lost so another can be given. And sometimes they.... It doesn't have anything to do with organ donation but... you heard sometimes when one dies... you might know somebody who has died, and then you know somebody who has given birth. And it is kind of like, one life has gone away and another life has entered the earth. So it is all about the circle of life again, going back to the very beginning of circle of life." (Carmen, Age 21).

Carmen's personalized view of reincarnation (the circle of life) spiritualizes her view of birth and death, which influences her perceptions of organ donation. Transplantation enables the body to complete what she calls the 'circle of life'—where, when one life is lost, another begins. Walter (2001) found similar thinking in his

research on reincarnation. Carmen's construction of the 'circle of life' is derived from her idealized embodied project (Thompson and Hirschman 1998) as revolving around her wish to become a mother in the future. As a woman, her body is the giver of life, a gift that presents life with a purpose—to nurture, to teach and to continue the circle of life. So, for Carmen, by imagining the body as a giver of life, organ donation becomes conceivable:

"I would say one great life is one great circle of people being born and dying and there are many little life circles within it..... I always have it in me to be like maternal..... I just feel that, that is like the greatest gift that we could give.... Because I would like to love, to nurture, to teach... continuing the life circle." (Carmen, Age 21)

The "gift-of-life" discourse inherently views body-self as a Western epistemology of dualism (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987) where disembodiment of the self in the event of death is embedded in the "gift-of-life" message. The circle-of-life embraces a holistic view of body-self (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987) where the embodied narratives of the self persist in an infinite circle of death and rebirth (Walter 2001). When asked if the circle of life would appeal to her as a means of promoting organ donation, Carmen agrees that by normalizing the notion between life and death, as part of existence, would help her to consider becoming an organ donor. As she explains:

"It puts more of a positive shine to it because if things look positive and harmless, people will be more willing to accept. If there is an element of danger and unknown and uncertainty, they might shy away from it. Because it is also about change, quite a lot of people are against change, fear of change. Whereas the circle of life suggests no change, it is rather moving. This is normal, this is life." (Carmen, Student, Age 21)

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Through the construction of personalized narratives pertaining to their sense of 'mortal embodiment', the young female potential donors in our study have shed light on the 'human dimension' involved in beginning to understand the complexities and ambivalence surrounding the perceptions of cadaveric organ donation.

Although we acknowledge the need highlighted by the 'transformative consumer research' task force to focus on the upstream or 'push factors' pertaining to organ donation (Mick 2006), our research concurs with current research (e.g. Lock 2002; Haddow 2000; Fox and Swazey 1992; Williams and Calnan 1996) in recognizing that potential donors are active consumers who creatively "rework and reinterpret media and advertising ideals and ideological inducements" (Scott 1994). In other words, we posit that potential donors retain the ability to appropriate and even resist such cultural inducements (e.g. presumed consent). Our paper therefore supports the CCT tenet in conceiving potential donors as interpretive agents who creatively employ interpretive strategies to decode marketplace ideologies (Arnould and Thompson 2005).

Participants in this research, for example, express their awareness of the "gift-of-life" discourse, in which they have been familiarized through the normalization of shared cultural meanings. The "gift-of-life" discourse draws its hegemonic (dominant) position by representing the Western epistemology of Cartesian philosophy, which views the body as a disembodied machine. At the same time, the "gift-of-life" discourse has been 'romanticized' by infusing

intertextual meanings of Judeo-Christian ideals of altruism to emphasize the survival of the social body. This reflects Johnson's (1999) view that embodied metaphors form the fabric of our moral understanding and experience. It also supports Moloney and Walker's (2002) assertion that the hypothetical support expressed by potential donors tends to reflect this normative dimension of organ donation. Therefore, articulating countervailing discourses involves potential donors having to actively negotiate their positions against the social grain of morality. Participants offer polysemic meanings surrounding organ donation by appropriating other countervailing discourses.

By creatively drawing on culturally available symbolic metaphors of the body (e.g. body as machine, temple), our participants occupy a range of interpretive repertoires (Holstein and Gubrium 1995)—for example (1) *body as self—body as machine* (2) *transcendence—materialist*—to reveal the existential anxiety underlying the nature of embodying mortality. As such, the sociocultural context provides a frame of reference for participants to fashion their embodied projects—further acknowledging the CCT tenet of consumer as weaver of cultural and symbolic resources in forging their identity projects (Arnould and Thompson 2005).

Additionally, late modernity's preoccupation with the body (e.g. through investment in body projects) is increasingly bound to the construction of self-identity and has evoked the existential tension between *finitude* and *perceived continuity* in the afterlife—which causes them to experience ambivalence about donating their organs. Organ donation catapults the embodied self within the liminal transitions between life and death and therefore raises questions of whether the nature of embodiment is essentially 'time-bound' (Bauman 1992). This occurs because, for them, their body is the essence of their 'self' and thus symbolic to them in life and death. Indeed, as sentient beings whose very sense of existence is embodied (Csordas 1994), the notion of inhabiting a disembodied metaphysics in the netherworld conjures up significant anxiety—it is difficult for them to donate their organs and retain their sense of 'self.' The 'mortal embodiment' perspective has thus provided some valuable insights to explore organ donation—by acknowledging the existential concerns held by potential donors, such research is 'transformative'.

What, then, are the implications for the "gift-of-life" promotional campaign? This campaign is rooted in the Cartesian philosophy of 'man as machine'—where body and self are disembodied. Our findings reveal that, while the "gift-of-life" message still has some relevance to this group—since it forms part of the western dominant social paradigm—its meaning is being reworked by these women to embrace a more embodied perspective. Consequently the "gift-of-life" message, for this audience, needs to extend beyond the altruistic life theme of saving the lives of the transplant recipient (Lock 2002) and to address the existential anxiety concerning the persistence of the embodied self—perhaps by embracing a holistic view of embodiment (e.g. circle-of-life) through spiritual transcendence? Hence, the integrity of the embodied self becomes integral to their decision to become an organ donor. Attempts to connect with this group's wider life themes and life projects (which are embodied) would enable the "gift-of-life" message to bear connotative meanings (Mick and Buhl 1992)—helping it to become more relevant to potential, ambivalent female donors in the future.

Finally, by exploring the issue of organ donation from a 'mortal embodiment' perspective, our research has contributed to the disposition aspect of the consumption cycle (an area recognized by CCT scholars to be under-researched). Our paper indicates that identity transitions do not traverse across a linear temporality of life stages (Schouten 1991; Van Gennep 1961). Instead the embodied

self is an ongoing metamorphosis of transitions and transformation in an endless 'circle of life'. Future research may explore the implications of 'mortal embodiment' on identity transition through immersion into the lifeworld of transplant recipients upon acquisition and possession of an organ.

In conclusion, the 'mortal embodiment' perspective enables us to provide insights into potential donors' lifeworld—thereby illuminating organ donation as a 'real world' consumption and social phenomenon (Deighton 2005 in Mick 2006). In so doing, we are able to provide implications for the 'gift-of-life' campaign to appeal to potential donors, whose embodied self negates their obligation as citizens to enhance the health of society. As citizens of the world, we urge future researchers to emerge from their cocoon in advancing the metamorphosis of consumption discourse towards the spirit of 'transformative consumer research'. We leave you with the thoughtful reflection from David Mick (2006).

"There is much contentment and joy, and many marvels and triumphs in our world. Consumer behaviors particularly have the capacity to support and enhance life... On the whole, there are many affirmative consumer behaviors and related dimensions of life that consumer researchers could not only derive deeper understanding of, but also share the insights with the people who would most benefit from them."

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Consumer Culture Matters: Insights from Contemporary Representations of Cooking

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INTRODUCTION

The dynamic of this paper is partly driven by curiosity about the apparent lack of curiosity regarding food, its preparation, presentation, serving and consumption, which suggest themselves as interestingly constructed and contestable sites of knowledge about contemporary consumer culture. A number of useful ethnographic studies have analysed notions of homemade food (Moisio, Arnould and Price, 2004; Wallendorf and Arnould 1991) and the practices of unbranding foodstuffs (Coupland, Iacobucci and Arnould 2005), paving the way for a focus upon representations of food and their attendant spaces of appropriation and practices. We build upon their lines of thought by arguing that cooking must be understood to mark the “*transition between nature and culture*” (Levi-Strauss 1970: 164). If this is so, then it clearly suggests a potentially rich vein of social inquiry about how consumers construct their worlds in and through texts and its attendant talk around food. For such representations we believe are so bound up with our lives that they can be seen to do all sorts of identity work and can be read as providing consumers with what we term *recipes for life* instructing them on the whys and wherefores of consuming, providing quick, easy and tailored solutions to time-strapped, harried consumers to resolve in an imaginary fashion the problems of contemporary life (Hewer and Brownlie, 2006).

This line of argument draws upon the work of Appadurai (1988) who suggests that framing culture as ‘text’ offers one way forward for an adequate empirical study of culinary culture and its naturalized forms of representation in cuisine and commodity cookbooks. But also, after Miller we argue that “goods [cookbooks] represent culture because they are an integral part of that process of objectification by which we create ourselves as an industrial society, our identities, our social affiliations, our lived everyday practices. The authenticity of artefacts as culture...derives from their active participation in a process of social self-creation in which they are directly constitutive of our understanding of ourselves and others” (1987: 215). Like others (cf. Cook and Crang 1996: 132) we follow Miller (1987) in understanding culture as “involving processes in which cultural life is objectified, in which objects are constructed as social forms, and hence in which cultural artefacts have to be understood in relation to their social and spatial contexts” (1987: 215).

We argue that the study of culinary culture, as represented in commodity cookbooks is largely neglected by consumer researchers. However, textual analysis, as a device for illuminating the meaning of social phenomena is not; nor is its important conceptual inversion asserting that texts read us, as much as we read texts, or, that they think us as much as we think them. Indeed Hebdige argues that “it requires a literary sensibility to ‘read’ society with the requisite subtlety.” (1979: 8). By means of this line of argument interpretive consumer researchers can assert that society reproduces itself through a process of naturalization, where particular sets of social relations, particular ways of organizing the world, appear as if they were universal and timeless. They can investigate, among other things, the possibility of symbolically repossessing ‘objects’ as placed cultural artifacts, in order to discern the veiled messages inscribed on their glossy surfaces and trace them out as ‘maps of meaning’ (Hebdige 1979: 18); reading them *otherwise* (Bennett and Royle 1995: 162), for the possibility of ‘contrapuntal readings’ (Said 1993: 78).

Interpretive consumer researchers are already sensitive to the useful insights gained from scholarship that situates its object of inquiry in the contested cultural dynamic of multiple representations. Indeed, Belk urges that studies of consumption can “no longer afford to ignore the broader consumption issues being raised in other disciplines” (1995: 62). So, for instance, consumer researchers have turned to literature (Fitchett 2002; Eid 1999; Stokes 1997; Brown 1996), film (Denzin 2001; Holbrook 1986), poetry (Sherry and Schouten 2002; Holbrook 1990) and art (Schroeder 1999; Brown and Patterson 2000; Fillis 2000) for cultural artefacts capable in Geertzian (1993) terms of rendering the curve of social discourse into an inspectable form.

This essay builds on these lines of thought, rendering cookbooks as cultural artefacts (commodity cookbooks) which have to be understood as part and parcel of their social context. In so doing, the wider ambition of the essay is to explore the potential contribution of the textual approach for enriching our understanding of contemporary consumer culture with regard to the preparation, presentation and consumption of food.

TURNING TO COMMODITY COOKBOOKS

In our view such work demonstrates the potential of this form of critique to generate a disciplinary space from within which to begin to problematise representations of contemporary culture, including representations of contemporary culinary culture. Schroeder (1999) shows how to accomplish this problematisation, and thus to read contemporary society through the device of textual analysis. In this way, we argue, after Pilchner (1995), that cookbooks can be treated as a literary genre that is part of the fabric and expression of our culture and which, in an analytical sense, serves to reproduce culture. This view is echoed by Appadurai when he states that “we need to view cookbooks in the contemporary world as revealing artifacts of culture in the making” (1988: 22). Or, as Tobias writes, “Cookbooks contain not only recipes, but hidden clues and cultural assumptions about class, race, gender and ethnicity. They reflect many of the dramatic transformations that have come to define the boundaries of the modern public sphere.” (1998: 3).

This material establishes our central point that, from an analytical perspective, commodity cookbooks must be understood, not merely as instrumental texts, conveying, by means of recipes, information about ingredients, their assembly, processing and presentation. Rather, they also offer access to “unusual cultural tales” (Appadurai 1988: 3) which generate representations of food as a placed cultural artefact, suggestive of where we have been, who we are and where we may be going. This point is underlined in Pilchner’s research when he approaches cookbooks as voices, capable of speaking “unique tales of home and nation” (1995: 301). So, understood as a form of placed cultural artefact (Gagliardi 1990), we can conclude that commodity cookery books can then be studied for what they reveal about the constitutive effects of time and space (Neuhaus 1999), questions of identity (Zafar 1999), the construction of gender norms (Tobias 1998; Neuhaus 1999) and the reproduction of dominant culinary values (Curtin 1992).

Tobias (1998) analysed cookery books published in eighteenth-century America, concluding that they served to position women and define their role in society. Pilchner (1995) continues this theme in his analysis of Mexican cookbooks, arguing that they served as sources of ‘cultural capital’ for women in Latin American

society. Likewise, in her analysis of two black women's cookbooks, Zafar (1999) notes that they represent a space through which cultural identity is 'recreated'. In this way she likens her analysis to that of an ethnographic journal, providing a "reading of what we eat, to understand how we construct a self around the axes of food" (1999: 463). Zafar sums up the revelations of her analysis as placing "...African-American cuisine in a political context, record[ing] a social history that must not be forgotten, and relat[ing] the lived experience of the writer and/or her family." (Zafar 1999: 464).

Zafar thus suggests that cookbooks represent, or function as 'recoveries', or 'recastings' of the culture of African-American consumption, as signs of refusal and of forbidden identity. This use of cookbooks as cultural artefacts can also be traced in the work of Novero (2000). Her analysis of cookbooks published in Weimar Germany, between the First and Second World Wars, reveals how they function to "reconcile nutritional and economic precepts with an ideology of taste and a modern lifestyle" (2000: 163). This is most evident where she reveals how the representations situate cooking as a technical skill, mediated by the rhetoric of instrumental rationality and efficiency. For instance, in her analysis of a cookbook by Kopp, entitled *Bache nach Grundrezepten* (Bake with Basic Recipes 1933), Novero shows how its content, that is the recipes, are rendered as if they were "...formulas that have been tested and perfected" (2000: 167).

This scientific representation of cooking is further conveyed through the use of over five hundred black and white photographs illustrating the 'precise' stages of food preparation. It is clearly framed as 'rationalized work' (Novero 2000), and Novero struggles to find a place for any notion of 'pleasure' in the representations. In a study of the changing contents of food columns in popular UK women's magazines between 1967-1992, Warde arrives at similar conclusions. He observes a discourse of compliance, noting that: "Information is now given fairly routinely, not only about precise quantities of ingredients and cooking times, but also about preparation time, nutrient contents, sometimes shopping instructions too...science, measurement, the use of information derived from experiment, rather than trial and error and *ad hoc* judgement, appear more frequently in the food columns." (1994: 24).

This discourse of compliance contrasts with the notion of culinary practice as a site of resistance. Bracken's publication *The I Hate to Cook Book* (1960) is indicative of the social tensions of the late 1950s. It provides tales of the drudgery of cooking and the repression of women in male dominated society. In coded form the book suggests how women might avoid this drudgery through using processed foods and avoiding elaborate recipes, yet still be seen to fulfil the expectations of their defined role. This text functions in a subversive and liberating way to clearly contest and encourage resistance to the dominant gender norms of the 1950s.

QUESTIONS OF METHOD

This essay has its origins in questions raised during a wider empirical study of attitudes towards food and cooking among young people in the UK.¹ During interviews and focus groups, informants suggested with noticeable frequency that two particularly popular TV cooks and their cookbooks performed a key role in making the routine and mundane everyday practice of cooking appealing and 'sexy' to them: Jamie Oliver's *The Return of the Naked Chef* (2000) and Nigella Lawson's *Nigella Bites* (2001).

Following Barthes (1973) and Zafar (1999) whose studies both drew on a critique of two texts, we also selected two texts (Oliver and Lawson) as an appropriate way to set off on a modest exploratory textual journey, intending, through the reportage of our contrapuntal readings, to generate information to help consumer researchers decide if representations of contemporary culinary culture do indeed have the potential to enrich our understanding of consumption. Our research thus maps out the three core themes to emerge from a reading of the cookbooks, these are organised as follows: re-enchanting the kitchen, stoveside pottering and culinary tourism.

THE RE-ENCHANTMENT OF THE KITCHEN

One of the key themes to emerge from the research is how the two cookbooks attempt to situate their various representations of culinary practice against the backdrop of contemporary events and social trends. This is accomplished in a number of interesting ways. First is in terms of how the contents are organized. That is, in eschewing the traditionally popular approach of organizing recipes by main type of produce, eg meat, pasta, or fish, Nigella's chapter structure is almost existential in its use of headings evocative of the angst of contemporary lifestyles. Chapters with accompanying images are positioned as envelopes for recipes, as soul food of therapeutic value for the following occasions: 'Rainy Days', 'Slow-Cook Weekend', 'Comfort Food' (arranged according to "our life, our timetable and our mood").

This is echoed in the aestheticized (Featherstone 1991) 'look' of the cookbooks where the focus is very much on design intensity, glossy, colourful and artful image-based communications of the kind found in lifestyle magazines targeted at the 'sophisticated and cultured'. Many of the images foreground the kitchen and its associated technological paraphernalia as key signifiers of lifestyle. For example, the image which heralds chapter one in *Nigella Bites*, entitled 'All-day breakfast', stages truth effects in support of a claim that our notions of breakfast are, or at least should be, undergoing considerable rethinking, as a site of resistance to popular notions of the stressful rushed breakfast. In this sense the stylised aspirational representations of culinary culture delivered in Nigella's book can not only be thought of coded responses to changes affecting the community as a whole. They can also be seen as an attempt to reposition and recontextualise the 'commodity cookbook', by subverting their conventional uses and inventing new ones—in this case as a site of resistance to contemporary cultural imperatives.

Throughout this cookbook, Lawson's poetic language literally engulfs the reader ("I want to be there in the kitchen with you; my words are merely my side of the conversation I imagine we might have"), as do the images of Nigella herself which precede each of the eight chapters in the book. Alongside, or more appropriately preceding such description the reader is presented with a full double page image of Nigella in long silk dressing gown, hair in curlers, pouring a cup of coffee, clearly with time on her side socialising with an imaginary friend/reader. On her kitchen units sit a number of unused stainless-steel utensils, each arrayed with their brand logos clearly decipherable. Providing further glimpses of an aspirational lifestyle statement, there is the liminal presence of a *Kitchenaid* Mixer and a *Dualit* Blender—both branded tools, representing the essential scaffolding of a lifestyle kitchen for the culinary guru. The subtle backgrounding of fetishized machinery and foregrounding of the beautiful female gastro-guru, reveals a discourse of recovery through distance and control which is at odds with the notion that human conduct is increasingly subject to forms of control and constraint delivered by machines. It reproduces notions of technology in its place, as a tool of power to be controlled

¹This data was selected from a broader study of young people's living skills, in total twenty young people aged from sixteen to twenty-two years, living in the UK were interviewed during 2002.

and used to support and facilitate human activity, not to dominate or constrain it. These objects are not mere accoutrements though. As aspirational brands they can also be understood as vital props, as wands for negotiating the jungle of contemporary culinary culture and achieving some of the new magic of the sexy culinary guru. They are also important symbols by means of which to imagine the re-enchantment of the commodity kitchen, as a magical place to conjure up food which will transform the reader. A space in which the emphasis is strictly opposed to the logic of rationality, rather the emphasis is upon the kitchen as a space in which to dwell or inhabit to counters the strains of contemporary life. The chapter entitled *Templefood*, opens with the following suggestion:

“I think I’d better start by explaining what Templefood is: it’s my term for the soothing, pure, would-be restorative food I make for myself after one binge or late night too far. ‘Temple’ as in ‘my body is a...’ Well, mine’s not, but this is what I eat when I want to feel it is. And don’t think—as if—I’m counselling deprivation or restraint, but rather the holy glow of self-indulgently virtuous pleasure...” (2001, p.223).

The section entitled *Comfort Food* explores what we might term a *recipe for life*, which emphasises the idea of food as transformative:

“If I’m being honest, for me all food is comfort food, but there are times when you need a bowlful of something hot or a slice of something sweet just to make you feel that the world is a safer place. We all get tired, stressed, sad or lonely, and this is the food that soothes.” (2001, p.32).

Food in this sense is re-presented as embodying magical, enchanting and transformative potentiality, capable of soothing the weary consumer in times of strife, anxiety and doubt.

STOVESIDE POTTERING, MAKING THE KITCHEN ‘HABITABLE’

The kitchen space is also part and parcel of this magical transformation as the text positions this site as stripped of drudgery, toil and failure, rather as a space of magical self-realisation and imagined social affiliation. For Oliver the practice of cooking appears to be very much secondary to the act of consuming. Many of his recipes in this respect focus upon the temporal dimension, justifying their use in terms of their speediness to prepare. For example, his recipe for ‘beef tomatoes, basil, ham and mild cheese on thick toast’ states “This brekkie or snack takes precisely 1 minute to make...Very simple, very tasty” (2000: 30). The recipe for ‘braised five hour lamb with wine, veg and all that’ starts with the lines: “This is a real hearty and trouble-free dinner. There’s barely any preparation, just a nice long cooking time which will reward you with the most tender meat and tasty sauce.” (2000: 174). Thus many of the images work hard to convey the pleasures to be had from the sociability that surrounds consuming and preparing food, or as he prefers ‘tucking in’. This view is reiterated in Nigella’s approach which elaborates upon the importance of home-made (see also and its powerfully evocative nostalgic potential. Granted we are given images of cooking as a ‘low-effort undertaking’ (2001: 190), but alongside such talk she suggests ‘stoveside pottering helps me unwind’ (2001: 55). Surely a recipe aimed especially to warm the heart of any world weary, time-strapped consumer. In her recipe for Lemon risotto this theme of ‘stoveside pottering’ is explored:

“This is comfort food on so many levels. For one, risotto has to be one of the most comforting things to eat ever. What’s

more, although everyone goes on about the finickiness and crucial fine-tuning involved, I find risotto immensely comforting to make: in times of strain, mindless repetitive activity—in this case 20 minutes of stirring—can really help.” (2001: 43).

We are thus told that for Nigella the act of cooking is symbolic of ‘temperament and habit’. This more care-driven and emotional approach attempts to deny the calculative rationality of weights and measures, in her recipe for mashed potato we are told: “I hesitate before giving quantities, so please regard the specifications below as the merest guidelines.” (2001: 32). Additionally, in ‘granny lawson’s lunch dish’ we are told “Cooking isn’t just about ingredients, weights and measures: it’s social history, personal history.” (2001: 162). A representation which attempts to imbue the act of cooking with extraordinary relevance. The practice of cooking in this sense is about making the space of the kitchen ‘habitable’, a scene for numerous ‘silent productions’ or ways of ‘making do’, if we adopt the poeticism of de Certeau (1984: xx). Images of the practice of cooking is thus much more than unspectacular mundane acts, it is where the ordinary is made extraordinary akin in other words to a form of *praxis* wherein, to paraphrase Miller (1991: 207-208) philosophical conundrums and contradictions are worked out but by other means.

INVOKING CULINARY TOURISM

The idea of cookbooks as offering consumers some kind of easy made solution to the dilemmas of contemporary life is extended through a discussion of the games of distinction played out in the texts. Warde (1994) considers recipes as ‘messengers of taste’, a point reiterated in the work of Gallegos who read such texts as ‘manuals of taste’ (2005). A recipe provided by Oliver for: “*Seafood broth, ripped herbs, toasted bread and garlic aioli*” serves to illustrate this point. Let’s start with the title, reference to the ingredient ‘aioli’ appears salient: “The aioli is not essential with this, but it is fantastic and you should give it a go.” (2000: 90). In other words, a game of distinction (Bourdieu 1984) appears to be being played out through the exotic ingredients included, a game which on the surface offers to the consumer an apparent sense of the abundance of choice, but such choice is paradoxically constraining, especially if you lack the required vocabulary to understand. The term Aioli we might suggest serves to exclude and distinguish those without the required cultural competence, or as Bourdieu prefers: “Consumption is...an act of deciphering, decoding, which presupposes practical or explicit mastery of a cipher or code. In a sense, one can say that the capacity to see (voir) is a function of knowledge (savoir), or concepts, that is, the words, that are available to name visible things, and which are, as it were, programs for perception.” (1984: 2).

To help understand how cookbooks stage and reconstruct moments of cultural difference we invoke the work of Cook and Crang (1996), who refer to the ‘local globalization of culinary culture’. Herein, the cookbook becomes akin to a site from which to experience and practice such local globalization, a space from which to participate in metrocentric global culinary culture. To demonstrate this we are given the following gamut of recipes by Nigella wherein ‘American pancakes with wafer bacon and maple syrup’ followed by ‘Asian-spiced kedgeree’ is followed by a trip to the Orient in ‘Masala Omelette’ and then a trip back to Europe through ‘Apple and blackberry kuchen’. The cookbook in this sense reads like the enchanted and all too enchanting visitors guide for a grandiose symbolic tour across the world in miniature, that is from the U.S. to Asia to Europe in the space of fourteen pages. In this sense the cookbooks not only provide geography lessons, but

symbolically this world becomes the embodiment of McLuhan's 'Global Village'. We argue that through the deliberate use of enchanting streams of symbols of travel and exotic places, they also manufacture the global diversity of culinary culture and bring this difference to your tabletop. As Cook and Crang remark "the touristic quality of these constructions [is] particularly apparent when [it] allows consumers to bring the experience of travel to their own domestic culinary regimes" (1996: 136). So, you can think of cookbooks as offering you a holiday for your tongue which, as Lash and Urry observe, "encourages us to gaze upon and collect the signs and images of many cultures—to act as tourists in other words" (1994: 272). Therefore, even if the recipes are not made and the exotic food is not eaten, the reader can still gaze at colorful constructions of far flung places of the globe and achieve imaginary gratification (Smart, 1994) and transformation therein.

DISCUSSION

This paper has follows in a long line of previous studies that have attempted to read consumer culture through its array of popular culture texts (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). We have sought to render cookbooks as cultural artefacts to thereby make them amenable to textual analysis, in order to counter their taken-for-grantedness amongst consumer researchers. It is further argued, that the turn to contemporary culinary practices and their representations serves to enrich our understanding of consumer culture, enabling us to illuminate not only dominant discourses, ie. with respect to notions of food as cultural capital and culinary tourism but also counter-discourses emerging forms of meaning. In this respect we seek to position and read off cookery books, as windows through which to glimpse and problematise representations of contemporary culture. But more, we want to suggest that through their representations are gleaned instances of culture in the making. Chief amongst these is the turn to what might be termed a discourse of compassion through which culinary culture is positioned as rather than simply consumption or production, but as a form of distribution through which emerge new patterns of sociality. In addition, we traced the emergence of what we might refer to as a mystification of the kitchen itself, as a pocket of resistance, a location for magical practices. The kitchen space represented as a site where acts of apparent mundane consumption assume the form of extraordinary consumption, a space for the practicing of what Fiske might term the little 'victories' (1989) wherein cooking, or at least through its representations and discourses, becomes a tactic to make the kitchen space habitable. A counter-discourse to all those notions of junk food and convenience, where the logic of *doing the right thing* is the order of the day. Such a line of argument concurs with the work of Firat and Dholakia who suggest that "...the social transformation of our day can be expected to occur through pockets of resistance, not in terms of a frontal attack or challenge...but in terms of ignoring authority and insisting on doing 'one's own thing'" (1998: 155). In this manner, we hope we have demonstrated that such cookbooks are never simply instrumental and instructional texts about ingredients, their assembly, processing and presentation, rather cookery books reveal and offer glimpses of very unusual tales of cultural transformation.

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An Investigation of Household Decision Making Among Immigrants

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Whenever an immigrant crosses the borders of one nation and enters another, they begin a complex adjustment process. This adjustment is oftentimes characterized by conflict otherwise known as acculturative stress (Berry and Annis 1974). Researchers have sought to understand this conflict at both the group and individual levels. At the group and national level, for example, changes frequently occur in social structures, economics and political organizations, while at the individual level changes are of identity, values, attitudes and behaviors (Berry et. al 1992; Williams and Berry 1991). It is apparent that if these stressors are evident at the group and individual levels that they will manifest themselves in the new households that immigrants must reconstitute. Part of this reconstitution of their lives involves the acquisition of a myriad of products. In many cases, there are numerous decisions to be made quickly, such as housing, transportation, work, child care and in all other domains of life. Thus, understanding immigrant adaptation necessitates our understanding of household decision making.

Research on household decision making has examined the roles that husbands and wives play in the consumer decision making process. In general research on spousal decision making has primarily focused on levels of influence between couples in the consumer decision making process (cf. Davis 1970). Other research has examined the impact of sex role orientation in decision making (Qualls 1987). In his research, Qualls (1987, p. 264) noted that research on household decision making primarily focused on: "1) which family member makes the decision; 2) outcomes of household decision behavior and 3) factors that determine which family member makes the decision." Similar sentiments have been articulated by Webster (1994, p. 321) who noted "there is general consensus in the findings of previous research that traditional role specialization has influenced purchase behavior in three major ways: First, it affects which spouse has dominance with respect to specific products," (Davis and Rigaux 1974) with males being dominant for such things as automobiles (Green et. al 1983); insurance (Davis and Rigaux 1974) etcetera. Wife dominant decisions are associated with the woman's role as a homemaker and the products where the wife has been found to be dominant are: appliances (Green et. al 1983) groceries (Davis and Rigaux 1974) and washing machines (Woodside and Motes 1979). Further, Webster (1994, p. 321) noted, "traditional role specialization has been shown to influence relative dominance with respect to product attributes." Men have been found to be concerned with functional attributes such as price while the women may concentrate on the aesthetic product attributes such as color (Davis 1970). Finally, Webster (1994, p. 321) observed that men have traditionally been dominant in the more important phases of decision making such as the decision to buy, while the women have been more dominant with the minor phases of the decision making such as suggesting the purchase.

Although research on household decision making has made some important contributions, it has primarily examined spousal or household decision making in western nations such as the United States. Researchers have begun to question the adequacy of these models in understanding the spousal decision making processes of individuals from non-western contexts. Webster (2000, p. 1035) noted that spousal decision making is a culturally situated phenomena. Since there are so many different cultures, then it is obvious that models that have been developed primarily for a western

context may not hold true when the "deciders" are non-western. In discussing current theories, Webster (2000, p. 1036) states: "the inadequacy of current theoretical bases is even more apparent outside the countries (mainly the United States), in which it was established. In particular, there is evidence that western theories do not fully explain the marital power patterns that can be found in a country such as India."

According to U.S. census data, the foreign born population represents 10.4% of the U.S. population. Therefore, it is important for researchers to expand their investigations beyond western household decision making. There have been some efforts on the part of researchers to understand household decision making in some non-western contexts. Ethnic identity has been found to be important in household decision making. For instance, Webster (1994) suggested that there was a positive relationship between identification with Hispanic culture and husband dominance in decision making. Further Webster showed that husbands in couples "with a higher identification with their modified patriarchal parent culture have more influence in decision making, p. 328," and that as the family assimilates, that there is a "shift in marital power away from the husband to the wife, p. 328." Maldonado and Tansuhaj (1999) demonstrated that the immigrant's ethnic identity and role destabilization influenced their self concept and ultimately their symbolic consumption.

Cross-cultural studies have found that as nations become more developed, household decision making generally becomes less husband dominant (Green et. al. 1983). This is an interesting point, because it examines changes in household decision making based on the level of development of a nation. Immigration by definition involves the transplantation of individuals from one cultural context to another. When immigrants originate from less developed countries to more developed countries, they may find themselves facing pressures to become more like their counterparts in the developed country. This, no doubt creates some tensions within the household.

Research by Ganesh (1997) has shown that the decision making of Tamil Indians in the United States falls consistently between that of the US respondents and Indian Tamil households in India, for most of the decision making stages and for most of the products. This research suggested that the immigrants were integrating aspects of American culture into their Indian culture. The acculturation strategy of the U.S. Tamil Indians would be characterized as one of integration.

Berry (1980) defined four different acculturation strategies that an immigrant was likely to adopt, and these strategies are a function of whether the immigrant desires a positive relationship with their culture of origin as well as their culture of immigration. Berry (1980) defined those strategies as a) assimilation; b) integration; c) rejection and d) marginalization. Cross-cultural psychologists have shown that there is strong evidence that supports a positive correlation between an integration strategy and good psychological adaptation during acculturation (cf. Berry and Sam 1997).

Because of the role that consumption plays in our lives, researchers have examined the consumer acculturation of immigrants. Penaloza (1994) developed a comprehensive model of consumer acculturation with research conducted on Mexican immigrants. Oswald (1999) examined culture swapping among Hai-

tian immigrants and Mehta and Belk (1991) looked at the favorite possessions of Indians in India, and Indian immigrants in the United States. There are numerous studies on immigrant acculturation and the examples above serve as illustrations of studies rather than as an exhaustive illumination of research in this field. Even so, it is noteworthy that spousal decision making has largely been absent from these studies.

Gendered patterns of behavior

In every culture there are gendered patterns of behavior. These gendered patterns of behavior are evident in all aspects of life, and consumption activities are not exempt. Therefore, when an immigrant is transplanted from one culture to another, their gendered patterns of behavior might be brought into question. These gendered patterns of behavior will certainly be evident and will be renegotiated within the household. The purpose of this research study, therefore, is to examine household decision making among recent Kenyan immigrants. Our central focus within the household is spousal decision making. As noted elsewhere, researchers have already documented that some decisions are husband dominant while others are wife dominant. Therefore, this study examines the underlying reasons why a particular decision may be wife or husband dominant, and the meanings that are attributed to these decisions. Our study is consistent with the views expressed by Webster (2000, p. 1036) who noted that there has been a scarcity of research on "the antecedents or reasons why one spouse is more powerful or has influence than the other in decision making."

METHOD

The data from this study were undertaken from a larger study of immigrant acculturation. One of the problems with research on spousal decision making has been the interviewing or data gathering from one spouse. This has been identified as a weakness by Davis (1976) who recommended interviewing both spouses (separately). Consistent with the recommendations of Davis (1976) husbands and wives were interviewed separately. The interviews of the eight couples were conducted one on one rather than together in order to ensure that the couples would be free to express their own opinion. Whenever possible the interviews were conducted on the same day, in the homes of the couples. All of the interviews were conducted in English and lasted on average one hour. The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. Six of the couples were married to Kenyans, and they were members of four different Kenyan tribes. The other two couples represented the intermarriage of Kenyans with African Americans. The length of marriages ranged from 2 years to over 20 years. In addition, three of the couples were married in Kenya and had had a household in Kenya. Four of the couples were married in the United States and the households had been formed in the United States. One of the couples got married in Europe, yet their household had been established in the United States.

Although the couples were not observed while making purchase decisions, the field researcher participated in various community events in order to further understand the lived experience of the immigrants. Informants were recruited for the study using the snowball method. The snowball technique affords the researcher maximum variation among the informants on characteristics that are pertinent to the research. Consistent with Wallendorf and Belk (1989), triangulation across sources and researchers was done to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. The integrity of the data collected in interpretive research depends upon the practice of proper interview techniques (Wallendorf and Belk 1989).

In our research we examine immigrant decision making with regards to grocery shopping, first car buying experiences and the influence of the extended family in the allocation of family resources. Although some of these categories have been examined in prior research, this research differs from previous studies because we examine the antecedents (or meanings) of these decisions rather than which spouse is dominant in the decision.

ANALYSIS

The data from the in-depth interviews were analyzed to see whether any themes emerged using the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss 1967). In the analysis, themes were identified and coded with key words and then subsequent data was analyzed to identify similar instances of the themes. The emergent themes were further collapsed to reflect the final themes that are presented here. It is important to note that the analysis of the data did not commence after the end of the data collection period. Instead, as themes were identified, they were used to guide future interviews in order to explore similar issues with subsequent informants. This proved to be very helpful since issues discussed by one informant could be explored with subsequent informants. This offered some excellent triangulation of the household decision making since we could compare across households, within households and across spouses. Some selected conclusions were submitted to the informants and in general they concurred with the plausibility of the interpretations (Schouten 1991). The data was analyzed consistent with the suggestions of Spiggle (1994).

FINDINGS

This research reports spousal decision making with regards to grocery shopping, car buying and allocation of household resources to their extended family. In reporting our findings, we rely on the words of the informants to illustrate important points. As such we do not edit the words of the informants since this is their "lived" experience. Our findings suggest that there is role reversal in decision making because of a) prior market place experience in the new cultural context; b) logistical constraints such as lack of access to a car and c) adjusting to the needs of a non-Kenyan spouse.

Role reversal—market place experience

In general, Kenyan men have adjusted to going grocery shopping. It is remarkable that among the couples who had been married in Kenya, there was a distinct pattern of decision making which involved relegating the initial decision making to the spouse with the most U.S. marketplace experience. In all of the cases, the spouses who had previously been married in Kenya, arrived in the United States separately and therefore, this gave one of the spouses more experience and expertise in the marketplace. Therefore, at first the spouse who had arrived first was the primary decision maker on major decisions pertaining to the reconstitution of their households. For example, these spouses, made decisions about where to live, what type of car to buy and furnishing for the homes prior to the arrival of their spouses and children. Consequently, the spouse who arrived first had to make decisions with or without expertise and without regard to normal gendered patterns of decision making. Consequently, in the beginning the spouse with longevity in the U.S. is the primary influencer of the household decisions. As result of this pattern of immigration, we document instances of role reversal in the decision making even after their spouses arrive in the United States. When asked to talk about his first car, Mwanza described how he had relied on his wife's opinion about the best car.

Mwanza: At that time I was, I actually relied on my wife because she had been in the country for some time and I drew from her experience. And when she said [brand] was a good vehicle, I said yes. It was good. Actually, it was a very good car and I had service for a very long time.

What is particularly interesting about this example is that his wife did not have a car when they lived in Kenya and indeed did not even know how to drive. Yet in the United States, she became the expert since she had been in the United States longer. Hence we see evidence of role reversal based on longevity in the United States rather than prior experience with car buying in Kenya. Mwanza had owned several cars when he had lived in Kenya. Kenya is a paternalistic society and therefore, male female relationships are well defined with the male occupying a dominant position (Abbott 1983). So the reliance of the wife in the decision making for a consumer durable such as a car represents changes and adaptation on the part of Mwanza.

Another example of this role reversal is evident from the comments of Mutumia who relies on her husband to recommend needed household items. Mutumia below illustrates the complexity of grocery shopping in her new environment. When asked who goes grocery shopping, Mutumia had the following comments.

Mutumia: When I went for shopping, the first time with him, it was amazing..... we needed some things, we needed food,....so I didn't really struggle much because my husband had already been here four or five months before we came so he knew where we needed to pick things but also I was interested also to know how to pick these things and in which area to get this and this.

Mutumia: Well, like the first time I came it was a real big change because I remember when I got this food and I came into the house and prepared the food, it had a kind of a smell and I asked my husband, um they don't look fresh I don't think they are fresh. And then I asked him, mmm, for the time we are going to be here, is this the type of food we are going to be cooking? And he said yes.

Even after the food is prepared, Omariba (mutumia's husband) remains the expert. Once again, prior experience with the marketplace makes the husband the expert on grocery shopping. This is an interesting development in this household because prior to immigration, Omariba was not involved in grocery shopping.

Mutumia: Well, that is something interesting. Because back in our country sometimes you find that most of the time I was to do my groceries, but here, I can, we both can, me and my husband. Sometimes in case if he is not available, I just go for groceries, in case I am the one who is available, or if he is the one available and I'm not available, he will go for groceries.

Omariba confirmed that he is the one who mainly goes grocery shopping.

Omariba: Well, everybody goes. I go most of the time actually. I cannot really have specific number of times that we go because I, I could go buy the groceries by the time I come back, I'm told this is not there, go back.

It is worth mentioning that the husband has become dominant in this decision making because of logistical constraints, in this case his

wife's lack of access to a car. At the time that the interview was conducted, Mutumia had recently gotten her own car.

Role Reversal due to American Spouse

In our research we document the fact that Jaramogi (LaTonya's husband) has moved away from his cultural orientation by becoming the official cook and grocery shopper in his household. This situation would be untenable in a Kenyan context because of cultural norms. It can be noted that perhaps as a result of his marriage to an American woman that the pressures to conform are somewhat lessened by the fact that the American spouse does not have the same notions of gender separation as a Kenyan spouse.

Jaramogi: Surprisingly my wife is not a grocery shopper. She doesn't even accommodate me so I do most of my grocery shopping. She hates grocery stores. The only thing, she'll go with me, is because I spend lots of money. I buy anything I come across. She is more a dollar person.

LaTonya: God knew what I needed because I hate being in the kitchen you know but he loves to go grocery shopping, he'll go and loves cooking and just preparing meals for us but that meat thing, I had to work on it, I'm like baby when you go to the store, you have to buy you know other things and we like a lot of snack food.

LaTonya noted that whenever her husband would go shopping, he would buy a lot of meat and frozen vegetables and no snacks. During the interview she stated that she had managed to convince her husband to buy other things other than meat. Webster (1994, p. 329) noted that research that examines whether some product categories are more culturally sensitive than others will further our knowledge of the U.S. subcultural family in transition. Our findings show that the purchase of meat is indeed very sensitive to cultural practices. More specifically, goats have enormous cultural capital and Jomo Kenyatta (1938) described the importance of goats in ceremonies such as in ascension to manhood and in numerous ways (see for example, Kenyatta 1938, p. 192-193).

Grocery Shopping—Meat Buying

An interesting finding of this research is with regard to the buying of meat. We found that this was a husband dominant decision. However, the acquisition of meat in this instance is not just a simple purchase of needed protein, for the family but is tied to very strong cultural practices. It is strongly tied to their sense of "manhood": and to maintain these cultural practices we found that the acquisition of the goat meat is very ritualized. In general, this acquisition is achieved in one of two ways: a) purchasing the meat from a butchery or b) slaughtering the animal such as a goat for oneself.

Rituals have been found to be comprised of: "a) episodic string of events; b) a linkage of the episodic event strings in an exact fixed sequence and c) repetition of the event sequence over time (Rook 1983, p. 252)". We describe the ritual nature of getting goat meat. The immigrants get the goats for specific occasions and these occasions necessitate the acquisition of the goat. Once the occasion is known, the immigrants either call a farmer to slaughter the goat for them, or more often than not, they call other men to accompany them in this quest for the goat. In general we found that this ritual of getting goats is a "men only" affair. The final aspect of this ritual involves the consumption of the meat which in most cases occurs with other individuals outside of the nuclear family. According to Hofstede's (2001) dimensions, Kenyans are collectivistic and there-

fore the conduct of activities in groups is not surprising. This is consistent with practices back in Kenya where a man slaughters a goat and then calls his family and friends to share. Mbithi's comments illustrate the ritual of slaughtering a goat and sharing with others.

Mbithi: Most times I call my Kenyan people around here, they come and sit here, I either slaughter a goat, we eat with them, or just barbecue, usually barbecue, drink a beer and relax.

When asked how often they get goat meat Mbithi and Jaramogi had the following comments.

Mbithi: Any good occasion or thanks giving or sometimes when I have many people, more than 5 people coming to visit me, I go look for the goat.

Jaramogi: No when I buy a whole goat it is for an occasion when me and my friends decide to do that.

In Kenya, the slaughtering of a goat when there is an important occasion is generally considered important and the person for whom the goat has been slaughtered generally feels very important (Kenyatta 1938). Traditionally only the wealthy men would have been able to provide a goat for friends and family since goats were stocks of wealth. As such the slaughtering of a goat for friends and family sends a message to others about the social standing of the man and is strongly tied to his self-concept as a man. The women value this and the men conform to this as is evident by the role that meat has started to play, even in the marriages of Kenyan women to African American men. Wilberforce an African American married to a Kenyan [Imani] noted that he was introduced to goat by Kenyans.

Researcher: So you got introduced to goat by Kenyans?

Wilberforce: Absolutely.

Researcher: Have you barbecued goat yourself at your house?

Wilberforce: I have.

Researcher: Learned how to kill the goat?

Wilberforce: Yeah.

It is interesting to note that the American men who were married to Kenyan women have learned to appreciate the culture associated with "goat" eating and in some cases have learned how to slaughter the goats or figured out where to get the goats. Another respondent, Zawadi who is married to an African American does all of their grocery shopping with the exception of meat. Her husband, mostly buys meat. Zawadi's husband has had to adjust to her gendered notions of meat purchase.

Researcher: You said you go for groceries. Does your husband go grocery shopping?

Zawadi: He mostly does the meat. He goes to buy the meat because he goes to the butchery. We try not to go together anymore. The first time, the first times when, the first years that we were married, we used to go together but, I guess it was more time consuming going with him.

It was also noted that the men were willing to expend a lot of effort to get goat meat. In many cases they traveled out of town, in some cases close to 75 miles to go and buy the goat. The comments of the

informants illustrate the effort that they are willing to expend in order to get the goats.

Mbithi: I get them from [name of town], I got a black farmer an American, black, a black American a friend of mine so I just call him and I tell him, I am coming for a goat, so we go there and he slaughters for us, he cleans it up, I just bring the carcass.

Ideally the immigrants would like to get goat meat from the farms, but when they are not able to slaughter the goat themselves then they go to the international stores such as those described by Jaramogi in order to satisfy their meat needs.

Jaramogi: There are some farm and stores in [name of city] have some. Some Mediterranean stores or African stores and I already know some Mediterranean and Indian stores that already sell them.

Researcher: You also said slaughter a goat

Jaramogi: In Mississippi, Tennessee. they are people that sell goats for a living.

Summary of Goat Acquisition

The acquisition of meat remains "sacred" to these immigrants and they engage in elaborate ritualistic behaviors. Therefore, we see the American male adjusting to the "sacredness" (Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry (1989) of the male buying of meat in order to enable his wife to continue practices common in Kenya. We also see evidence of this with the African American husband who learns how to slaughter and eat goat so that his wife can maintain the "sacredness" of who makes this purchase. So, indeed there are those things that the immigrants hold sacred, and others that are profane, such as going grocery shopping yet, particular consumption objects might be "sacred" such as the meat buying.

Kenyan familial relationships

"For African peoples, the family has a much wider circle of members than the word suggests in Europe or North America. In traditional society, the family includes, children, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters who may have their own children, and other immediate relatives (Mbithi 1969, p. 138). Kenyans tend to stay married for long and divorce is virtually non-existent. Abbott (1983) noted that in Kenya: "marriages link two patrilineally based families in continuous obligation to each other." These life long obligations to both sides of the family call for the utilization of household resources in meeting these obligations. The self concept of many Kenyans includes their extended family such as their clan. "What happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say: "I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am, p. 141." According to Mbithi (1969) this is a cardinal point in understanding the African view of man. This view is crucial in understanding why the Kenyans allocate their household resources to extended family members in Kenya.

Family Resources: Allocation

The allocation of funds to send to Kenya is deeply rooted in the immigrants' self-concept. Ma and Schoeneman (1997) have correctly noted: "in traditional African cultures, family and kin are the most important aspects of an individual's life." The African tribal group conception of self is defined by feelings toward wealth, property, family and position in the community (Mwaniki 1973). Mbithi (1969) asks "what then is the individual and where is his

place in the community? In traditional life the individual does not and cannot exist alone except corporately. He owes his existence to other people, including those of past generations and his contemporaries. He is simply part of the whole.” Similar views were expressed in *Facing Mt. Kenya* by Jomo Kenyatta (1938) who described: “An individualist is looked upon with suspicion He may lack assistance when he needs it. He cannot expect that everything he does will prosper, for the weight of opinion makes him feel his crime against society . . . in Gikuyu community there is really no individual affair, for everything has a moral and social influence p. 115.” Gikuyus are a Kenyan tribe who are represented in the sample. The comments of Wilberforce highlight this belief in prosperity based on helping others as expressed by his Kenyan father in law.

Wilberforce: He believes the strengths of everything that he has, comes from his assistance to other people. You know kind of like he’s reaping his blessings from being helpful to other people.

As such the society expects those with wealth and prosperity to bring up their family members. In their 2003 study Bonsu and Belk examined cultural versus global capital in Ghana and they noted how Ghanaians who had global economic capital were able to convert this into cultural capital. The same situation is evident here, where the Kenyans send money home in order to increase their (and here we mean “immigrant and his/her family’s) social standing in the community. Research on household decision making has not examined the impact of the extended family on the allocation of family resources. Kenyan families have complicated familial obligations that last for life. As a result the income of the family is distributed among the nuclear family as well as the extended family. This is done through: a) sending money to Kenya to support their parents and siblings; b) paying tuition for their siblings and relevant others; c) the sending of money to family members for sustenance or for self-development and d) sending of physical items. Our research also uncovered differences in the types of things that the different spouses will send to Kenya, and it was found that the women were more likely to send material goods than the men. As the immigrants live longer in the United States they stop buying things to send and rely more on sending money back to Kenya. The comments of Mbithi show the changes that have occurred over time.

Mbithi (Lela’s husband): When we came here, most of our family members that we care about didn’t have enough clothing so when we came here the clothing say you go to garage sales and sometimes you get new clothes which have never been used so every time we used to buy, buy, buy like if you go to my wife’s wardrobe, it is full so at the time, we get a ticket or somebody decides to go home, we just throw the things in a bag and just label them for so and so and then we would carry and then we started changing the technique a little, we found out that every time we would be here, and we are going home, they think we are bringing and that doesn’t help them and so we started saying that we will go home and see somebody who we think has an idea and we ask them, what do you think if you got some money like so much what do you think you can do with that money.”

Lela(Mbithi’s wife): I just send them money. I send them clothes too. But right now, I’m not so big with the clothes coz I send them and it’s just never enough. And I don’t think I can

afford doing that. Sometimes I just think I can send them money.

Sending Things to Kenya

Again as noted above there are gender differences in the types of things being sent to Kenya. The following comments clearly illustrate this.

Mwanza(Nyokabi’s husband): Yeah, we do not send many items, articles. What we do if we want to help is send money. Of course if we travel, for me as a person, I like giving money and letting someone choose what they want to buy. My wife of course would buy items to give which is different. So I do not normally buy articles and items to send. I give money if I want to help someone.

Nyokabi (Mwanza’s wife): When I buy things and I keep them up and when my sisters come here or when I go home, I fill everything that I don’t wear anymore, what I bought on sale, . . . So if I’m not wearing them, I haven’t worn anything for a year, I put it and take it home.

Immigrants described sending money to help their parents as well as educate their siblings.

Omariba: Well, at least we have parents to help so we do not, fortunately we do not have anybody in school now, but my wife and myself, so all that we do is maybe help the parents and help those who are out of school sometimes.

Kariuki: I just say money that’s what I do. I don’t have any other brothers going to school, everybody is through, we just send money to help out my mama, . . .but I, mostly it is money.

Zawadi: Both my parents, my mom is retiring in December so, my dad has retired so there is no income for them. So I try and send money every month for them to pay their bills and to help them out.

Pay Tuition for Siblings

Imani: What I do, I pay tuition, I pay fees for most of my family and especially some of them are finishing this year thank God.

Zawadi: I am mostly the one who put my small sister through school. I mostly send money home. When I know they are okay, when I know that everything is okay, then I am okay.....so I tend to send money.

CONTRIBUTIONS

This research questions the adequacy of existing models of household decision making in non-western contexts. The allocation of household resources to the sustenance of extended family members is largely absent in these decision making models. Our research highlights the need for research that examines the role of extended families in household decision making. Research on household decision making has primarily been concerned with dominance in decision making within the household. Our research has demonstrated that for immigrants, longevity in the United States might better explain the dominance in household decision making rather than their gender. We illustrate how longevity in the United States has resulted in role reversal in decision making among the immigrants. It is noteworthy that our pre-occupation with gender as one of the primary influencers of household decision making has

resulted in gender attributions to observed household decision making. This research questions the efficacy of these gender attributions. An additional contribution of this research is to suggest that some decisions might be "sacred" and others "profane" based upon the cultural meanings associated with the acquisition of particular products.

CONCLUSION

This research has examined spousal decision making among Kenyan immigrants. We have found that through the process of acculturation, that the immigrants adapt to their new consumption environment. For these immigrants, duration of stay in the United States might better explain dominance in decision making rather than their gender. Further, we found that the purchase of some products such as "meat" have significant cultural meaning. In our research we have found that the immigrants have a strong connection with their family in their home country and as such, their household decision making cannot be understood without examining the allocation of household resources to their extended families. Our study demonstrates that there are deep rooted reasons for supporting the extended family. A February 2006 statement by the Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya indicated that Kenyans in the Diaspora are remitting over 500 million dollars annually (Mulei 2006). Clearly, this research has important implications for marketers as they develop strategies for households. If current U.S. population growth trends prevail, the number of non-western households will continue to increase. Hence, understanding the differences in household decision making processes of western and non western household will be important for marketers as they fine-tune marketing strategies for households.

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We Love to Hate You: Discourse Between the Distance Running Subculture and Mainstream Media

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Subculture researchers have tirelessly sought to understand the relationship between subcultures and mainstream society. Within this work, some research posits a positive relationship while other research presents a negative relationship. The purpose of this study is to understand the relationship between subcultures and mainstream society and presents a conceptualization of this relationship as symbiotic in nature.

Consumer research is one of many fields that embrace subculture research with many researchers examining a variety of subcultures, including but not limited to, Harley Davidson riders (Schouten and McAlexander 1995), sky-divers (Celsi, Rose, and Leigh 1993), extreme sport participants (Quester, Beverland, and Farrelly 2006), the Australian hip-hop community (Arthur 2006), tattooists (Bengtsson, Ostberg, and Kjeldgaard 2005), and *X-Files* and *Star Trek* fans (Kozinets 1997, 2001).

While each of these studies offer different theoretical insights into the nature of subcultures, they all converge on the notion that subcultures and subcultures of consumption are characterized as thriving on a sense of exclusivity (e.g. Arthur 2006; Donnelly and Young 1988; Hebdige 1979; Quester et al. 2006; Richardson 2006; Schouten and McAlexander 1995) and are opposed to appropriation into the mainstream culture: with 'going mainstream' viewed as detrimental to the subculture as a whole (e.g. Fox 1987; Irwin 1973; Schouten and McAlexander 1995).

On the other hand, some elements of going mainstream are beneficial to subcultures. For example, media can serve an informative role in which it differentiates the subculture from the dominant culture, articulates possible behaviors of members, and works to expand the subculture by reaching new members (Celsi et al. 1993; Donnelly and Young 1988; Irwin 1973; Kozinets 2001; Wheaton 2000). Thus, the overall nature of the interaction between media and subcultures is ambiguous and begs the question: how do subcultures that value exclusivity navigate the tensions inherent in mainstream popularity?

To explore the relationship between subcultures and mainstream media, we conducted a detailed analysis of the distance running subculture. The distance running subculture was selected because it is a well-defined subculture with a clear and distinct culture that is also experiencing mainstream popularity. We use a combination of semi-structured depth interviews (McCracken 1989) and online message board observation (Kozinets 2002; Muniz and Schau 2005). Purposive sampling and snowballing techniques were used to recruit informants from the local running community, university running associations, and personal contacts.

Interviews were conducted with 41 self-identified distance runners (19 female, 22 male) with varying levels of involvement with running. The majority of the runners interviewed were recreational runners; however, interviews were also conducted with some key community leaders and elite runners. To balance the perspectives of the recreational runners, we conducted an analysis of an online message board catering to more serious runners. Using naturalistic observation techniques, we used the interview findings to guide our selection of threads to observe, seeking out avenues for both confirmation and disconfirmation of emerging themes. Interviews and online observations were transcribed and then coded,

first using free coding and then using QSR NVivo 1.2 and standard data analysis and interpretation procedures (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Thompson 1997). Important themes and tensions were uncovered through across informant and within individual informant analyses.

Analysis of the data revealed two primary themes: (1) a tension within the subculture remaining an exclusive entity, grounded in the core values of achieving emancipation through the pursuit of modernist elements of achievement, competition, and measurement of time and distance (Chalmers 2006), and the adoption of a more inclusive attitude that encourages mass participation and (2) subculture members using mainstream media and popularity as a tool to assert their exclusivity.

The first finding of this study is subculture members simultaneously supporting subcultural exclusivity and being inclusive. Runners supporting exclusivity is manifested in four ways within the distance running subculture: (1) explicit references to being part of an exclusive group, (2) a desire to see running glorified in the eyes of the mainstream public, (3) an emphasis on supporting elite athletes who epitomize the athleticism of running and (4) a disdain for mainstream media undermining the sport's competitiveness. On the other hand, there is an emphasis on inclusivity and mainstream popularity. This is evidenced in three ways. First, runners enjoy seeing the running mentality applied to areas outside of running by mainstream media. Second, runners express a desire for more television and advertising coverage of recreational runners. Third, runners express a sense of evangelism and encourage mass participation in the sport.

The second theme in this study outlines how members of the running subculture manage the tension between exclusivity and inclusivity. The data from this study reveals that runners use mainstream media and the popularity of the running activity to assert their exclusivity. There are three ways in which this is done. First, runners use mainstream media portrayals of running to show their insider knowledge of the subculture. Second, runners differentiate themselves by showing that they are unique in their appreciation of running media. Third, runners justify the mainstream popularity of the sport by proclaiming that it supports them in their exclusive running lifestyle.

This study serves to enhance current conceptualizations of subcultures by illuminating a previously overlooked type of interaction with the mainstream culture. The findings of this study are particularly important for consumer researchers. First, they show how subculture members react to and use advertisements and other media to enhance their own agendas. This represents an interesting type of co-production of meanings that blurs the boundaries between what is included and excluded in a subculture. Second, the tension inherent within a subculture highlights the sometimes overlooked variation and complexity of subcultures. Subcultures are generally conceptualized as being fairly homogenous within their bounds, and while these findings do support the notion that a subculture has a core set of values, a tremendous amount of variation exists as to how these core values manifest themselves. Finally, these findings show the important role that media can play in maintaining subcultures, especially those that operate as mundane, yet salient, consumption activities.

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Mood Self Verification Explains the Selection and Intake Frequency of Comfort Foods

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Comfort foods are those foods that provide a dimension of psychological comfort when they are consumed. These foods have often been associated with unintended weight gain (Ganley 1989; Wansink, Cheney, and Chan 2003). However, it is not known whether systematic associations exist between a person's mood (psychological state) and the selection and intake of different types of comfort foods. Awareness of any such biases could enable people to more knowingly make food choices that will benefit their health. Based on a self-verification framework, it is examined whether the foods that obese and non-obese individuals claim they eat for "comfort" may have unknowingly been selected to verify their mood.

In contrast to self-enhancement, which suggests people are psychologically motivated to increase their positive self regard, self-verification contends that people are psychologically motivated to confirm self-impressions for reasons of prediction and control (Geisler and Swann, 1999). For example, if a man has low-self esteem on a particular occasion, he may be more likely to seek, accept, and agree with negative feedback more so than positive feedback (Swann and Ely 1984; Swann, Stein-Seroussi, and Giesler 1992). Similarly, bulimic individuals with poor body self concepts were more likely to self-verify by seeking an interest in negative feedback that corroborated their self concepts, thereby leading to an aggravation of bulimic symptoms (Joiner 1999). From this, it is not difficult to assume that it may be the case that bulimics use food to serve their conceptions of themselves, thus supporting the idea of mood self-verification. Indeed, negative emotions, which preceded binge eating, actually increased after the binge eating episode (Lynch, Everingham, Dubitzky, Hartman, and Kasser 2000). This suggests that people may use food as a means to confirm how they feel about themselves, rather than to improve their negative mood states.

In addition, there is reasonable evidence to suggest that individual characteristics, such as age and gender, may also influence mood. Research indicates that both women and younger people have a relatively greater intensity of negative affect than men and older people (Cheng 2004; Robins et al. 2002; Charles and Pasupathi 2003). Because women and younger people have been shown to have a greater intensity of negative affect (as compared to men and older people), they should tend to be more likely to consume less-nutritive comfort foods, which is consistent with an attempt to verify their relative stronger negative mood state intensity.¹

A content analysis of clinical eating records (diaries and interviews) of obese individuals, were combined with results of three focus groups to better understand the relationship between mood and the consumption of what individuals commonly refer to as "comfort foods." Based on self-reported commonly experienced moods and self-reported commonly eaten comfort foods, a phone survey of 1014 randomly selected North Americans was conducted to determine which foods were most likely to be consumed under

various mood states. Chi-square tests examined how one's selection of a comfort food varied across differences in mood, gender, age, and obesity. In the interview, participants were asked whether they would be likely to consume (yes or no) ten different comfort foods when experiencing each of ten specific moods.

Both positive and negative moods were associated with the reported likelihood of consuming comfort foods for both obese and non-obese individuals. Importantly, however, positive moods were robustly associated with the reported likelihood of more nutritive food consumption while negative moods were associated with the reported likelihood of less nutritive food consumption.² Females, in comparison to males, were more likely to report consuming comfort foods in negative mood states. Similar results were found when comparing younger adults to older adults, and when comparing normal weight adults with overweight adults.

This study provides an important first step in understanding the ecological correlation between mood states and reported comfort food consumption. While this study used self-assessment surveys and interviews as exploratory tools for research, self-assessment surveys and interviews are important in obtaining information about past behavior. Although laboratory tests would confirm the results of this study, they generally obtain information only for a single consumption experience. Further support for mood self-verification in comfort food consumption could come from research that measures mood *before* consumption and *after* consumption. A similarity of mood, in both pre- and post-consumption would provide additional evidence of mood self-verification, and it will also test for boundary conditions that define situations when this may or may not occur. Last, knowing what other factors (besides gender, age, and BMI) could influence mood could facilitate a better understanding of what types of interventions could be had to increase consumption of more nutritive foods. The resulting interventions would have implications for clinical settings (i.e., weight loss) and the consumer.

When selecting comfort foods, people appear to consume foods that match their mood. Weight loss strategies, which focus on negative emotions for compliance, may actually be responsible for the maintenance or even exaggeration of a person's weight. This research suggests that this is because when a person experiences negative mood states, they will attempt to verify these moods by eating less nutritive foods. In this way, a person can predict and control how they feel about themselves by matching their mood with the corresponding comfort food. Therefore, a vicious cycle, based on reinforcement of mood, may ensue.

As one is made to feel guilty (a negative emotion) about a particular failure to lose weight, they will eat less-nutritive food, which could increase their weight. Once their weight increases, they may feel even more negative emotion, which would correspond to further non-nutritive consumption of comfort foods. As is suggested by this research, women, younger people, and overweight people could be particularly vulnerable to this vicious cycle. This implies that these people should pay particular attention to their mood when searching for comfort food. In this way, instead of

¹Interestingly, the literature also suggests that while there may be differences in negative affect intensity for females and younger people compared to males and older people, these differences disappear for positive affect intensity (Cheng 2004).

²The "more nutritive" "less nutritive" distinction is one that has been commonly used in comfort food research (Wansink, Cheney, and Chan 2003)

the tendency for searching for a less nutritive comfort food when in a negative mood state, as suggested in this research, a more cognizant decision can be made about comfort food choice.

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Going Along Versus Going Alone: When Fear and Romance Alter the Influence of Reference Groups

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research has demonstrated that consumers are strongly influenced by reference groups and word-of-mouth (e.g., Cialdini 2001; Pechmann and Ratneshwar 1994). Although consumer research is currently experiencing a resurgence in work on emotion (e.g., Bosmans and Baumgartner 2005; Garg, Inman, and Mittal 2005), almost no research has examined how consumers' emotional or motivational states influence their susceptibility to reference group information.

The current studies were aimed at redressing this imbalance by investigating how the emotional states of fear and romance influence consumer preferences when people are aware of the preferences of their peers. Study 1 used a chat room design and examined how being in a fearful, romantic, or neutral state influenced preferences for artwork. Study 2 extended the research by examining several boundary conditions: First, it investigated whether the effects of emotion will be different depending on whether the consumer decision concerns products that are subjective vs. objective in quality; and second, it examined how the effects of emotion might change depending on the degree of consensus within the reference group (e.g., whether peers are unanimous versus split on a preference).

Both going along and going against the group can confer powerful benefits, such as making more accurate decisions and facilitating affiliation on the one hand (Cialdini and Trost 1998; Chartrand and Bargh 1999), and by establishing uniqueness on the other (Snyder and Fromkin 1980). Given the power of emotional states to motivate specific cognitions (e.g., Maner et al. 2005), one useful way to ascertain whether a consumer will go along or go against the preferences of a reference group may be to examine the consumer's current emotional state.

Consistent with research on stress and affiliation, as well as Terror Management Theory, a state of fear is likely to motivate people to want to fit in with their group and not draw attention to themselves (Pyszczynski, Greenberg, and Solomon 1997; Taylor et al 2000). In contrast, a romantic state, which motivates a person to attract a member of the opposite sex, is likely to lead that person to want to stand out from the crowd. However, men and women tend to value somewhat different traits in a romantic partner (Buss 2003; Baumeister and Sommer 1997; Campbell 2001), suggesting a possible gender difference in conformity when in a romantic state.

Given these theoretically derived predictions, in Study 1 participants were put into either a fearful, romantic, or neutral emotional state by reading a pre-tested short story. Then, they went into a chat room and indicated their preferences on art (while being able to see the unanimous preferences of their peers). When participants were in a fearful state, both men and women were more susceptible to group influence than in the neutral condition. In contrast, a romantic state led men to nonconform (i.e., men went against the preferences of the group), while a romantic state led women to conform more than in the neutral state.

Study 2 extended the findings by examining two theoretically derived boundary conditions for the effects of a romantic state: (1)

whether the consumer choice is *subjective* (e.g., there are multiple products of relatively equal quality in a category) versus *objective* (i.e., there is a verifiably superior product in a category); and (2) whether the opinions of the reference group are unanimous toward preferring a product versus split into a majority and a minority preference.

After inducing a romantic or a neutral state, participants indicated their preferences in a survey in which they could see the responses of the previous four individuals. Half of the survey questions were subjective consumer preferences (e.g., do you prefer a Mercedes-Benz or a BMW), and half of the questions were objective in nature (e.g., do you think it's more expensive to live in New York or San Francisco). Furthermore, for half of the questions the previous responders were unanimous in their selections (e.g., 4 preferred the BMW and 0 preferred the Mercedes), while for the other half, the previous responses were split (e.g., 3 preferred the BMW and 1 preferred the Mercedes).

Results again indicated that when choices were subjective (like that for artwork in Study 1), a romantic state led men to go against the group and led women to conform significantly more. However, consistent with predictions, when choices were objective, a romantic state led both men and women to increase their reliance on group information. That is, when conformity could produce higher accuracy in decision-making, a romantic state increased both men's and women's tendency to follow the reference group. However, also in line with predictions, the effects of the romantic state persisted only when group judgment was unanimous. When the responses of the 4 people were split 3/1, the effects of the romantic state were muted. That is, when nonconformity could not lead men to appear independent to the group, and when conformity could not lead women to appear more agreeable to the entire group, a romantic state did not influence susceptibility to reference group information.

In summary, both the emotional states of fear and romance influenced people's tendency to follow a reference group in a strategic manner. Interestingly, as evidenced by Study 2, the effects of emotion persisted even when people's responses were completely private. The current studies expand on previous consumer research regarding reference groups and word-of-mouth, and provide a significant contribution by showing that specific emotions can influence consumer susceptibility to reference groups. The findings also have multiple practical implications. For example, a romantic desire will lead men to make purchases that make them seem unique, while being in a fear state will lead people to purchase the same products as the majority. Moreover, when attempting to market a product that is unique, marketers are advised to activate romantic desires. We hope these findings serve as a springboard in furthering consumer theories of emotional influence.

Side Effects from Fear: The Automatic Inhibition of Threat-Relevant Brand Advertising

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to broaden our understanding of the impact of fear appeals. Specifically, we investigate whether, and under what conditions, the processing of fear appeals automatically suppresses the activation of concepts that are semantically associated with the threat and in turn decrease attention to threat-relevant brand advertising.

Social marketers have widely used fear appeals as a persuasive communication strategy, with the underlying assumption that threatening messages reduce maladaptive behaviors and/or encourage adaptive behaviors. To this end, fear appeals have been studied in the context of reducing unhealthful behaviors, such as smoking (Keller and Block 1996; Pechmann et al. 2003), drug use (Brown, D'Emidio-Caston, and Pollard 1997), the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (LaTour and Pitts 1989; Tanner, Hunt, and Eppright 1991), aggressive and inattentive driving (Mowen, Harris, and Bone 2004), and alcohol abuse (Mider 1984; Moscato et al. 2001). Fear appeals have also been studied in the context of promoting appropriate behavior, such as practicing good oral hygiene (Janis and Feshbach 1953), obtaining vaccinations (Dillard and Anderson 2004), and using sunscreen (McMath and Prentice-Dunn 2005).

We seek to add to this literature by exploring another theoretically driven consequence of using fear appeal communications that is also of importance but has not yet received attention in the literature; that is, we investigate the ability of fear communications to automatically inhibit the processing of stimuli that are semantically associated with, but not explicitly linked to, the threat. An example of such stimuli is threat-relevant brand advertising. We define "threat-relevant brand advertising" as industry advertising that promotes a product that could be instrumental in causing the very behavior the fear appeal is attempting to prevent. For example, an advertisement that promotes Budweiser or Absolut Vodka would be considered threat-relevant brand advertising for a fear appeal message that focuses on the dangers of drinking and driving. Although Budweiser and Absolut Vodka are not the focal elements of the threat or explicitly mentioned in the threat, they are relevant to an anti-drinking-and-driving fear appeal message because they are specific brands of alcohol that can be consumed before driving.

Various theories have been proposed to account for peoples' reactions to fear appeal messages. Some of these theories, including Sutton's (1982) expectancy value model and Rogers's (1975, 1983) protection motivation model, assume an effortful, cognitive process. However, other theories exist that allow for a more automatic route to persuasion. For example, Ray and Wilkie's (1970) parallel process model and Witte's (1992) extended parallel process model assume that exposure to a fear appeal message engages two processes: a danger-control process and a fear-control process. The danger-control process is a deliberative, cognitive process that includes thoughts of how to avoid the threat (e.g., don't drive after drinking, use a designated driver). In contrast, the fear-control process is believed to be automatic and involuntary and, potentially, to occur outside conscious awareness. This process is viewed as being maladaptive (Ruiter et al. 2001; Witte 1992) in that fear control aims to eliminate the unpleasant feeling elicited by a threatening message through denial ("I won't get hurt if I drink and drive"), reactance ("This message can't stop me from drinking and driving, and in fact, I bet I am a better driver after I've had a few

drinks"), or defensive avoidance ("this is too scary to think about"; Witte and Morrison 2000). It is through the fear-control process that we propose that suppression of semantic associates occurs. Thus, in this sense, we view the fear-control process as being beneficial rather than maladaptive, as others have argued.

The results of Study 1 provide the initial support for our hypotheses that exposure to a fear appeal message leads to the suppression of other concepts semantically related to the threat. Specifically, after reading an anti-drinking and driving fear appeal PSA, participants performed worse in a reaction time task featuring words semantically related to the threat of drinking and driving (bottle, beer, party, alcohol).

Study 2 provided us with two important results. First, based on a surprise recall task, study 2 confirms the findings of study 1 that fear appeals can lead to the automatic suppression of threat-related stimuli. Second, study 2 adds the dimension of testing these hypotheses in an environment of more direct relevance to marketers and consumer advocates. Participants who were exposed to an anti drinking and driving PSA were less likely to notice alcohol ads surrounding magazine articles of interest than were participants who were exposed to the control fear appeal PSA.

In addition, study 2 included a measure of cognitive avoidance, an individual-level variable predicted to impact the likelihood of a participant relying on fear-control processes. This variable was shown to significantly moderate the effect of fear-appeal PSAs on the suppression of threat-related ads.

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“Hopelessly Devoted to You” Towards an Extended Conceptualization of Consumer Devotion

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INTRODUCTION

In the Western consumer society, a world of wealth and abundance, yet a world almost demystified, secularized, and seemingly controllable, people feel an increased desire to find new forms and opportunities to give sense to their lives. Some consumers evidently fill this void by sacralizing products in order to fulfill their deeply rooted desire for spiritualism (Belk et al., 1989; Belk et al., 2003; Firat and Venkatesh, 1995; O’Guinn and Belk, 1989; Muniz and Schau, 2005).

Through an extended conceptualization of consumer devotion, this article attempts to further our understanding about strong emotional bonds between consumers and products. Consumer behavior literature offers rich research insights into emotional consumer relationships with products, possessions, and objects in general. The Consumer Odyssey constitutes one of the first, seminal attempts to grasp the deep meanings of possessions resulting from long-lasting relationships between consumers and objects (Wallendorf et al., 1988; Belk et al., 1989). These early and influential contributions all agree on the importance of non-utilitarian functions of objects, possessions, consumption activities, and rituals (Wallendorf and Arnould, 1991; Arnould and Price, 1993; Celsi et al., 1993; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995) and emphasize the strong connection of objects and activities with consumers’ selves and lives. Research has established that favorite objects contribute to an intensified sense of self, may serve as replacements for desired aspects of life; allure extreme attention and devotion; and often attain a sacred status.

Since the advent of postmodernist thought in consumer behavior, interest in extreme forms of emotional bonding with products has dramatically increased. Concepts, such as attachment, desire, passion, brand enthusiasm, fetishism, brand cult, fandom, and devotion have been introduced in the literature and attracted research attention (Ball and Tasaki, 1992; Wallendorf and Arnould, 1988; Belk et al., 2003; Belk, 2003; Belk and Tumbat, 2005; Kozinets, 2001; Pimentel and Reynolds, 2004).

In a recent article Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) related devotion primarily to socio-cultural phenomena, such as sports fandom, and suggest an extension of their model to a product context. Their work offers an important integration of consumer devotion-related literature. Yet, we believe the concept needs a sharper delineation from collective phenomena, and further clarification, particularly with regard to its psychological foundation. We will focus on the individual experience of such strong relationships to objects and concentrate on its privately lived aspects.

To this end, we will first provide an overview of related phenomena portrayed in consumer behavior literature. We will juxtapose these concepts with theories of love relationships in psychology and related concepts in theology. In the following synthesis emphasis will be put on both the emotional states that characterize devotion, and related acts of devotion. Finally, we will conclude with a discussion of the implications for future theorizing and research.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Devotion in consumer research

Pimentel and Reynolds’ (2004) work is the first in the marketing literature to address the phenomenon of consumer devotion as a distinct concept. Their conceptualization of devotion locates the devoted consumer within the larger group of committed consumers. Their extremely high level of emotional bonding with the brand justifies the distinction of devotees from the rest of loyal and committed consumers. Considering football fans as an example of devoted consumers, Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) show how devotees use special objects, as for instance fan utensils, to demonstrate a relationship to the brand. By assigning extraordinary importance and personal value to those objects, objects attain a sacred status, similar to objects of religious worship.

To the devotee, the sacred object does not only represent a resource for defining and developing personal identity, but also a means of conveying this identity-construct to the environment (Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004). Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) further contend that the need for distinction, the need to belong, or a felt void, serve as antecedents to engaging in a consumer-brand relationship. Consumption can relieve these states of emotional discomfort; it eventually leads to affective commitment towards objects. Once fans are devoted, they engage in ‘proactive sustaining behaviors’, such as pilgrimage, rituals, sacrifices, or displaying behavior, which prevent the object of devotion from re-secularization.

Pimentel and Reynolds’ (2004) approach to devotion focuses on groups and their social experiences and behaviors, similar to what has been defined as fandom in the literature (Hunt et al., 1999; Kozinets, 2001). The individual, private side of strong emotional bonds with objects has gained much less attention in the literature. By highlighting the individual facets of devotion, we offer an alternative perspective with useful consumer behavior implications.

Related concepts in the consumer behavior literature

Concepts in consumer behavior research regularly discuss two common elements of devotion. First, devotion is depicted as a highly emotional concept, reflecting very intense relationships between consumers and objects, or activities. Second, it has been argued that the term ‘devotion’ also implies religious fervor (Pimentel and Reynolds, 2004). Pimentel and Reynolds’ work also indicates that devotion is connected to strong feelings related to love, as well as feelings of spiritual or religious excitement and adoration. Hence, devotion is characterized by *states* of devotion and results in devotional *behavior*, which are spiritual in nature.

In consumer behavior literature, we can find a number of related, yet distinct concepts. Ahuvia’s (2005) notion of ‘object-love’ seems rather close to the emotional aspect of the concept of devotion. Drawing on Belk’s (1988) notion of the extended self, Ahuvia maintains that the objects we love have a strong influence on our sense of who and what we are. Several authors (Wallendorf and Arnould, 1988; Fournier 1998; Belk, 2003) have adopted a similar perspective with regard to the importance of loved objects

to individual identity. Ahuvia (2005) extended these insights with his findings that love objects might also assist with symbolically demarcating the boundaries between the self and identities the consumer rejects. In other instances, they serve to support an identity that combines potentially conflicting aspects of self. Furthermore, particularly in connection with activities and consumption experiences, objects also serve the purpose of self-completion, personal growth, and renewal of the self (Schouten, 1991; Arnould and Price, 1993; Celsi et al., 1993).

Another related concept has been promoted by Belk et al. (2003). Consumer passion and desire is portrayed as a strong, highly emotional, captivating, and motivating force, which makes us want the particular object of desire. Hence, desire is defined as a highly emotional, positive *state*. Based on mimetic theory (Girard, 1977) and Foucault's work on strategies of modern governance (1984), Belk et al. (2003) describe desire as being deeply linked to the social world, its values and lifestyles. Belk et al.'s (2003) findings reflect the passionate character of desire, fueled by danger and immorality, distance and inaccessibility, desire for otherness and sociality. Hence, desire is rather characterized by powerful feelings of urge, and lacks the notion of commitment.

In order to elaborate the two defining elements of devotion-emotional state and behavior-we will draw on literature on love and romantic relationships in psychology. Research findings on religious sensations, religious worship, and its manifestations should provide a theoretical foundation of the religious aspects of devotion. Furthermore, we want to draw attention to the fact that feelings and actions towards objects of devotion might take on various forms, just like in interpersonal love relationships.

Love and devotion in psychology

Before love can grow out of a romantic relationship between two individuals both persons have to possess the ability to fall in love (Kernberg, 1995). They must be ready to idealize the partner and willing to enter into the commitment of an emotional relationship. Also reciprocal erotic desire is a prerequisite for love. Once, these circumstances are established, love ideally evolves towards an altruistic act of loving, where being able to give is more important than taking (Fromm, 1976). Love is seen by Fromm as a perpetual activity. According to him, it comprises four basic mutual elements: concern, responsibility, and respect for and knowledge of the object of the union.

Sternberg (1997) sees intimacy, passion, and decision/commitment as the three building blocks of love. Intimacy relates to closeness and bondedness in relationships, while passion stands for physical attraction and sexual desire. When looking at typical behaviors and attitudes that make up intimacy in this construct, Fromm's basic elements of love can be recognized as sub-elements of Sternberg's intimacy. Decision/commitment describes the conscious decision at the beginning of a relationship to love one's partner, and later on, the commitment to keep this love alive. The interplay of these three elements of love can result in eight different forms of love, stretching from non-love, to the most complete form, consummate love, depending on how extensively each component is present. Non-love is a state where none of the three components are present. In most of the love kinds, two components are dominant, while the third one is only weak or absent. Consummate love is the only kind of love that is a product of all three components (Sternberg, 1997).

As opposed to Sternberg's eight variations of love, Lee only determines six love styles (Lee, 1973). These love styles, basically, rest upon the same underlying elements, namely passion, intimacy and decision/commitment. Lee's three primary love styles (Eros,

Ludus and Storge) find their equivalent in three of Sternberg's types of love. While Eros, which is the combination of passion, intimacy and commitment, equals Sternberg's consummate love, Ludus represents a state of love where commitment does not play a big role, just like Sternberg's romantic love. The third primary form, Storge, is a mixture of intimacy and decision/commitment in the absence of passion, equivalent to Sternberg's companionate love.

Function and purpose of love (relationships)

Erich Fromm (1976) sees romantic love as driven by a need to overcome the sense of separation. The perceived separation from the outer world occurs to humankind because we have evolved from an instinct-dependent being to rational homo sapiens. The mental and physical unity with a beloved person can help us to get rid of this deep-seated disparity.

Djikic and Oatley (2004) present a second dominant approach to the purpose of love and romantic relationships that can be found in the literature. According to them love is supposed to add meaning and sense to our lives. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1994) follow this stream of reasoning, suggesting that romantic relationships should fill the life of those involved with sense and substance. Additionally, they argue that another significant purpose of love is to grant emotional stability and security. Ideal love relationships should foster the autonomous personality development of both partners (Djikic and Oatley, 2004; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1994). In this case, the exchange among the partners leads to a process of self-reflection and self-discovery for both. As a positive relationship in this sense can only be established if both partners open up freely to each other, intimacy, self-disclosure, mutual understanding, and respect are essential (Djikic and Oatley, 2004; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1994; Fromm, 1976).

Love and devotion in theology

Function and purpose of religions

According to Erich Fromm (1976) religion serves as a frame and guideline for thinking and acting. It provides the individual with a means of orientation and an object of devotion. Religion offers a set of explanations and values which helps in making sense of what is going on around us. But religion also confronts us with something higher that is worthy of adoration. Whereas Max Weber also defines religion's main function as problem-solving, Sigmund Freud (1912) sees religion's primary purpose as providing consolation, and granting security to those who feel lost and threatened in an increasingly complex and insecure environment.

Religious love, just like interpersonal romantic love, is derived from a deeply rooted human need to overcome the feeling of separation from the outer world (Fromm, 1956). The objects of devotion that religions place at their center allow the individual to build up mental and spiritual connection. This artificial bond to a higher being delivers the "lost" individual from his state of separation.

Manifestations of religious devotion

Religious devotion often reveals itself in the form of worship of objects or persons and religious rites (Giddens, 1991; Freud, 1912; Lévi-Strauss, 1963; Mol, 1979; Durkheim, 2001; Fromm, 1956). In primitive religions totems play a central role (Mol, 1979; Durkheim, 2001; Lévi-Strauss, 1963). Idols made of wood or clay in the shape of human bodies were believed to possess supernatural powers and therefore be appropriate for public and private adoration (Fromm, 1956). Today, religions still have sacred objects such as altars, shrines and relics. Representatives of a religion (e.g. saints, the pope, the Dalai Lama) are also venerated as object of religious devotion because they embody the values and beliefs of the religion (Martignetti, 1998; Nicholls, 1996). They serve as

tangible objects towards which believers can direct their devotion (Mol, 1979; Forster and Ranum, 1982).

Rites constitute purposive acts associated with religious symbols (Durkheim, 2001; Giddens, 1991). Social rites are extremely numerous in primitive religions, including rites of passage, rites of initiation, ascetic rites, rites for sacrificing and rites for commemorating (Durkheim, 2001; Eliade, 1959; Mol 1979; van Gennep, 1960). In Christianity, events like baptism, marriage or going to confession are common examples of rites (Forster and Ranum, 1982). Rituals are either performed individually or as collective ceremonies (Giddens, 1991).

Religious aspects of love

Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1994) describe love as earthly religion, which contains a certain kind of utopia; just like religious systems. Both, love and religion, enable the experience of transcendence. While in the case of love, sexual sensation leads to transcendent moments, religion's transcendent aspect is determined by the belief that a higher powerful being exists. The conviction that a better life and a superior self are possible is the common foundation for individuals seeking love and religion.

SYNTHESIS

The following section provides a synthesis comprised of the psychological underpinnings of love relationships, devotion as an emotional state, and the religious acts associated with consumer devotion.

"You light up my life"—the psychology of person-object relationships

Similar to what Ahuvia (2005), Belk (2003), Belk et al. (1989), Wallendorf and Arnould (1988) have described, objects of love are a repository of meaning in life. They represent important means of identity-building. In order to give their lives meaning, consumers build up highly emotional, long-lasting relationships with love objects (Fromm, 1976; Fournier, 1998; Vézina, 1999; Shankar and Fitchett, 2002). They help people cope with complexity in life. Confronted with almost endless options of how to live one's life, and with an unprecedented amount of things to consume and possess, love objects differentiate sheer consumption objects and valued objects from the ones we love and relate with. They provide a frame of reference, reflect our values system, and display our *Weltanschauung*.

Those objects are loved for what they do to the consumer, particularly in times of change. They are essential for the development and definition of one's identity. Human beings are confronted with various life tasks, current concerns, and times of transition (Fournier, 1989), which are waiting to be mastered. Objects can help us to overcome those challenges by physically and psychologically helping us to gain skills and perform better, giving us hope for the future. They are means for transformation and can help to overcome tensions between different identities. As reported by Belk (2003), for instance, high heeled shoes can help transform an insecure high school girl into an elegant and adorable lady (2003).

However, consumers do not necessarily become devoted to all objects that help in this respect. Research in psychology teaches us that love relationships are also characterized by a secure feeling, by reciprocity and unity. According to Fromm (1956, 1976), humans engage in religious practices and love relationships because of a deeply rooted human desire to overcome the feeling of being separated. Fournier (1998) has found similar brand relationships, which are characterized by the feeling that the other is irreplaceable.

A further reason to engage in those relationships is our striving for transcendental, spiritual experiences (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim,

1994). Objects and persons may be mediators of such experiences and play a central role in an individual's spiritual life. From the literature on totemism (Mol, 1979; Forster and Ranum, 1982; Durkheim, 2001) we know that individual totems are used as concrete objects to which the believers can direct their devotion.

"Is it love?"—devotion as an emotional state

As Fournier (1998) has reported, consumers engage in various different forms of brand-relationships among which we also find feelings of love. Such relationships require the ability to idealize an object, which is an antecedent for desire. Hence, love objects are perceived in a somewhat distorted and idealized manner. Furthermore, in order to be loved an object must fulfill the 'personification qualification' criterion, which enables an object to be perceived as an active partner who can also reciprocate in a way (Fournier, 1998; Rozanski et al., 1999).

Whereas our intuition undoubtedly tells us how it feels to love and to be loved, love from a theoretical standpoint is a much more complex emotional state and encompasses many different forms. Passion and desire are often cited components of love (Hazan and Shaver, 1994; Sternberg, 1997; Kernberg, 1995; Fournier, 1998; Belk et al., 2003). Along with passion comes idealization and adoration of the beloved. The passionate component of devotion is responsible for the intensity of emotionality that comes with love however it does not reflect the intensity of love as such. Passion rather circumscribes the desire and (physical) attraction that is evoked by the object of love. Hence, passion and desire is to be understood as an important component of love, although not equivalent to love. Authors agree that love also implies a feeling of connectedness and intimacy (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1994; Fournier, 1998; Hazan and Shaver, 1994; Sternberg, 1997). Person-object relationships, therefore, are also very close and trustful, which necessitates that both partners are highly committed and dedicated to this relationship. Dedication describes the conscious decision at the beginning of the partnership to keep this love alive. Passion and dedication are fueled by transcendent experiences, which are sought after in love relationships (Fromm, 1956, 1976; Belk, 1989; Kozinets, 1997, 2001; Pimentel and Reynolds, 2004; Scholes, 2004; Muniz and Schau, 2005). Those experiences make partners feel close to each other and uphold a certain intimacy, which is needed for love to gain substance.

Devotion as an emotional state can be described as a tripartite state of *passion*, *intimacy* and *dedication*, similar to Sternberg's triangle of love. Depending on the intensity of those three components, different facets and intensities of devotion might exist (Shimp and Madden, 1988). As described by Sternberg (1997) and Lee (1973), several love styles are possible, from non-love to consummate love, which we expect to exist in person-object relationships in a similar way. Acts of devotion perpetuate and refuel the loving feelings for the loved, sacred object.

"Loving you, loving me"—acts of devotion

It is at the very beginning of a love relationship that individuals engage in a process of sacralization of the loved object, for instance by means of sacrifices, adoration and worshipping, rites and rituals, and objectification of the sacred (see: Belk et al., 1989 for a comprehensive overview of sacralization processes). However, ecstatic as one might feel upon a first transcendental experience and loving feeling, this sacred status may soon be lost through habituation, forgetting, or encroachment of the profane (Belk, et al., 1989). Belk et al. (2003) provide important findings on the dynamics of consumer passion and desire. They report that desire is perpetuated through imagination, by dwelling on the love object

and so intensifying our feelings. However as soon as we possess the object of desire, it transforms into familiarity, and eventually boredom. Only our desire to desire, our fear of being without desire, and hope to be able to realize our desire eventually upholds this state.

As opposed to desire, devotion is characterized by a much more altruistic attitude, by responsibility, and dedication. Therefore, devoted individuals do not hesitate to sacrifice their time, money, and energy in order to maintain this intimate and passionate relationship. The religious zealotry of devoted individuals is exhibited by consumers who make such sacrifices, engage in consumer advocacy (Rozanski et al., 1999), and oppositional brand loyalty, as for instance described by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) or Pimentel and Reynolds (2004). Loyalty in words and deeds is a distinct element of consumer devotion. It reflects a voluntary emotional bond between an individual and a love object. From Ahuvia's (2005) work we have learned that love objects receive much attention and dedication from consumers rather than provide simple pleasures. Individuals seem to put much energy in these objects, which makes them meaningful and helps integrate them into their sense of identity (2005). When put to the extreme, individuals even cease consuming and start producing their own love objects in an effort to achieve a state of individuation and self-realization (Hemetsberger, 2005). These objects are outcomes of 'labors of love' (Ahuvia, 2005; Hemetsberger, 2005) reflecting that 'pleasure can be bought, but love is made'.

We can also learn from Fromm (1976) that love involves knowing each other. Hence, devotees are eager to gain knowledge about their love object. Individuals dedicate a considerable part of their life to the things they love. We know from theology that individuals engage in rites, rituals, prayers, singing, fasting, adoration and worship. People travel to holy places, adore and worship spiritual leaders, collect things, build altars and shrines, all which are sacred to them. Regarding love objects we are still unaware of much of the private rites and worshipping behavior. However, we know from introspection that we fast for *the* wedding gown, that we pray for good weather to be able to ride our bike, and that we caress and polish our cars. We even make pilgrimages to the Museum of Modern Art in order to see the original design of our love object. Whereas some behavior becomes public at some point, other devotional acts are kept private. Knowledge about private meanings of possessions is rich (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Richins, 1994), but we know much less about how individuals act upon love objects and keep this love alive, apart from public spheres.

DISCUSSION AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As developed in our synthesis, devotion conveys the meaning of love, close connectedness, and a religious form of zeal. From our discussion of the extant literature derives a tripartite, yet closely interwoven, concept of devotion encompassing *passion*, *intimacy*, and *dedication*. In future research, an investigation into the interplay among the three elements will provide important empirical underpinnings of consumer devotion, and provide a categorization of person-object relationships. Sternberg (1997) and Lee's (1973) love styles could serve as a starting point for an extension to objects and brands.

As with regard to the behavioral aspects of devotion, we should further look at the intimate and private acts of devotion and how they contribute to consumers' self-identity and personal growth. Acts of devotion might reflect particular forms and intensities of consumer-object relationships, which we don't know yet. A brand

could facilitate and support those acts of devotion, for instance by providing 'holy' places where the devotee can adore the brand; by facilitating private rituals; or by inviting devotees to create their own love object.

Devotees also show their dedication to their worshipped brand to others. Their role as ambassadors of the brand should not be underestimated. Being convinced of their object of devotion and its centrality in their lives, devotees share their opinion and feelings concerning the brand with others. Thus, they might influence potential consumers to the advantage or disadvantage of the brand. However, they might act differently in this respect as compared to other members of a brand community, because of their intimate, private relationship with the brand. Hence, future research is needed to clarify their role within a broader social context.

Considering that each partner in an interpersonal relationship has chosen his complement for good reasons, there might be specific characteristics in products or brands that increase their adequacy as object of devotion. Gender could make a difference regarding men and women's propensity to become devoted to different objects. Monga (2002) has already reported findings that men and women do not engage in brand relationships in the same way.

Investigations into the intensity of consumer devotion seem important as it could be both enriching and detrimental to consumers and consumer-brand relationships. Just like pathological forms of love exist in interpersonal relationships, pathological forms of devotion to a brand or product can emerge. Findings from research into compulsive consumption and addictive behavior show an increased vulnerability of individuals with a general addictive predisposition and low self-esteem to develop pathological forms of devotion (O'Guinn and Faber, 1989; Hirschman, 1992). We expect that an investigation on the propensity of different human personalities to addictive forms of devotion will contribute to avoid potentially detrimental consequences.

A potential harm for consumers might also arise from a late awareness that there is a decisive difference between interpersonal relationships and relationships with objects. When love objects are treated as substitutes for human relationships, which are essential in human life, ethical concerns arise. If a brand cannot fulfill the expectations of the devotee, the devotee might not only quit the relationship but also feel abused, disrespected and betrayed by a brand. Hence, for one thing, as Holt (2002) maintains, brands need to be authentic. Additionally, encounters between brands and consumers should reflect respect and concern.

It might be challenging for consumers and companies to draw the line between an enriching devotional relationship with a brand and its pathological counterparts. Yet, we should not close our eyes before the potential perils of pulling consumers into such tight and personally challenging relationships with a brand. True and authentic brands should aim to contribute to a re-enchanted world and enable both, the consumer and the brand, to grow.

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When More May Be Less: The Effects of Regulatory Focus on Responses to Maximal/Minimal Comparative Frames

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ABSTRACT

We examined the consequences of regulatory focus on exposure to two types of comparative advertising frames—a maximal (“Brand A is superior to Brand B”) and a minimal claim (“Brand A is equivalent or similar to brand B”). Experiment 1 featured brand vs. brand comparisons while experiment 2 compared a brand with a normative standard. For promotion-focused people, a maximal frame simply represented a gain over a minimal frame leading to more favorable elaboration and greater persuasion. To prevention-focused individuals, maximal frames represented either a “no loss” or a “deviation from the norm”. The former representation led the two frames to be equally persuasive. The latter representation led to greater negative elaboration of maximal frames, making them less persuasive.

INTRODUCTION

Recent research has found that the effectiveness of comparative advertising is moderated by several message features (valence of comparison: Jain and Posavac 2004; gain/loss framing: Shiv, Edell, and Payne 1997, 2004; alignability: Zhang, Kardes, and Cronley 2002; featured attribute’s typicality: Pechmann and Ratneshwar 1991) that systematically affect persuasion. We examine the differential persuasion effects of a *maximal* claim where the sponsor brand claims superiority over a comparison object, and a *minimal* claim where the sponsor brand claims parity with the comparison object (Buchanan and Smithies 1989). An example of maximal claims is Visa’s claim that it is accepted more widely than American Express. Minimal claims are exemplified by Nissan Altima’s claim that it has the same trunk space as a BMW.

While these examples suggest that maximal and minimal claims are mostly made in a brand vs. brand context, claims of brands comparing themselves against an established standard or a norm are also observed. For instance, manufacturers of dietary supplements cite their brands as meeting specific dietary and nutritional guidelines established by the FDA (e.g., % daily recommended value of vitamins, fiber, and other nutritional ingredients). Several automobile brands are often advertised as meeting specific regulatory standards relating to fuel emission and/or safety (e.g., performance in a crash test). We investigate minimal and maximal claims in brand vs. brand as well as brand vs. standard comparison contexts. Besides identifying and investigating different types of comparisons, our research makes two additional contributions. One, it examines regulatory focus (Higgins 1997) as a moderator of effectiveness of these two comparison frames; and second, it provides insight into the processes underlying this moderation.

REGULATORY FOCUS

Regulatory focus theory suggests that distinct motivational systems govern people’s drive to attain desired outcomes. To achieve these outcomes, a consumer may choose to either “approach outcomes that match the desired end-state” or “avoid outcomes that mismatch the desired end-state” (Crowe and Higgins 1997). Some consumers might prefer to maximize the occurrence of positive outcomes (e.g., hopes and achievements). Thus, they are driven towards scenarios representing ‘gains’ and away from

scenarios associated with ‘non-gains’. In contrast, others may focus on minimizing the occurrence of negative outcomes (e.g., duties and responsibilities). They are motivated by the absence and presence of undesirable outcomes and are thus more driven towards approaching ‘no loss’ situations and avoiding ‘losses’. The motivational system that approaches positive outcomes is termed promotion focus while the system that is driven by avoiding negative outcomes is called prevention focus (Higgins 2000).

Recent research has examined the role of regulatory focus in persuasion and has shown that the effectiveness of an appeal advocating attainment of prevention/promotion goals varies depending on the context and/or frame of the appeal. Chernev (2004) found that prevention-focused individuals show a greater preference for status-quo than promotion focused individuals. Lee and Aaker (2004) demonstrated that gain-framed appeals were more persuasive for promotion-focused individuals, but loss-framed appeals were more effective for prevention-focused individuals. However, research on regulatory focus has not examined how the effectiveness of different types of comparisons may differ for promotion- and prevention-focused individuals. We suggest that maximal frames are more persuasive under a promotion orientation while minimal frames, depending on how they are perceived, are either equally or more effective than maximal frames under a prevention orientation. Further, we examine the processes that may underlie the judgments evoked by exposure to different frames by consumers with different regulatory foci.

HYPOTHESES

Higgins (1997) suggests that individuals with a promotion focus work towards *maximizing* gains and/or minimizing non-gains. In contrast, a prevention focus is driven towards *minimizing* losses and/or maximizing non-losses. Promotion-focused individuals follow an ‘inclusive’ approach—they focus on striking ‘hits’ and avoiding misses. Alternately, a prevention focus fosters an ‘exclusive’ approach—the focus is on incorporating correct rejections and steering clear of ‘false-alarms’. In particular, promotion-focused individuals avoid committing errors of omission while prevention-focused individuals avoid making errors of commission (Crowe and Higgins 1997). Because of their drive to approach hopes and aspirations, promotion-focused individuals are open to change and prefer advancement to maintaining their existing states (Chernev 2004; Liberman et al. 1999), and are likely to set maximal goals (Crowe and Higgins 1997). Thus, when a brand is presented as superior to or exceeding a comparison brand versus being similar to it, promotion-focused individuals would be more persuaded by superiority rather than similarity claims. This outcome is predicted because in the ‘superior (vs. similar) to a comparison brand’ frame, the sponsor brand presents a gain (non-gain) and an advancement (vs. no improvement) from the norm.

Prevention-focused individuals focus on stopping losses and attaining non-losses. When a brand is presented as being at parity with a comparison brand, it represents a non-loss to them. Similarly, when the sponsor brand is seen as exceeding the comparison brand, any positive movement from an accepted entity is also likely to be perceived as a non-loss. Higgins (2000) states, “the duties, obliga-

tions, and responsibilities (that drive a prevention-focused individual) function more like minimal goals which a person must attain." Thus, under a prevention-focus, a brand that is similar to a comparison brand is acceptable because it meets established expectations. A brand that is superior to the comparison brand also offers the same 'non-loss'. Hence, prevention-focused people should find both minimal and maximal framed comparison equally appealing.

H1: In a brand vs. brand context, promotion-focused individuals will be more persuaded by maximal (vs. minimal) frames while prevention-focused individuals will be equally persuaded by minimal and maximal comparative frames.

Valence of Elaboration. Regulatory focus is expected to guide the valence of message-related elaboration. Promotion-focused individuals are likely to think more favorably of a maximal (vs. minimal) comparative frame because it represents their gain-driven goals. Hence, maximal (vs. minimal) framed comparisons should lead to more favorable elaboration. For such individuals, more positive thoughts and fewer negative thoughts should be evidenced in response to maximal frames than minimal frames. To prevention-focused individuals, both, maximal and minimal appeals represent non-losses and hence should be equally desirable. So, the valence of the thoughts generated by the prevention-focused individuals should not vary as a function of frame. To examine this 'nature of elaboration' prediction, we relied on a valenced elaboration index of positive minus negative thoughts (Maheswaran and Chaiken 1991).

H2: For the promotion-focused individuals, the valenced elaboration index would be more favorable when featuring a maximal frame. However, prevention-focused individuals will have equivalent valenced elaboration index across both frames.

EXPERIMENT 1

97 undergraduate students participated in a 2 (promotion vs. prevention focus) x 2 (maximal vs. minimal comparison frames) between subjects experiment in two purportedly unrelated studies in exchange for course credit. The first study manipulated focus through a brand name recognition task (see Higgins et al. 1994-experiment 4). Participants were informed that the task will require them to solve anagrams that were 'jumbled-up' brand names and they will be assigned points for each name. In the promotion (prevention) focus condition, respondents began with 0 (12) points and were informed that they will gain (lose) 2 points when they got a brand name right (wrong) and will not win (not lose) 2 points when they didn't get the brand name right (wrong).

Next, respondents completed a second study that exposed them to a toothpaste advertisement. In the maximal (minimal) frame condition, the sponsor brand was described as preventing cavities 'more effectively than' ('as effectively as') the comparison brand. Specifically, the copy stated: "Crown is more (as) effective in preventing tooth decay than (as) the leading brand, Gloss. Research has consistently shown that Crown provides cavity protection that is superior (similar) to Gloss. Try Crown today and experience superior (similar) cavity prevention to Gloss." In addition, the sponsor brand was described as having a "Fresh Mint" flavor. The brand names were fictitious to control for prior brand knowledge/preference and were counterbalanced. This counterbalancing did not influence the dependent measures. After looking through the advertisement at their own pace, respondents went to the next page. Respondents then filled all measures (thoughts and

evaluations counterbalanced) and manipulation checks for focus and comparison frames, responded to a suspicion probe, were debriefed and dismissed. The suspicion probe revealed no evidence of hypotheses guessing.

Dependent Measures and Manipulation Checks

Brand Evaluation and Elaboration. Participants evaluated the sponsor brand on four 7-point scales anchored by 'will definitely not consider buying-will definitely consider buying', 'very bad-very good', 'very unfavorable-very favorable', and 'negative-positive' (higher scores indicate more positive evaluations). These items were averaged into an overall evaluation for the target brand ($M=.91$). Thoughts were coded by two independent raters (blind to the hypotheses) as message-related positive, negative, and neutral statements, as well as irrelevant statements (Chaiken and Maheswaran 1994; Jain 2003; Jain and Maheswaran 2000). The judges agreed on 89% of the thoughts and resolved the disagreements through discussion. Positive thoughts indicated positive thinking and approval of the claims presented in the appeal (e.g., "This toothpaste seems like a good one"); negative thoughts indicated thoughts that reflected negatively on the product or were challenges to the claims presented in the appeal (e.g., "I am not sure if what they are saying is true."); neutral statements did not clearly have a positive or negative evaluative implication on judgments (e.g., "The ad was for toothpaste."). Thoughts appearing unrelated to the experimental materials were coded as irrelevant (e.g., "I am ready to head to work"). The number of negative thoughts was subtracted from positive thoughts to yield an index of valenced elaboration.

Manipulation Checks. The manipulation check for the comparative frames elicited participants' rating of the similarity between the two brands on two items anchored by "most different (1)-exact same (7)" and "totally dissimilar (1)-totally similar (7)" ($r=.72$). The manipulation for regulatory focus was assessed using two items. In a 'follow-up on brand name quiz' study, the promotion-focused item assessed the extent to which participants focused on scoring more points and was anchored by "not at all (1)-a lot (7)". The measure for prevention focus assessed the extent to which participants focused on not losing any points with the same end points and numerical anchors.

Results

Manipulation Checks. A 2 (Focus) x 2 (Frame) between-subjects ANOVA was used to analyze the data. The comparative frame manipulation check yielded only a significant main effect-the two brands were seen as more similar in the minimal frame condition ($M_{\text{maximal}}=4.18, M_{\text{minimal}}=4.98; F(1, 92)=12.38, p<.01$), confirming the success of this manipulation. Further, promotion focused participants were concerned marginally more with gaining points ($M_{\text{promotion}}=4.70, M_{\text{prevention}}=3.94; F(1, 93)=2.99, p=0.08$) and significantly less with losing points ($M_{\text{promotion}}=3.31$ vs. $M_{\text{prevention}}=4.63; F(1, 93)=8.51, p<.01$).

Brand Evaluations and Processes. A 2 x 2 ANOVA on sponsor brand evaluation yielded a marginal effect of regulatory focus ($M_{\text{promotion}}=4.38, M_{\text{prevention}}=3.93; F(1, 93)=3.52, p=.07$) as well as a significant focus x frame interaction ($F(1, 93)=4.91, p<.05$; see table 1). Consistent with hypothesis 1, follow-up contrasts indicated that promotion-focused individuals found maximal frames more persuasive ($M_{\text{maximal}}=4.80, M_{\text{minimal}}=3.95; F(1, 89)=6.60, p<.05$) while prevention-focused individuals were indifferent between the two ($M_{\text{maximal}}=3.84, M_{\text{minimal}}=4.03; F<1$).

An ANOVA on the valenced index (positive minus negative) of thoughts yielded two significant effects: a main effect of frame ($M_{\text{maximal}}=.96, M_{\text{minimal}}=-.04; F(1, 93)=8.79, p<.01$) and a focus

TABLE 1
COMPARING TWO BRANDS
MEANS OF KEY DEPENDENT MEASURES (EXPERIMENT 1)

Regulatory Focus	Promotion Focus		Prevention Focus	
	Maximal Frame	Minimal Frame	Maximal Frame	Minimal Frame
Evaluations of Sponsor Brand	4.80	3.95	3.84	4.03
Valenced Elaboration	1.67	-.48	.26	.40

Note: Cell sizes range from 24-26

x frame interaction ($F(1, 93)=11.40, p<.001$). Supporting hypothesis 2, follow-up contrasts revealed that promotion-focused individuals had more favorable elaboration when exposed to a maximal frame ($M_{\text{maximal}}=1.67, M_{\text{minimal}}=-.48; F(1, 93)=20.34, p<.001$). For prevention-focused participants, the valence of elaboration did not vary across the two frames ($M_{\text{minimal}}=.40, M_{\text{maximal}}=.26; F<1$).

EXPERIMENT 2

Findings of experiment 1 are consistent with our prediction that focus moderates the effectiveness of comparative frames. In the next experiment, we tested this moderation in a brand vs. standard context guided by the prediction that for the prevention-focused individual, a minimal appeal will be *more* persuasive. The reasoning for this expectation is as follows.

Prevention focus fosters a preference for stability and maintenance of the status quo rather than risking a move to a 'better' position (Liberman et al. 2001). Therefore, prevention-focused individuals find a new brand that meets a credible standard (as in a minimal appeal) acceptable because it represents stability. On the other hand, a maximal claim represents a movement from or challenge to the status quo and hence carries uncertainty with it. Thus, it could be interpreted in one of two ways by a prevention-focused individual: a) simply as a 'non-loss' or b) as a deviation from the norm that may be perceived as a potential source of loss (a.k.a. a 'false-alarm').

In experiment 1, as reasoned earlier, the presentation of a brand as being superior to a competing brand induced perceptions of non-loss. Consumers routinely encounter advertising that promotes a brand as superior to another brand and to that extent, such claims may be simply coded as non-losses. Also, brands might not be associated with being 'guidelines' or 'standards' in quite the same way as, say, an FDA requirement. Thus, under prevention focus, a maximal 'brand vs. brand' comparison is as persuasive as a minimal frame. In a brand vs. standard domain, a brand's claim that its performance exceeds a standard may be perceived as a deviation from an established norm-'false-alarm' or 'possible loss'-that should be avoided. Hence, prevention-focused individuals may find a maximal comparison less persuasive based on their aversion to steering away from the status-quo and their preference for avoiding 'false-alarms'. However, when the brand claims to meet

the normative standards (as in minimal frames), it represents the desirable end-state of 'no loss', and should thus be more persuasive.

H3: In a brand vs. standard context, promotion-focused individuals will be more persuaded by maximal (vs. minimal) frames. Prevention-focused individuals will be more persuaded by minimal (vs. maximal) frames.

The valence of elaboration should also reflect our theorizing. If prevention focused individuals indeed sense a maximal framed comparison to an established standard as a potential loss, then this perceived risk of a loss should be reflected in the valence of thoughts such that maximal (vs. minimal) frames should lead to more unfavorable elaboration. Hence, we predict:

H4: For the promotion-focused individuals, the valenced elaboration index would be more favorable when featuring a maximal frame. However, prevention-focused individuals will elaborate more favorably on a minimal (vs. maximal) frame.

Method

We tested hypotheses 3 and 4 in a 2 (promotion/prevention focus) x 2 (minimal/maximal frame) between subjects experiment conducted among 122 undergraduate participants in two purportedly unrelated studies. In the first study that manipulated regulatory focus, promotion- (prevention-) focused respondents were asked to write down and explain how their 'hopes and aspirations' ('duties and obligations') differed from those they had in their childhood (see Liberman et al. 2001).

Next, in a 'second study', participants were exposed to an ad for a nutrition bar, the copy for which stated: "The FDA (U. S. Food and Drug Administration) and the NAS (Food and Nutrition Board of the National Academy of Sciences) have set up recommended Dietary Allowances and Daily Values (DV) of most nutrients, vitamins, and minerals that we should consume. The Nutri-Bar® was designed to meet (*exceed*) these standards of health and nutrition. Developed to be the body's most efficient source of fuel, each Nutri-Bar® packs 10 grams of complex carbohydrates. That means you can easily satisfy the energy demands of your hectic daily schedule. Add to that our exclusive vitamin formulation

TABLE 2
COMPARING BRANDS WITH STANDARDS
MEANS OF KEY DEPENDENT MEASURES (EXPERIMENT 2)

Regulatory Focus	Promotion Focus		Prevention Focus	
	Maximal Frame	Minimal Frame	Maximal Frame	Minimal Frame
Evaluations of Sponsor Brand	5.07	3.45	3.57	4.64
Valenced Elaboration	1.26	-.61	-1.13	.17

Note: Cell sizes range from 30-31.

which includes 105% DV of the antioxidant vitamins C and E and 105% DV of all eight B-complex vitamins to aid energy metabolism, plus 9-10 grams of high quality protein to help muscles recover and rebuild. These ingredients all add up to nutrition in a convenient, no-melt, no-crumble bar that fuels your daily activities, no matter where your adventures take you. Available in several flavors. The Nutri-bar meets (*exceeds*) the standards. The Nutri-bar meets (*exceeds*) your needs.”

As indicated by the italicized words in parentheses above, only the framing of the comparison of the target brand with a credible standard (FDA and NAS) as meeting/exceeding was varied. Participants then filled the dependent measures as in experiment 1, responded to manipulation check items for the independent variables, were probed for suspicion, debriefed, thanked, and dismissed. No evidence of hypotheses guessing or demand was found.

Dependent Measures and Manipulation Checks

Brand Evaluation, Elaboration, and Manipulation Checks. Brand evaluations ($n=93$) as well as thoughts were collected and analyzed as in experiment 1. Focus manipulation checks asked participants the extent to which they focused on their hopes, aspirations, responsibilities, and obligations on separate 7-point scale items for each of these goals, with the scales items anchored by ‘not at all’ (1) and ‘a lot’ (7). Hopes and aspirations were averaged to form a promotion index ($r=.90$) and responsibilities and obligations were averaged to form a prevention index ($r=.89$) (Liberman et al. 2001). The manipulation check for the frame asked participants to indicate the extent to which they believed Nutri-bar met/exceeded FDA’s requirements, with anchors ‘meets standards set up by FDA’ (1)-‘exceeds standards set up by FDA’ (7).

Results

The data were analyzed using a 2 (Focus: promotion / prevention) x 2 (Frame: maximal / minimal) between subjects full-factorial design. No effects were observed based on the order of administering the dependent variables.

Manipulation Checks. Promotion-focused individuals indeed thought more about hopes and aspirations ($M_{\text{promotion}}=4.06$, $M_{\text{prevention}}=3.18$; $F(1, 118)=6.67$, $p<.05$) and less about duties and obligations ($M_{\text{promotion}}=3.39$, $M_{\text{prevention}}=4.53$; $F(1, 118)=8.85$, $p<.01$). In addition, respondents in the minimal frame condition

thought that the advertised breakfast bar met standards while those in the maximal frame condition thought it exceeded standards ($M_{\text{minimal}}=4.02$, $M_{\text{maximal}}=4.82$; $F(1, 118)=5.56$, $p<.05$).

Brand Evaluations and Processes. An ANOVA on the evaluation of Nutri-bar yielded only a significant focus x frame interaction ($F(1, 118)=26.15$, $p<.001$; see table 2). Follow-up contrasts indicated that promotion-focused participants were more persuaded by the maximal frame ($M_{\text{maximal}}=5.07$, $M_{\text{minimal}}=3.45$; $F(1, 118)=19.34$, $p<.001$) while the minimal frame was more effective under a prevention focus ($M_{\text{minimal}}=4.64$, $M_{\text{maximal}}=3.57$; $F(1, 118)=8.11$, $p<.01$).

As predicted in hypothesis 4, an ANOVA on the valenced index of thoughts yielded the predicted focus x frame interaction ($F(1, 118)=29.28$, $p<.001$). In particular, participants with a promotion focus were more favorable in their elaboration under the maximal frame condition ($M_{\text{maximal}}=1.26$, $M_{\text{minimal}}=-.61$; $F(1, 118)=20.73$, $p<.001$) while prevention focus elicited more favorable thoughts in the minimal frame cell ($M_{\text{minimal}}=.17$, $M_{\text{maximal}}=-1.13$; $F(1, 118)=9.68$, $p<.01$).

GENERAL DISCUSSION

We examined the effectiveness of maximal/minimal comparative messages under different foci when the comparison benchmark was a brand (experiment 1) and a normative standard (experiments 2). Consistent with the promotion-focused goal of seeking gains, the maximal message was more persuasive and favorably elaborated upon. However, under a prevention-focus, its claim of being better than a recommended norm undermined persuasion. When a brand was compared to a brand however, maximal and minimal frames were equally persuasive. Process measures provided insights into the mechanisms that may account for the differences in the judgmental effects of maximal comparison under a prevention-focus. When maximal frames represented a “no loss” (as in experiment 1), then the two frames were equally persuasive. But when maximal frames were perceived to be a deviation from an established norm (experiments 2), they led to negative elaboration and attenuated persuasion.

While past comparative advertising literature has examined gain/loss framing (Shiv et al 1997), valence (Jain and Posavac 2004), and alignability (Zhang et al 2002), our research examines the frame of the ‘extent’ of claimed difference in comparisons. In

the process, it extends comparative advertising literature by identifying two types of comparison—comparison with a norm and minimal (similarity) comparison. While industry practice often relies on a standard-based comparison in advertising, relatively little insight is available on the effectiveness of this frame. We identify conditions under which such a comparison would be productive. Second, while considerable research has addressed the effectiveness of maximal comparisons, the effects of minimal frames have not been well understood. Our studies suggest that minimal frames by themselves may be an important comparative advertising execution since they could be more persuasive than maximal frames in some situations. Also, while most research assumes that maximal comparisons might always be more persuasive, our research shows conditions when maximal frames may be less persuasive than minimal comparative frames.

The present research also extends the literature on regulatory focus. Our findings provide support for the expectation that relative to a current state, promotion-focused individuals are geared towards advancement while prevention focused individuals toward maintenance. In addition, our results are novel in suggesting that prevention-focused individuals might process information pitching a non-loss differently, based on the uncertainty or 'possibility of loss.' That is, for prevention-focus respondents, different contexts may prime different degrees of losses or non-losses. For example, exceeding (vs. meeting) a recommended norm may lead to discomfort and uncertainty about attainment of a non-loss. But being superior to another brand presents as much a non-loss as being equal to another brand. Future research could identify more conditions when prevention-focused individuals may see the same information as representing a 'non-loss' versus a 'potential loss' depending on differing frames or contexts.

One concern across experiments one and two is the difference in domain. In experiment 1, the toothpaste category may be associated more with preventing losses than with promoting gains. The breakfast bars might be more associated with gain-domain. We investigated the differences in gain/loss domain in an ancillary study. We examined category associations by asking 79 undergraduates to rate four categories (breakfast bars, condoms, ice creams, and toothpaste) on two scales regarding the extent to which respondents perceived they "reduce negative feelings"(1)/"increase positive feelings"(7) and "prevent problems"(1)/"promote benefit"(7)" ($r=0.78$; lower scores indicate more loss/prevention association). Besides the finding that the difference in means for the two stimulus categories was not statistically significant ($M_{\text{breakfast bars}}=4.37$, $M_{\text{toothpaste}}=4.18$, $F<1$), their average rating was around the mid-point of the scale, suggesting that their domain (gain/loss) was ambiguous (in comparison, condoms received a rating of 2.7 suggesting a strong prevention/loss focus and ice creams were rated at 6.2 suggesting a strong promotion/gain focus). Hence, the difference in gain and loss domains does not explain our findings. However, future research would benefit from testing circumstances where gain and loss domains might lead to differential effects for regulatory focus or comparative frames.

A limitation of our research is that we have used different categories to represent different contexts in separate experiments. It would be useful to test our predictions either by controlling for the category or through category replicates. In particular, an important task for future investigations is to identify factors that may systematically activate the non-loss and deviation mechanisms under a prevention-focus. Also, follow-up inquiries could help identify conditions other than prevention focus that might influence the effectiveness of norm versus brand-based comparisons. Future research could also investigate the effects of regulatory focus on comparative frames using further measures of processing (time

spent, elaboration) and effectiveness (ad credibility, claim believability, evaluations of competing brands). We have proposed an individual's regulatory motivation moderating the impact of different comparative ad frames. There has been an increasing interest in individual differences (e.g., Sorrentino and Roney 2000) and motivational variables (e.g. Agrawal and Maheswaran 2005a; Jain 2003; Jain and Maheswaran 2000) as predictors of a host of process and persuasion-related measures. While our research examines regulatory focus differences in a specific comparative context, examining other variables such as self-monitoring (Snyder 1974), self-construal (Agrawal and Maheswaran 2005b), and cultural differences (Gürhan-Canli and Maheswaran 2000; Maheswaran and Agrawal 2004), may further deepen our understanding of framing effects in general and comparative advertising effects in specific.

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“Be All You Can Be”: The Influence of Advertising Slogans on Regulatory Focus and Consumer Spending Behavior

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Advertisers and marketers often try to influence consumers' choices by creating advertising slogans that appeal to our future goals, dreams and wishes (e.g., “Let’s make things better”, “Just do it”, “Be all you can be”). Associating brands with personal dreams and ambitions may imply that purchasing these brands can help us achieve and express our ideals and aspirations. In two studies we test the proposition that exposure to advertising slogans containing values related to achievement and personal goals will make consumers aware of the discrepancy between the person they are at this particular point in time (actual self-state) and the person they desire to be in the future (ideal self-state). We propose that this slogan-induced discrepancy can be decreased by various forms of consumer behavior, not necessarily related to the advertised product.

Regulatory Focus Theory (Higgins 1997) states that individuals adopt a *promotion* focus orientation when they are concerned with reaching their ideal selves. Individuals with this strategy regulate their behavior towards desired end states and positive outcomes in order to decrease the experienced discrepancy between their actual and ideal state. Based on earlier research, showing that advertisements focusing on the independent self can induce promotion-related values (Hamilton and Biehal 2005), we expect that advertising slogans reminding us of the goals and ideals relating to our hopes, wishes, and aspirations are suited to directly induce the self-regulation mechanism of promotion focus. Furthermore, we hypothesize in study 1 that this activated promotion orientation influences personal spending intentions. We predict that participants who are exposed to promotion-related slogans intend to spend relatively more money on means that will help them achieve their goals and aspirations (i.e., education) than on means unrelated to valued promotion ideals (i.e., entertainment).

Study 1

We tested our hypotheses in a 2 (slogan: promotion-focused vs. control) x 2 (spending: education versus entertainment) design with repeated measures on the second factor. Participants' focus orientation was manipulated by either exposing them for 40 seconds to four promotion-based slogans for various products (e.g., “Straight to your dreams”) or to four different neutral control slogans for the same products (e.g., “Getting you around”). After exposure, participants completed an adapted version of the proverb-task (Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2003) which measured participants' state focus orientation. Subsequently, they were asked to estimate the amount of money they were planning to spend on their academic education and entertainment in the upcoming month.

As expected, we found that participants in the promotion-focus condition were more promotion focused than participants in the control condition. Moreover, compared to participants in the control condition, we found that participants in the promotion-focused condition planned to spend relatively more money on means related to aspirations and accomplishment, i.e. on their academic education, than on entertainment.

Study 2

In study 2 we extended the results found in Study 1 by focusing on actual spending behavior. Based on the “value from fit” principle (Higgins 2000), entailing the notion that individuals experience a

regulatory fit when they pursue goals that match their (current) focus, we propose that participants are more inclined to donate money to a charity that expresses values that are congruent with their current orientation, than when the charity's values and goals are incongruent with their current orientation. Furthermore, we test whether private self-consciousness moderates the effect of orientation fit on charity donation. People with a high private self-consciousness are more attuned to their inner state and feelings than people with a low private self-consciousness. We expect that this salience of inner feelings and state intensifies the experienced focus orientation and therefore increases the experienced fit or misfit, which will affect the amount of money donated.

These hypotheses were tested in a 2 (orientation: fit versus misfit) x 2 (private self-consciousness: high versus low) between-subjects design. To measure participants' individual differences in private self-consciousness, participants completed a translated version of the Private Self-Consciousness Scale (Vleeming and Engelse 1981) originally developed by Fenigstein, Scheier, and Buss (1975). We used the same focus orientation manipulation as in study 1 wherein half of the participants were exposed to promotion-based slogans and half of the participants to control slogans. After the ostensible end of the experiment, participants were asked to donate some money to an unrelated charity aimed at helping educational projects in third world countries. Before they had to decide whether and how much money they wanted to donate they received information concerning this charity. This information contained clear promotion orientation goals and values related to accomplishment and achievement. This enabled us to create a fit condition (promotion-based slogans and promotion-oriented charity) and a misfit condition (control slogans and promotion-oriented charity).

The results showed that actual spending behavior was affected by exposure to promotion-based slogans. Participants donated more money when the expressed values of the charity matched their own regulatory focus than when there was no such fit. Furthermore, as expected, we found that private self-consciousness moderated the relation between orientation induction and donation. Participants high in private self-consciousness donated more money to the charity when it matched their orientation than when it did not fit with their current orientation. For participants low in private self-consciousness, the impact of orientation fit on amount of money donated was less pronounced. This suggests that participants with a high private self-consciousness are more aware of their current orientation state and experience “the value from fit” more intensively than participants with a low private self-consciousness. Interestingly, for these individuals, a regulatory focus induced by advertising slogans was found to carry over and affect consumer behavior in an unrelated domain: i.e., donating money to charity.

These results have important theoretical as well as practical implications. We found that a slogan-induced orientation state can affect actual spending behavior. Furthermore, we extended earlier findings on the impact of regulatory focus on consumer behavior by assessing the role of the consumer's self-consciousness and found evidence for the notion that the “value from fit” perception requires a “mirror on the self”. On a practical note, our findings are of importance for marketers as they should keep in mind that activating desired goals and ideals may benefit other causes than their own.

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**Does Confirmation Trump Valence?
Confirmation and the Effects of Negative and Positive Political Advertising**

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In spite of long discussion of the detrimental aspects of negative advertising in a political domain, it continues to be a widely used, almost fundamental element of many election campaign strategies. Recent academic research has suggested that negative advertising may actually be ineffective because it only appeals to those who are already predisposed to dislike the targeted candidate (i.e., “preaching to the choir”). Yet, this research does not provide direct evidence of advertising reactions. We explore negativity by comparing the effects of negative (anti-opponent) and positive (pro-sponsor) advertising on voting intentions shortly before the November 2004 U.S. presidential election, accounting for voters’ prior preferences. Our initial hypothesis that confirmation (i.e., seeing an ad for the preferred candidate) would trump valence (positive or negative advertising) did not hold true—negative advertising got generally poorer reviews and produced more counterarguing than did positive advertising whether it was for the favored candidate or the opponent. In spite of this, however, negative advertising was more likely than positive advertising to produce shifts in voting intention *in the direction of the ad*. While small given the strong priors of our participants at this late date in the election cycle, these effects included both reinforcement/strengthening of priors *and* preference-changing shifts. We explore the implications of our results for the effectiveness of negative advertising.

Perceived Variability, Category Size, and the Relative Effectiveness of “Leading Brand” Versus “Best in Class” Comparative Advertising Claims

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Direct comparative ads map an advertised brand to a specific strategically-selected competing brand (e.g., “Visa is better than American Express”; “Pepsi is better than Coke”), and indirect comparative ads imply superiority to other brands without mentioning any specific competing brands by name (e.g., “Benadryl Allergy Relief is 54% more effective than the leading prescription antihistamine”; “Chevy is the biggest truck in its class”, and “You are more certain of safe delivery of your urgent documents with FedEx than with other carriers”). Two major types of indirect comparative ads are frequently used: “Better than the Leading brand” indirect comparative ads state that the advertised brand is better than the leading member of the product category, and “Best in class” indirect comparative ads state that the advertised brand is generally the best brand in the product category. “Leading brand” indirect comparative ads invite consumers to compare the advertised brand to a specific instance or member of a product category, whereas “Best in class” indirect comparative ads encourage consumers to compare the advertised brand to a global abstraction-based representation of a product category. Our research investigates the antecedents and consequences of instance- versus abstraction-based comparative processing.

It is proposed in the paper that exposure effects to these different indirect comparative ads are moderated by two factors: (1) perceived variability or the perceived dispersion of category instances around the prototype or the abstraction of the central tendency of category members on a given attribute (Park and Hastie 1987) and (2) category size. When perceived variability is high, consumers focus on specific instances and engage in confirmatory search, regardless of category size (Mussweiler 2003; Sanbonmatsu, Posavac, Vanous, and Ho 2005). “Leading brand” claims are likely to be more effective than “Best in class” claims and the matching hypothesis is supported.

Disconfirmatory or negative search is likely to occur when perceived variability is low (Mussweiler 2003; Sanbonmatsu, Posavac, Vanous, and Ho 2005). When category size is large, consumers prefer to focus on abstractions and “Best in class” claims that encourage consumers to compare the advertised brand to an abstraction-based representation facilitate disconfirmation. Consequently, “Leading brand” claims are likely to be more persuasive. When category size is small, consumers prefer to focus on instances and “Leading brand” claims that encourage consumers to compare the advertised brand to instance-based representations facilitate disconfirmation. Consequently, “Best in class” claims are likely to be more persuasive. Thus the mismatching hypothesis is supported.

Two experiments were conducted to test our expectations regarding the interaction between perceived variability, category size, and advertising claim. Both experiments were 2 (type of indirect comparative ad: “Leading brand” vs. “Best in class”) x 2 (category size: large vs. small) x 2 (perceived variability: high vs. low) full-factorial between-subjects design. Participants were asked to review an indirect comparative ad (“leading brand” or “best in class”) and complete a questionnaire containing relevant dependent variables (brand evaluations, covariates) at their own pace. The

differences between the two experiments are as follows: (1) Real product categories were used for each cell in the first experiment. By contrast, perceived variability and category size were manipulated using a fictitious survey in the second experiment. (2) In the second experiment, process data was collected (level of counterarguing to measure confirmation/disconfirmation; type of information relied on—instance vs. abstraction based) to enable a direct test of mediation. Analysis of the data obtained from the two experiments revealed support for our hypotheses.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Regulatory Focus and the Use of Time in the Evaluation of Persuasive Messages

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SESSION OVERVIEW

In recent years, consumer researchers have increasingly studied self-regulation issues, acknowledging that consumer decisions do not take place in a “motivational vacuum” (Pham and Higgins 2005). In particular, regulatory focus theory (Higgins 1997) proposes two distinct motivational systems regulating behavior: promotion and prevention focus. Individuals in a promotion focus follow a strategy emphasizing the pursuit of gains (or the avoidance of non-gains). Individuals in a prevention focus follow a strategy emphasizing the avoidance of losses (or the pursuit of non-losses). Considerable consumer research showed that these foci differ not only in how goals are framed, but also in how they influence persuasion (e.g., Lee and Aaker 2004), which suggests that regulatory focus influences both the type of evaluative content and the type of evaluation strategy that follows (Pham and Higgins 2005). Our objective in this session is to show that the duality of promotion and prevention also does not express itself in a temporal vacuum, and that consumers in these foci *actively and differently use time* in shaping their attitudes (Pennington et al.; Sellier and Chattopadhyay; Jain et al.). Therefore, the topic we propose is: *how consumers in different regulatory foci differently use temporal cues in shaping their evaluations and ways of thinking*.

While the notion of time as a resource is not new to consumer research, almost no work has been examining how time interacts with regulatory focus (except Pennington and Roesch 2003). We present instances of how consumers in a promotion or a prevention focus strategically use time when evaluating messages. We operationalize time in three ways: construed time (Pennington et al.), experienced time (Sellier and Chattopadhyay), and time processed (Jain et al.).

If all three papers look at the persuasive impact of the interaction between time and regulatory focus, they each address substantially different questions: Pennington et al. ask if a prevention-framed versus a promotion-framed message is equally persuasive when a product is to be purchased in the near versus the distant future. Sellier and Chattopadhyay examine whether a short rather than a moderate download time always lead to more positive website evaluations. Jain et al. ask whether consumers process different parts of comparative ads at different times, depending on their regulatory focus. In addition, these papers present findings of both theoretical and practical significance: Pennington et al. find that when a purchase is temporally *proximal*, consumers prefer prevention-framed rather than promotion-framed messages; when a purchase is temporally distant, consumers equally like prevention- and promotion-framed messages. Jain et al. find that when processing a comparative ad, prevention-focused participants have lower evaluations of the comparison brand when they are exposed to a negative rather than a positive comparison frame; promotion participants evaluate the comparison brand equally across both types of frames. One reason for this asymmetry is that prevention-focused consumers evaluate the comparison brand first, while promotion-focused consumers evaluate the advertised brand first. Thus, *when* different parts of the message are integrated leads to different evaluations of the comparison brand. Finally, Sellier and Chattopadhyay find that while promotion-focused participants evaluate a website more negatively when experiencing a moderate (5-10 s.) rather than a short (0-1 s.) download time when they click

on a link, the reverse occurs for prevention-focused participants. Together, our findings suggest that *depending on their motivational approach, consumers differently use time when shaping their evaluations; time is attributed distinct values, resulting in the same persuasive message to predictably vary in persuasiveness*.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“The Pressing Preference for Prevention: The Impact of Temporal Construal on the Persuasiveness of Prevention versus Promotion Framed Product Information”

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Persuasive messages often convey “motivationally loaded” information that may encourage consumers to view a product or service in either approach or avoidance terms. This research examines the influence of purchase proximity on the effectiveness of prevention- versus promotion-framed product claims and explores a possible mechanism by which such effects occur.

The literatures on construal level theory (CLT; Liberman and Trope 1998; Trope and Liberman 2003) and regulatory focus theory (RFT; Higgins 1997) suggest hypotheses concerning the effect of time on the persuasive impact of prevention versus promotion-framed messages. First, consider the need to make an immediate purchase. Imagine you have a dinner party planned for that evening. As you are driving home from work, you realize you should buy a bottle of wine. Work on CLT suggests that in an instance of temporal constraint, feasibility and operational concerns become salient to you, and thus the concreteness of actions should assume priority (e.g., “how can I get a bottle of wine, pronto?”). Your mind should race to specific actions that are necessary to avoid potential impediments to goal fulfilment. Unlike promotion frames, prevention frames focus on such requirements (Brendl and Higgins 1996). That is, prevention frames recognize the possibility of a negative outcome but provide the consumer the concrete means to avoid it. In contrast, promotion frames do not have such a concrete focus; rather they center on the possibility of a positive outcome and excite the consumer with eagerness to achieve it. Consequently, we predict that when consumers have to make an immediate purchase decision, they will prefer products framed with a prevention message over those framed with a promotion message.

This preference for prevention-framed messages should, however, decline when the purchase does not need to be made immediately. When the dinner party, for example, is next month rather than tonight, the wine presented in a prevention-framed message should be as popular as a wine presented in a promotion-framed message. This hypothesis is supported by the finding that high-level construals (associated with temporal distance) reduce individuals’ reactivity to contextual factors (e.g., Nussbaum, Trope, and Liberman 2003)). Therefore, a consumer facing a distant purchase is expected to think about the purchase in terms of his or her overarching goal (e.g., “why do I want this?”), showing little sensitivity to the prevention versus promotion framing of persuasive messages.

Three studies tested the predictions that when a purchase occasion is close at hand, prevention-framed messages that focus on avoiding negatives will be more persuasive than promotion-

framed messages that focus on the presence of positives. And by contrast, when the purchase occasion is in the distant future, the frame of the message will not affect its persuasiveness. One reason for these effects may be that temporal perspective alters the way in which individuals cognitively construe the purchase situation (Trope and Liberman 2003). We examined this mechanism through tests of moderation where cognitive construal was manipulated and tests of mediation where cognitive construal was measured.

In Study 1, participants imagined themselves in a purchasing situation that was described as distant (one month away) or proximal (2 days away). Participants were then presented with either a promotion-framed message (e.g., “the satisfaction of getting a good deal”) or a prevention-framed message (e.g., “the satisfaction of never paying too much”). As expected, the prevention-framed message was preferred in the temporally constrained conditions, whereas both messages were equally liked in the distant purchase conditions.

Study 2 tested whether consumers in a concrete, detail-oriented mindset (the type of thinking adopted for proximal events) would be more persuaded by prevention-framed messages, while consumers in an abstract mindset (the type of thinking for distant events) would be equally persuaded by prevention- and promotion-framed messages. Participants in this second study evaluated one of four types of advertisements for athletic shoes. The text of each message was altered to manipulate regulatory focus (promotion/prevention) and construal (abstract/concrete). Consistent with a moderating role of construal level in the temporal effect found in Study 1, participants preferred prevention-framed messages when concrete thinking was emphasized but were indifferent between prevention- and promotion-framed messages when abstract thinking was emphasized.

Study 3 tested whether the perceived temporal immediacy of a purchase differentially affected consumers’ motivations to purchase prevention-framed versus promotion framed products. Participants thought of a product, which they planned to buy in approximately two weeks that would either help bring about a desirable outcome (promotion) or help prevent an undesirable outcome (prevention). Perceptions of temporal proximity were manipulated through small differences in the instructions (e.g., “relatively soon” vs. “later on”), and the participants’ associated thoughts were coded as representing either a high- or low-level of construal. The results showed that prevention-framed products were viewed more favorably than promotion-framed products in the context of proximal purchases, but that they were viewed similarly in the context of distant purchases. One reason for this effect was the evocation of low-construal thoughts when participants considered purchasing a prevention- (vs. promotion-) framed product in the near future.

Taken together, these results suggest ways in which managers might effectively target consumers at different stages in the purchasing process and identify the cognitive processing underlying consumers’ evaluative responses.

“Faster Is Not Always Better: Regulatory Focus and the Interpretation of Download Time”

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We challenge the assumption among academics and practitioners that the faster the average download time (DT) experienced while surfing, the more positive consumers’ evaluation of a website will be (e.g., McKinney, Yoon, and Zahedi 2002). Drawing on regulatory focus/fit theory (Higgins 1997; Higgins et al. 2003) and the literature on conversational norms (see Moon 1999), we show

that moderate DTs (5 -10 s.) can lead to more positive website evaluations than short DTs (0-1 s.). While there is empirical evidence suggesting that long DTs (>10 seconds) negatively impact attitudes toward the object with which the delay is associated compared to short DTs (1 second), no research has examined the impact of short DTs compared to more moderate DTs (5-10 s.), on website evaluation. This is important, as companies are investing significant amounts to achieve DTs lower than one or two seconds globally (Pappalardo 2005).

Regulatory focus theory (Higgins 1997) distinguishes between two strategies that consumers adopt when approaching their goals: a promotion or a prevention focus. This distinction applies to the study of online behavior, given that web-surfing is a goal-directed action (e.g., Alba et al. 1997). Of particular relevance, promotion-focused people adopt eagerness as a strategic inclination (Crowe and Higgins 1997). This inclination should make people prefer a website more, the shorter the average DT, because of a better regulatory fit (Higgins 2003). In contrast, people in a prevention focus adopt vigilance as a strategic inclination, and present a high sensitivity to norms (Crowe and Higgins 1997). For them, a moderate DT (5-10 s.) may generate a more positive website evaluation than a short DT (0-1 s.) for two reasons: first, consumers may have a greater fit experience when DT is moderate rather than short. This regulatory fit has a limit: when DT gets too long (>10 seconds) as the goal approach is disrupted (Nielsen 1993), and hence website evaluation gets adversely affected. A regulatory fit explanation would also predict that web users would find the information they are processing more correct when experiencing fit rather than non-fit (Camacho, Higgins, and Luger 2003). Also, they should enjoy their web surfing task more when experiencing fit rather than non-fit (Freitas and Higgins 2002).

A second explanation is that because of their conservative bias, consumers in a prevention focus mindlessly apply conversational norms when interacting with a website (i.e., they treat clicking on a link as though they were asking the website a question). A conversational norm which was speculated to extend to human-computer interaction (Moon 1999) is that too fast (too long) an answer is perceived as less credible than an answer provided after a few seconds. We tested whether these explanations were supported in three studies.

In study 1, participants surfed a prevention-framed website for a fictitious sleeping pill. Participants either experienced a short (0-1 s.), a moderate (5-10 s.) or a long (13-18 s.) DT. They then reported their website evaluation. A quadratic contrast showed that the website evaluation was more positive when DT was moderate rather than short/long.

In a second study, we created a website for a home HIV test, and manipulated its content, so that participants would adopt either a promotion (e.g., “the quick and easy FDA Approved home test for everyone, so the eradication of AIDS becomes a reality”) or a prevention focus (e.g., “the FDA Approved home test for detecting the HIV-virus”). Participants either surfed the promotion-framed or the prevention-framed website, and either experienced a short (0-1 s.) or a moderate (5-10 s.) DT. All participants then reported their website evaluation, as well as a source credibility scale and their enjoyment with the task. Results revealed an interaction of regulatory focus and DT, and the analysis of simple effects showed that participants in a promotion (prevention) focus evaluated the website more positively when experiencing a short (moderate) DT. The evaluation of source credibility mediated this effect, and was higher in the fit compared to the non-fit conditions. Also, participants in the fit conditions enjoyed the web surfing task more than participants in the non-fit conditions.

A third study provided a competing test of the regulatory fit and the conversational norm account. All participants surfed the prevention version of the website in Study 1, experiencing either a short or a moderate DT. Subsequently, a third of the participants evaluated the website directly, as in Study 1 (control condition). For those participants, we expected to replicate our findings that a moderate rather than a short DT leads to enhanced website evaluations. A third of participants rated how they felt about their goal pursuit before they evaluated the website. Because their attention was drawn to the source of the experience of fit, we expected the effects in Study 1 to either disappear or be significantly attenuated if regulatory fit was causing the effects observed in Study 1 (Schwarz and Clore 1983). Similarly, a third of participants rated to what extent they felt they applied interpersonal conversational norms to their communication with the website before they evaluated the website. We replicated the effect from Study 1 in the control conditions; the effect disappeared in the fit conditions, but not in the conversational norms conditions. In sum, our data supported the regulatory fit account more than the conversational norm account.

These results show that we can manipulate content to improve the fit between the DT associated with a website and consumers' regulatory focus. Therefore, DT is not a necessary evil.

“Regulatory Focus and Direct Comparative Ad Framing”

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Nidhi Agrawal, Northwestern University

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Which brand do consumers evaluate first in a direct comparative ad (where an advertised brand compares itself with an explicitly-named comparison brand)? How does this temporal sequence of evaluation influence overall persuasion? Importantly, how do consumers evaluate the comparison brand and what are the implications of such evaluations for persuasion? We address these issues by integrating regulatory focus theory with comparative message framing research.

A direct comparative ad frames the advertised brand as better (positive frame; e.g., “Brand A is better than B”) or the comparison brand as worse (negative frame; “Brand B is worse than A”). Promotion-focused people focus more on and display greater eagerness for a positive outcome (advertised brand) than away from its absence (comparison brand). Further, because they desire to secure hits and avoid misses (Higgins 1997), a positively framed comparison permits an inclusion of the advertised brand while not necessarily excluding the comparison brand. Hence, the advertised brand being more effective should not have implications for the evaluations of the comparison brand. In contrast, prevention-focused individuals focus more on the presence of a negative outcome (comparison brand) than on its absence. They emphasize identifying correct rejections and avoiding incorrect ‘hits’. A negative frame indicates that while the comparison brand should be rejected, the advertised brand may be a safe hit. In the positive frame, the comparison brand is merely the absence of a positive, a less appealing proposition for prevention-oriented people. Therefore, avoiding the comparison brand in the negative (vs. positive) frame should lead to less favorable attitudes towards the comparison brand.

We are thus able to predict that promotion-focused participants will evaluate the comparison brand equally across both types of frames while prevention-focused participants will evaluate the comparison brand lower under negative (vs. positive) frames. Also, prevention (promotion) focused participants will evaluate the comparison (advertised) brand first. As a result, prevention (promotion)

focused participants will recall more comparison (advertised) brand information. Finally, because promotion (prevention)-focused individuals place lower (greater) weight on prior choices in making future decisions, they may have lower (higher) preference for consistency (PFC). Because of this difference in PFC, promotion-focused participants' inter-brand ratings should be uncorrelated whereas prevention-focused participants' ratings should be significantly and negatively correlated.

We tested these predictions in two studies. Our first study was a 2 (focus: promotion/prevention) x 2 (comparative frame: positive/negative) between-subjects design featuring home made comparative ads. Following a focus manipulation, participants viewed one of two comparative ads (positive or negative frame), completed the dependent measures (advertised and comparison brand evaluations, counterbalanced), manipulation checks, and the PFC scale.

We observed a significant frame x focus interaction for advertised brand's evaluations as well as comparison brand's evaluations. Promotion-focused participants expressed higher advertised brand evaluations under a positive frame while prevention-focused participants did so under a negative frame. Further, prevention focus led to lower evaluations of the comparison brand under a negative frame while promotion focus resulted in equivalent evaluations across frames. Also, prevention-focused participants exhibited a higher PFC than promotion-focused participants. Finally, inter-brand attitudes were negatively correlated under prevention focus and uncorrelated under promotion focus.

A second study was identical to study 1 except that it featured more dependent measures consisting of two counterbalanced brand cognition probes and a recall task. One brand cognition probe asked participants to “evaluate both brands on a scale of one to seven where 1=extremely bad and 7=extremely good. You can evaluate either brand first.” The second question, presented on a separate page, asked the participants: “which brand did you form an opinion of first?” Next, following a distractor task, participants' recall about each brand was elicited separately.

Mirroring experiment 1, we found that promotion-focused participants evaluated the advertised brand higher in the positive frame while prevention-focused participants did so in the negative frame. Further, prevention focus led to lower comparison brand evaluations in the negative frame while promotion focus led to equivalent evaluations across frames. Prevention-focused participants were more likely to evaluate the comparison brand first (proportion of initial evaluations: advertised brand=.38; comparison brand=.62). The opposite was true for promotion-focused participants (advertised brand=.75; comparison brand=.25). Also, prevention-focused participants were more likely to form an opinion about the comparison brand first (proportion of first opinions: advertised brand=.43; comparison brand=.57). The opposite held for promotion-focused participants (advertised brand=.73; comparison brand=.27). Finally, promotion-focused individuals recalled more advertised brand information while prevention-focused participants recalled more comparison brand information.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

How Consumers Evaluate the Quality of Purchase Decisions

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Gerald Häubl, University of Alberta, Canada

SESSION OVERVIEW

The research presented in this session is centered around the important question of how consumers evaluate the quality of their own and others' purchase decisions. The session features the work of three research groups, each of which has been examining a specific aspect of this general question. The three papers to be presented in this session are highly synergistic in that the implications of each individual piece of work become more significant if considered in conjunction with those of the two other papers.

Prior research has shown that consumers usually prefer choosing for themselves over having others make choices on their behalf because they believe that they can select the best choice option, therefore maximizing outcome satisfaction. That is, consumers assume that their final evaluation of a decision outcome depends solely on the quality of the outcome itself; however, they may fail to consider that the quality of the decision-making process may also influence this evaluation. The research presented by Botti and McGill investigates this hypothesis by showing that consumers' evaluation of a decision outcome is a function of the relevance of the affective experiences associated with the decision-making process and the extent to which decision makers see themselves as instrumental in having had these experiences. When the goal of the decision-making task is hedonic, consumers like choosing more than not choosing and this preference is reflected in greater satisfaction with the decision outcome for choosers as compared to non-choosers. Conversely, when the goal of the decision-making task is utilitarian, affective considerations matter less than objective evaluative standards; as a result, consumers' preference for choosing is mitigated, resulting in a lower difference between choosers' and non-choosers' outcome satisfaction.

Hence, in some circumstances, consumers' satisfaction with their own choices may depend on their perception of the quality of the decision process rather than on that of the decision outcome. In fact, the research presented by Häubl, Dellaert, and Usta suggests that outcome satisfaction may or may not have anything to do with the *quality* of the outcome. This research shows that, although the availability of personalized recommendations (provided, e.g., by a salesperson, a realtor, or a computer-based decision aid) tends to improve the objective quality of consumers' product choices, it does not necessarily increase consumer's satisfaction with their decisions (Häubl and Trifts 2000). The reason? Because this type of decision advice tends to omit undesirable alternatives, consumers must select from an exclusively positive choice set. Although advantageous from the standpoint of decision quality, this lack of differentiation between options can have a negative impact on decision satisfaction. First, it becomes more difficult for consumers to identify the subjectively most attractive option, and this reduces consumers' subjective assessment of, and satisfaction with, their purchase decisions. Second, to the extent that a consumer's satisfaction with a purchase decision is a function not only of the attractiveness of the chosen alternative but also the attractiveness of the rejected alternatives (Mellers 2000), not being exposed to any unattractive alternatives can diminish the subjective assessment of the decision.

That said, the research presented by Kruger and Burrus suggests that rejected alternatives tend to have far less of an impact on evaluations of decision quality than one might think. When evalu-

ating the quality of a decision, consumers tend to focus on the objective features of the option chosen and underweight the objective features of the option(s) rejected. As a consequence, decisions tend to be deemed wise when the chosen option is positive and foolish when it is negative—occasionally even when the rejected option(s) are just as positive or negative. This is true not only when evaluating the wisdom of one's own choices, but also (and perhaps especially) when evaluating the decisions of someone else.

Taken together, the research described in this special session is aimed at providing a better understanding of how consumers evaluate the quality of their own (and others') decisions. This collection of work not only provides significant new theoretical insights, but it also has important practical implications in terms of consumer welfare, and human well-being more generally. Therefore, it fits this year's conference theme particularly well. The session is likely to be of interest to a wide range of audiences, particularly those interested in the psychology of consumer choice, consumer decision processes, decision assistance for consumers, and customer satisfaction.

We were very fortunate to have a leading expert in the field, Mary Frances Luce of Duke University, to serve as discussion leader. All three presentations are based on work that is in progress and that is expected to be submitted to a major journal shortly after the conference.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“Do the Means Justify the End? The Effect of Choice on Evaluation of Hedonic versus Utilitarian Outcomes”

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Prior research indicates that consumers prefer making their own choices rather than having others choose on their behalf and that they are more satisfied with self-chosen as opposed to externally-dictated outcomes (Brehm 1966; Langer 1975). These results have been recently challenged by findings demonstrating that, although people generally prefer choosing, choosers are not always more satisfied than non-choosers. This more recent research builds on the idea that consumers' utility derives both from the decision process and the decision outcome (Thaler 1985) to suggest that the evaluation of an outcome is a function not only of its objective worth but also of the manner in which it is obtained. For example, choosers' satisfaction with a desirable outcome is greater than that of non-choosers because they enjoy contemplating a greater number of pleasant thoughts during the decision task; conversely, choosers' dissatisfaction with an undesirable outcome is exacerbated relative to that of non-choosers by the greater number of task-related unpleasant thoughts (Botti and Iyengar 2004). This enhancing effect of the choice-based affect on outcome evaluation has however been found only when choosing is perceived as instrumental in determining the quality of the outcome. In this case, relative to non-choosers, choosers' satisfaction for a desirable outcome is augmented by self-credit whereas their dissatisfaction is exacerbated by self-blame. On the contrary, when the quality of the outcome is perceived as being virtually independent from the choosers' actions, the act of choice does not seem to add any value to the worth of the selected item (Botti and McGill 2006).

These prior studies have nevertheless investigated choice only in relation to hedonic consumption. It is possible therefore that the enhancing effects of choice on outcome satisfaction may be restricted to such hedonic contexts. Hedonic tasks are inherently self-rewarding whereas utilitarian tasks are undertaken to pursue higher-end goals. Further, affective considerations are usually more important in the former than in the latter case (Pham 1998). Hence, choice-based affect may influence satisfaction more in hedonic domains than in utilitarian ones. That is, how one comes to an experience may affect satisfaction more for hedonic than utilitarian outcomes, which are established mostly on objective, external standards. The present research tests this assertion.

Specifically, we hypothesize that in the positive domains studied in the present research, perception of oneself as being instrumental in the experience of a hedonic outcome augments the pleasure derived from it. Consequently, choosers will be more satisfied than non-choosers because they can credit themselves for the fun and excitement associated with the hedonic outcome. Conversely, utilitarian decision outcomes' evaluation will depend more on its objective value than on the affective value associated with the decision process. Hence, as long as utilitarian outcomes are perceived as meeting specific objective standards, choosers' satisfaction with those outcomes will be more similar to that of non-choosers.

We test these predictions in two studies in which the hedonic versus utilitarian nature of the decision task was determined only by the goals assigned to participants. The first study was a 2 x 2 in which participants engaged in a computer-simulated visit to a photography museum. The hedonic goal was manipulated by asking participants to pretend being tourists visiting the museum just for fun; the utilitarian goal was instead manipulated by asking them to pretend being art students visiting the museum to collect material for their bachelor's thesis. Choosers allegedly selected the format of their visit among four options, whereas non-choosers were informed that the museum's curators had chosen the format for them. Unbeknownst to participants, however, they all eventually experienced the same virtual visit. As predicted, participants' perceived value of the decision-making task was moderated by the goal of the visit: Participants liked choosing more, and were consistently less willing to give away the choice opportunity, in the hedonic as compared to the utilitarian condition. In addition, choosers liked their visit more than non-choosers when the goal of the visit was hedonic, but there was no difference between choosers and non-choosers' satisfaction when the goal was utilitarian.

Study 2 replicated these results even when the outcome in the no-choice condition was dictated by fate rather than by an expert, and the decision outcome was not directly experienced but simply imagined. This study was again a 2 x 2 in which participants were asked to imagine receiving a massage in a spa. Participants in the hedonic condition were told that the massage was a way to reward oneself for recent academic success, while those in the utilitarian condition were told that the massage was intended to heal mild back pains and a state of general soreness. After being shown the same list of five different massages, with relative brief descriptions, participants were told that they would use a gift certificate to buy the massage. In the choice condition the certificate allowed for participants to freely choose one of the massages, whereas in the no-choice condition the certificate specified what massage they would receive. Results show that choosers liked the choice-task more than non-choosers and hedonic participants liked the choice task more than utilitarian ones. In addition, choosers were more satisfied with their massage than non-choosers when the decision-making goal was hedonic; however, there was no difference between choosers

and non-choosers' satisfaction when the decision-making goal was utilitarian.

This research contributes to prior studies challenging the assertion that choice is always beneficial by showing that choosers were more satisfied than non-choosers only when the goal of consumption was hedonic but not when the goal was utilitarian. When the goal is hedonic, the value of the alternative is inherently subjective and is experienced more positively as a consequence of how it was obtained. This research supports the view that pleasant tastes, smells, touches feel different, better, depending on how one came to experience them. By contrast, when the objective is utilitarian, then the means by which the outcome was obtained does not affect its value.

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"The Opposing Effects of Personalized Recommendations on Objective and Subjective Decision Outcomes"

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Many important consumer purchase decisions in domains with heterogeneous preferences are made in the presence of some form of personalized recommendations that are based on an understanding of a consumer's subjective preference. Such decision assistance may be provided either by a human advisor (e.g., a salesperson or a realtor) or by a computer-based decision aid (e.g., an electronic recommendation agent). It has been shown that the availability of personalized recommendations tends to improve the objective quality of consumers' product choices, and that the magnitude of these effects can be substantial (Häubl and Trifts 2000). However, this prior research also revealed that, despite these significant increases in objective decision quality, consumers tend *not* to feel any more satisfied with their choices when these choices are made in the presence of personalized recommendations.

The objective of the present paper is to explain these paradoxical findings. Our central thesis is that the availability of personalized recommendations has separate, *opposing* effects on objective and subjective decision outcomes, and that these effects are driven by the particular representation that these recommendations take on.

The first effect is based on the fact that the provision of personalized recommendations typically involves the pre-screening of a large set of available alternatives by an agent external to the consumer and the sorting of alternatives in terms of their likely attractiveness to the consumer. Consequently, the availability of

such recommendations allows consumers to more quickly identify, and focus their decision efforts on, those alternatives that are of greatest appeal to them—i.e., that represent a close fit with their subjective preferences. This explains why personalized product recommendations enable consumers to achieve objectively better decision outcomes (Diehl, Kornish, and Lynch 2003; Häubl and Trifts 2000).

At the same time, however, we propose that by disproportionately (or even exclusively) drawing attention to alternatives that are highly attractive to consumers, personalized recommendations tend to have a negative effect on subjective decision outcomes. One mental process by which this may occur is based on the notion that the selective focus on the best alternatives results in a high level of *decision difficulty*. That is, it becomes more challenging for consumers to identify their subjectively most attractive alternative (see Shugan 1980). In line with Iyengar and Lepper (2000), we hypothesize that, all else being equal, such an increase in the difficulty of making a choice reduces consumers' subjective assessment of, and satisfaction with, their purchase decisions.

A second consequence of the disproportionate attention drawn to a small set of alternatives that are all highly attractive to the consumer is that this tends to prevent the latter from observing the (subjectively) least attractive alternatives. To the extent that a consumer's satisfaction with a purchase decision is a function not only of the attractiveness of the chosen alternative, but also of the attractiveness of the alternatives that were not selected (Mellers 2000; Mellers, Schwartz, Ho, and Ritov 1997), not being exposed to unattractive alternatives can diminish the subjective assessment of the choice. Therefore, we hypothesize that, by "protecting" consumers from having to consider products that don't match their subjective preferences, all else being equal, personalized decision assistance reduces consumers' satisfaction with their purchase decisions.

To summarize, we hypothesize that the presence of personalized recommendations has the following distinct component effects: (1) it *increases* the objective quality of consumers' product choices and, (2) given the level of objective decision quality, it *lowers* consumers' subjective appraisal of their decisions. While it is conceivable that the second effect might be offset by the recognition of an extremely good choice (in objective terms) that could not have been achieved without personalized recommendations, we suggest the possibility of the following type of reversal between objective and subjective decision outcomes: Compared to unassisted consumer decision making, which involves searching the space of available products without any pre-screening or sorting of alternatives, the presence of personalized decision advice can lead consumers to make objectively better purchase decisions and yet experience lower satisfaction with their choice outcomes.

We report the results of two experiments designed to test the above predictions. In each of the studies, participants were presented with sets of golf courses, each described on four attributes, and asked to choose their most preferred one from each set. The choice sets differed in terms of the following properties: (1) whether the alternatives in the set were a random sample or the most attractive ones from what is available in the market, (2) whether the alternatives were sorted, in decreasing order, by their likely attractiveness to the decision maker, (3) the number of alternatives included in the set, and (4) the absolute attractiveness of the best alternative in the set. These factors were manipulated both within and between subjects. After making a choice, participants responded to a number of rating-scale questions intended to measure different aspects of decision appraisal, including their satisfaction with both the outcome and the process, their confidence in having made the right choice, and their affective appraisal of the decision.

Experiment 1 provides a demonstration of the predicted reversal between objective and subjective decision outcomes. Compared to choosing from a randomly-selected set of golf courses, being presented with a pre-screened set (of equal size) of highly attractive courses led participants to choose objectively better alternatives, but to feel less satisfied with, and less confident about, their decisions. The results of Experiment 2 shows that the low levels of subjective decision appraisal in the presence of personalized recommendations are due, at least in part, to a lack of exposure to unattractive alternatives. Specifically, subjects were more satisfied with their decisions when they chose from a sorted set of golf courses that was larger (and included some undesirable alternatives) than when they chose from a smaller sorted set that included only the (objectively dominant) top half of the alternatives. We discuss the theoretical and practical implications of these findings with a view towards broadening the notions of decision quality and consumer welfare.

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"Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Focalism in Evaluations of Consumer Choice"

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Consumers are frequently called upon to evaluate the quality of purchase decisions—be it their own or someone else's. Logically, that quality is a function not only of the option *chosen*, but the option(s) *rejected* as well. The wisdom of purchasing a particular automobile, for instance, is a function not only of *its* price, performance, and luxury features, but also the price, performance, and luxury features of the competition. As such, in order to arrive at an accurate assessment of decision quality consumers must compare the features of the chosen option with the features of the rejected option(s).

We suspect, however, that when people evaluate the quality of a decision they focus on the objective features of the option chosen more than on the objective features of option(s) rejected (even when they are known). As a result, decisions tend to be deemed wise when the chosen option is positive and foolish when it is negative—occasionally even when the rejected option(s) are *just* as positive or negative.

We base our predictions, at least in part, on recent research on another type of comparative judgment: social comparisons. When people compare themselves with others—be it in terms of their abilities, their contribution to joint tasks, or their likelihood of

winning a competition—they tend to focus on the features of the target of the comparison (i.e., the self) more than on the features of the equally relevant referent of the comparison (i.e., others) (Giladi and Klar 2002; Kruger and Burrus 2004; Moore and Kim 2003; Windschitl, Kruger, and Simms 2003). For instance, when people compare their ability to drive a car with that of the average person, they focus on their own skills behind the wheel more than on the skills of the average person (Kruger 1999). This leads to an overestimation of relative standing in domains in which skills tend to be high (such as driving a car or operating a computer mouse), but to an underestimation of relative standing in domains in which skills tend to be low (such as programming a computer or telling a really good joke).

In much the same way, and for much the same reason, we argue that when people evaluate the quality of a decision they focus on the features of the target of the implicit comparison (the object chosen) and underweight the features of the referent of that implicit comparison (the option rejected). As a result, people tend to overestimate decision quality when all options are positive and underestimate decision quality when all options are negative.

The research presented here was designed to test this focalism hypothesis, while at the same time distinguish it from several alternatives (Baron and Hershey 1988; Botti and Iyengar 2004; Dhar and Sherman 1996; Dhar and Simonson 1992; Tversky 1977). In one study we presented participants with a series of hypothetical product choices supposedly made by another consumer. Some of the choices were between exclusively attractive options (such as a choice between two new sports cars) and others were between exclusively unattractive options (such as a choice between two older cars with mechanical problems). For each choice, participants evaluated the consumer's decision on a scale from -5 (*definitely the wrong choice*) to 0 (*neither the right nor the wrong choice*) to +5 (*definitely the right choice*). On average, participants thought that the consumer made the "right" decision when choosing among attractive options and the "wrong" decision when choosing among unattractive options. This was true regardless of the option chosen, and regardless of the fact that the option set was mutually exclusive and exhaustive (i.e., no other options were available).

What caused these differential evaluations of decision quality? Our thesis is that when people evaluate the quality of a decision, they focus on the option chosen and underweight the option(s) rejected. Consistent with this thesis, we found that participants' evaluations of decision quality were predicted far better by their evaluations of the option chosen than their evaluations of the option rejected.

In a follow-up study we investigated the interpersonal implications of this phenomenon while at the same time extending the results to a real decision with real consequences. Pairs of participants were recruited for what they were told was a conceptual replication of the classic Ross, Greene, and House (1977) false consensus effect study in which participants were asked whether they would be willing to walk around campus wearing an embarrassing sandwich-board style sign that said "Eat at Joe's" or "Repent." Unlike in the original study, however, the decision was not whether to comply with an experimental request to wear a sign (and then predict how many other subjects would do the same), but rather to choose which of *two* signs to wear.

Also unlike in the original study, participants were told that the decision would be made not by the subject him or herself, but his or her *partner* in the experiment. Specifically, participants were told that one member of the pair would be randomly chosen to be the *sign-wearer*, and the other the *sign-chooser*. Next, participants were escorted to private rooms whereupon both participants were

incorrectly led to believe that they had (unfortunately) been assigned to the role of sign-wearer.

As expected participants thought their partner made the "wrong choice" and a "poor decision," and this was true regardless of the sign ostensibly chosen. But more than that, these evaluations of the decision made trickled down to evaluations of the decision *maker*. Compared with a no-decision control group, participants thought that their partner was inconsiderate, unsympathetic, and unkind.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

The Role of Consumption in Re-establishing Cultural Stability: Case Studies of Disaster Recovery

Michelle F. Weinberger, University of Arizona, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

This session draws noted scholars together to empirically address how consumption is implicated in the processes of recovery, repossession, and reconstitution of tradition. By examining consumer activities in the aftermath of large-scale disasters, these papers add to our understanding of the physical, social, and rhetorical tools and resources that consumers employ in producing cultural stability. Extreme cases of destruction are theoretically important not only in their own right, but also for studying the role of consumption in the construction and maintenance of social collectivities.

All three papers take a socio-cultural perspective on efforts to respond, recover, and rebuild in the wake of mass destruction. In such situations, consumption is used collectively to reconstitute social cohesion and connection for neighborhoods, metropolitan areas, or nations. The papers examine reconstruction both at the personal and at the group level. All papers address the means by which the collectivity is glued back together again, partially through consumption activities. Recovery of meaning through consumption following large-scale disasters is an excellent context to empirically build theory about consumption's role in creating social cohesion, long-noted as a necessary precondition for social stability (Parsons 1951).

The first presentation examines the process of re-possession following the Tsunami. Jill G. Klein and Laura Huang examine the meanings of objects sought by adolescents post-disaster. They aim to understand choice behaviors and replacement processes that occur when access to resources beyond the bare necessities is highly restricted. This paper highlights power issues that surface when aid is appropriated from one culture to the next. Through depth interviews with adolescent survivors, the paper develops a theoretical understanding of repossession. Drawing on these theoretical findings, policy implications for recovery efforts are developed. Jill Klein's award-winning research with holocaust survivors and experience interviewing individuals about profoundly negative experiences (Klein 2003) brings both human compassion and theoretical expertise to this vulnerable context and important theoretical domain.

In the second presentation, Jean-Sebastien Marcoux examines a different theoretical question and empirical context in the same overarching domain of recovery. This research explores the social construction of memory through the means of consumption at Ground Zero, site of the 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City. The presentation sorts through the ideological values, images, and meanings associated with the site, and examines how they are negotiated by interest groups to form social memory. Ultimately, this ethnographic research looks at the role of values and practices associated with space and memory in the recovery process. The author's unique position as an anthropologist trained in material culture studies with prior publications on the meaning system at Ground Zero (Marcoux 2005) credential his methodological sensitivity and appropriateness in studying such profoundly difficult contexts.

In the third presentation, Michelle F. Weinberger and Melanie Wallendorf unpack the role of tradition in community reconstitution in the wake of the 2005 devastation of New Orleans by

Hurricane Katrina. This paper uses ethnography to develop an understanding of how local families and communities use participation in Mardi Gras parades in recovery. The research aims to understand the role of deeply embedded consumption rituals at the parades in the process of change, renewal, and reconstruction. The authors are well-suited to study this context and theoretical domain. Weinberger began studying the theoretical issues associated with continuity and change at New Orleans Mardi Gras in 2001. This history combined with her education in sociology situate her to unravel the social dynamics of this community's recovery of tradition and social solidarity. Prof. Wallendorf draws from her prior study of the role of tradition and change in Thanksgiving celebrations (Wallendorf and Arnould 1991).

Taken together, the empirical results presented in these papers provide fodder for discussion on social recovery processes led by John Sherry. Prof. Sherry is uniquely suited to this role because of his training as an anthropologist and his expertise on recovery issues through his prior employment as a substance abuse treatment and recovery counselor. Further, his discussion draws from his scholarship on culturally grounded meanings of consumption.

The session addresses pivotal issues that are timely, interdisciplinary, and transformative. Issues concerning recovery from large-scale disasters are important not only because of their practical implications, but because they provide rich sites for deep theoretical development from observation of cultural change processes.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"Meeting the Needs of Adolescent Disaster Survivors: Getting the Right Consumer Goods into the Right Hands"

Jill G. Klein, INSEAD

Laura Huang, INSEAD

Our study of adolescent survivors in their process of re-possession after the tsunami disaster suggests that the special needs of teenagers were severely underserved. In the second phase of relief that followed the basic necessities of food, water, clothing, shelter, and sanitation, adolescents received very little or nothing in terms of additional consumer goods.

We have conducted multiple interviews with seven adolescent tsunami survivors from a fishing village in Thailand. The interviews were conducted from Feb 2006 to June 2006, in multiple settings, including the homes of the teenagers, family shops, and other settings within the village (e.g., two adolescent girls asked to take the interviewer to see the village tsunami memorial). For a few of the interviews, family members attended and participated in the discussion. All interviews were conducted with a native Thai interviewer who also speaks English, and at least one English-speaking researcher (one or both of the authors). Most interviews were videotaped and transcribed into English. For the others, notes were taken. Our informants had all suffered extensive losses due to the disaster. Some lost family members and all lost friends, and most were completely dispossessed of all belongings, as well as their homes.

We found that while young children received age appropriate gifts in the second (post-survival necessities) phase of relief, the

needs of adolescents appear to have been routinely overlooked. When adolescents *did* receive goods, they were often inappropriate for them or completely unneeded. One female adolescent informant related:

“When they came to give us things, it was nice, but never things that we wanted. It was things that they wanted us to have.”

One boy declared:

“I never wanted to see another pack of Ramen noodles.”

Given the consumer behavior literature on the extended self and symbolic consumption (e.g., Belk 1988) as well as research from psychology on Terror Management Theory (e.g., Greenberg, Solomon and Pyszczynski 1997), adolescent survivors are in particular need of possessions that will allow them to express their identity and build self-esteem. In spite of their particular vulnerabilities and needs, teenagers in the village were not targeted by relief organizations. One possible reason for this is that it is difficult to diagnose the material needs of adolescent survivors. It is relatively easy to find objects that young children will enjoy, yet little is understood about the treasured possessions of teenagers (Kamptner 1995).

Thus, we wanted to gain a better understanding of the kinds of possessions these teenagers valued, what they would have most appreciated receiving in the months after the tsunami, and which lost goods they sought to replace. We also wanted to understand what methods of distribution would have been most valuable.

In conducting our interviews a set of themes emerged that guided the adolescents in their choices and behaviors in the replacement process. Among the most valuable possessions of our informants prior to the tsunami were objects that made up collections, such as coins, stuffed animals, or comic books. Re-starting a collection appears to have been a priority for teens and thus, when asked what kinds of objects they would most like now, they often mentioned items to restart a collection or to contribute to a recently restarted collection.

In addition, the adolescents repeatedly mentioned the ‘downtime’ that they experienced post-tsunami. There was a sense of restlessness and helplessness that the adolescents felt during this period, when most were in camps and schools had not reopened. The teens yearned for things that would help them occupy time, to give them something to do. When asked what kinds of gifts they would like to have received during this time, objects mentioned by girls were embroidery sets, craft materials, books, puzzles, crossword puzzles, and badminton equipment, and boys wanted building sets, sports equipment (e.g., footballs), and comic books. When asked, they said that these objects would help them occupy their time in the camp. Involvement in the distribution also appeared to have benefits, though teens were rarely asked to participate in relief work. One respondent mentioned that he was able to help aid organizations distribute goods. This activity kept him occupied and made him feel like he was contributing by helping others.

Informants reported that in the weeks after the tsunami they tended to try to obtain replacement goods for their families from relief workers, and when asked generally about what they would have liked to receive at that time, they often referred to food and equipment that the whole family could use. However, when asked, “Imagine if three weeks after the tsunami we took you to a store that only made things for kids your age, what would you want us to get for you?” most had no trouble listing items such as those mentioned above. This led us to develop a menu-based selection process that

informants found accessible and easy to use, and we make suggestions to relief organizations based on these findings.

More generally, the techniques we commonly use in marketing can be applied to disaster relief efforts to help the repossession process. Marketers are very adept at understanding how to uncover and measure consumer needs and desires, and how these vary across segments. Marketing tools can be used to make targeting decisions to help resolve resource allocation issues, and focus initiatives on those who will be most responsive. NGOs have become more and more skilled at marketing to potential donors, and it would be highly beneficial to recipients of aid if these skills were also applied to gaining a better understanding of survivor needs. This suggests an excellent corporate social responsibility opportunity for businesses (and business schools) by sharing marketing knowledge to assist NGOs in better understanding survivor needs.

“The Construction of Memory in the Aftermath of 9/11”

Jean-Sébastien Marcoux, HEC Montreal

Since the end of the second World War, numerous researchers and philosophers such Battaglia (1995), Lowenthal (1997), Nora (1984), Pomian (1999), and Ricoeur (2000) have reflected on Maurice Halbwach’s notion of collective memory. The moral imperative to keep alive the memory of the Shoah, the need to prevent a tragic event such as this one from sinking into oblivion, the necessity to honour what Primo Levi (1995) has called the ‘memory duty’, have lead researchers to define memory more broadly than what is usually the case in psychology, but also look at it as a process which relates to the ways people give meanings to the past, and the ways they approach the future.

Even though the research on social memory remains largely unknown in consumer research, it acquires a particular importance in the aftermath of the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11th 2001; a context where sentences like “*We will never forget*” has invaded a multitude of commodities, souvenirs and memorabilia. The relationship between collective memory and consumption becomes even more important in regard to the recent development of death tourism (Lennon and Malcolm 2000; Lloyd 1998; Saunders 2003; Sturken 1997, 2004) on sites as contested as Ground Zero, that are invested with political and ideological values, as well as images of horror. Whereas researches on dark tourism such as those of Sturken (1997) have highlighted the relation between this activity and the formation of a national identity, not to say patriotism, few researches have actually reflected on the role played by consumption in the construction of collective memory. More importantly, consumer researchers themselves have failed to examine critically and reflexively the role of consumption in the construction of memory, as well as the criticisms and the disgust that consumption may raise. Yet, in contemporary situations such as the post 9/11 context, the marketplace provides primary resources involved in the process of memory construction.

The aim of this paper is to unveil the relationships between consumption and collective processes of memory construction. It explores the complex character of the dark tourism that is taking place at Ground Zero. In doing so, it analyses what attracts pilgrims, tourists and voyeurs to this site, as well as the kind of memory that is taking shape as a result of the commodification process. The question that directs this paper is: how is consumption related to the social construction of memory in the aftermath of 9/11?

This paper is grounded in an ethnographic research conducted since March 2003, on and around the site of Ground Zero. It can be situated along the line of the works on social memory undertaken in social sciences, in humanities, in arts history as well as in philosophy. As such, this paper attempts to move beyond the psychological dimensions of the memory; an issue that consumer

researchers have explored in depth, and which is still attracting a great deal of attention. This paper also draws on CCT research (Arnould and Thompson 2005) and CCT researchers' interest for collective memory (Marcoux 2005). An ethnographic analysis of the social construction of memory does not only promise to fill in an important gap in consumer research. It may also help push the reflections on memory conducted outside of consumer research in sensitive directions that still need to be explored.

“Tradition and Renewal: Reconstruction of Culture through Consumption”

Michelle F. Weinberger, *University of Arizona*

Melanie Wallendorf, *University of Arizona*

This research examines how local residents used the annual tradition of New Orleans' Mardi Gras as a tool for community recovery following one of the largest national disasters in U.S. history. We address collective reconstitution of culture by examining how consumption traditions and consumption rhetoric are used to assert social solidarity and demonstrate cultural hegemony.

While other consumer research has studied how individual consumers recover from extreme hardships (c.f. Hill and Stamey 1990; DeLorme, Zinkhan, Hagen 2004), that is not our focus. Instead, we use community activities 6 months after this natural disaster as a vivid context for understanding consumption's role in the development of social solidarity and community. Theoretically, this research aims to explicate how consumption is used collectively to reconstitute social cohesion and connection for neighborhoods and metropolitan areas. It addresses the means by which the collectivity is glued back together, partially through consumption activities, and the form that the reconstituted culture takes.

The Mardi Gras (Carnival) festival in New Orleans provides a rich context for understanding how deeply embedded consumption traditions are used by locals as a tool for cultural recovery. Certainly, New Orleans' tourist economy, particularly at Mardi Gras, has grown in importance over the past 30 years (Gotham 2002). Increasing tourism, the popularization of the exchange of beads for nudity (Shrum and Kilburn 1996, Shrum 2004) and the proliferation of excessive drinking within a small French Quarter section of New Orleans has grown to dominate the media and marketing images of Mardi Gras. But our focus is not on the tourist experience (MacCannell 1976) of Mardi Gras evident in these sites.

Instead, our focus is on the festival as a central component of New Orleans culture for residents of the city's neighborhoods and surrounding areas, dating to 1835 (Mauldin 2004). New Orleaners and their extended family members from surrounding areas spend the weeks leading up to Carnival twenty blocks and a cultural world away from the French Quarter scene. Bearing more resemblance to tailgate parties before a football game than to a wild party, their activities include spending days in folding chairs along grassy St. Charles Avenue with family, friends, and strangers waiting for the many parades that occur periodically through the day. It is a time for spending days socializing, playing, eating, participating in the parades, and collecting during the parades, in the way many of their families have done for decades.

Public celebration of Mardi Gras was threatened in 2006. The destruction that occurred following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the subsequent levy breaks produced a mass exodus of residents and highly politicized discussions concerning the future of the city of New Orleans. At the same time, a fierce debate erupted as to the city's ability to hold and afford the public festival. A rhetoric of consumption for the sake of tourism dollars was leveraged against a rhetoric of restraint both out of respect for the dead and for reallocation of the public funds that would be required for the

rebuilding effort. Ultimately, the festival was given clearance from the city, and many community members returned to New Orleans to participate in the event. During the event, however, locally-oriented participants articulated a different collective reaction: a rhetoric of renewal. The data reveal strong expressions of the importance of the event both at the individual level and the cultural level. While cultural capital continued to mediate the roles that various types of individuals played within the events as Krewe riders, band members, and catchers at different locations along the parade routes (Bourdieu 1984), participants' *emic* articulations were ones of inclusion, community, and togetherness. Despite the wider cultural prominence of mechanical solidarity and division of labor in U.S. society and at the event, participant expressions and actions asserted the key role of organic solidarity (Durkheim 1960 [1893]) in the recovery process. While rituals such as funerals have long been used to smooth the change required in recovery processes after disasters (van Gennep 1909 [1960]; Turner 1969), this research demonstrates how traditions other than those designed for bereavement and change are used as a tool for the cultivation of social solidarity and cultural recovery.

Data collection for this research occurred in February 2006 as a sited ethnography in New Orleans during the first Carnival following Hurricane Katrina. The data are based on participant observation and in-context interviews as well as a collection of ancillary material objects, 472 photographs, and media documents.

Two emergent themes provide an understanding of the role of collective consumption in the reconstitution of social solidarity. First, data reveal that this calendric tradition of consumption was perceived by residents to be a fundamental and invaluable component of New Orleans' culture, one in which families participate year after year. Through participation, cultural normalization and symbolic solidarity are constructed and proven, despite their simultaneous reinvention of the cultural categories of race, class, and gender as a system of social stratification. Second, attempts to hold market forces at bay in order to maintain and prove cultural authority were reflected in anti-sponsorship rhetoric by residents. Ironically, however, the economic boon to the local production system comprised of float makers, costume designers, and bead makers was often used as a secondary justification for the festival's occurrence, in an unquestioned rhetoric of the moral imperative of economics. Taken together, the data provide key theoretical insights into the means by which consumption is used to (re)constitute social solidarity, and the forms of solidarity that consumption reifies.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

That's Not What I Wanted: Perspectives on Unwanted Choice Options and Outcomes

Merrie Brucks, University of Arizona, USA

Wendy Attaya Boland, University of Arizona, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

This session brings together three papers that examine consumer choices and outcomes through a lens that centralizes what the consumer does not want. This view is complementary to the bulk of the choice literature, which has focused on antecedents, processes, and consequences of consumers getting what they do want. More specifically, this session examines consumer reactions to “things they don’t want” at three points in the choice process: as an option in the original choice set, as a denial of the first choice followed up by a second choice, and as a denial of choice followed by affective reactions. The first two papers posit that subsequent choices are affected by subtle changes in the perception and weighting of attributes associated with the unwanted/denied option. The third paper expands our view by including motivational, affective, and individual difference factors.

The first paper (by Wijnen, Bettman and Huber) focuses our attention on the importance of a truly unacceptable option in the consumer choice process. Although such options could easily be eliminated from consideration without comparison to other choice options, the authors show that unacceptable options can affect consumers’ evaluative processing of the remaining options and resultant choice share in a set of three experiments.

The second paper (by Boland, Brucks and Nielsen) also demonstrates that a non-feasible option affects preferences for remaining options in the choice set. In contrast to the first paper, Boland and her colleagues’ infeasible option is the most preferred option in the choice set. It is infeasible because of unavailability after the choice. When asked to make a second choice among the remaining alternatives, the authors show that consumers may abandon their original runner-up choice in favor of one that superficially resembles the denied option.

Similar to the second paper, the third paper (by Moore and Fitzsimons) considers how consumers react when they learn that a preferred option is no longer available. This paper goes beyond the preference construction process to consider affective, social, and individual difference factors. Specifically, the paper takes the view that consumers experience psychological reactance when their first choice is denied. The authors find support for the novel hypothesis that consumers may experience reactance on behalf of other individuals, and that this experience is stronger for consumers with an interdependent self-construal.

Deborah MacInnis concludes this session by presenting an overarching framework addressing issues related to all possible combinations of “wanting”, “having”, “not wanting”, and “not having.” This discussion highlights the similarities and differences among the topics of the three papers comprising this session and offers directions for future research.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“Gone, But Not Forgotten: The Role of Unacceptable Options in Decision Making”

Katrien Wijnen, Ghent University

James R. Bettman, Duke University

Joel Huber, Duke University

Imagine Mr. Jones wants to buy a digital camera and uses a recommendation agent website to find the brand that suits him best.

If the list of recommended brands contains an option with a ‘truly unacceptable’ attribute level, how will he react? Will he choose a different brand from the one he would have chosen if the ‘truly unacceptable’ option was not included? Does the presence of an unacceptable option affect the consumer’s choice among the remaining options?

One common hypothesis is that the truly unacceptable option is eliminated in an initial editing phase and does not influence choice. Our research argues for a more subtle role for the truly unacceptable option. Even if discarded in an early stage, the information characterizing the unacceptable can play a role in the further decision process by helping to define the context (i.e., the relationships between the options in the set) within which the final choice is made. For example, depending upon its attribute values, the unacceptable option could make another target option either asymmetrically dominating or compromise options. If so, the unacceptable option could enhance the choice share of the target option. The unacceptable option in our studies is designed to be such a decoy, with the truly unacceptable feature implemented as a third, categorical attribute with two possible values, either acceptable or unacceptable. We argue that people’s initial examination of the unacceptable option allows it to affect the context within which the other options are perceived. Thus, perception of the viable options in the set will be ‘contaminated’ by how the unacceptable option contributes to the context of the choice set. Such contamination is difficult to detect and correct, due both to people’s limited access to their mental processes and also to the lack of observable ‘symptoms.’

In our first study, we measure whether people’s judgments and inferences are affected by the unacceptable option by comparing choices with or without unacceptable options. Choices are made in each of eleven product categories. For each category, we define a two-option choice set containing a target and a competitor and four three-option sets, two with an asymmetrically dominated relationship and two with a compromise relationship. For each context (asymmetric dominance or compromise), one three-option set has a decoy with an unacceptable value and the other has an acceptable decoy. Participants make choices from all eleven categories but select from only one type of choice set for each product category, with the type of set rotated across categories. We show first that we replicate classical asymmetric dominance and compromise effects. Comparing the three-option, acceptable decoy set to the two-option, no decoy set, a significant increase in relative choice share was found for both context settings. Next, we compare the two-option, no decoy set and the three-option, unacceptable decoy set. As hypothesized, even though the decoy is unacceptable, the choice share of the target relative to the competitor significantly increases for both asymmetric dominance and compromise. Finally, we compare the relative magnitude of the effect of the unacceptable and acceptable decoys and show that the context effect is not attenuated because of the unacceptable nature of the decoy. These findings indicate that editing is rarely as surgical as often assumed. The presence of a truly unacceptable option in the set biases the consumer’s final choice by affecting the perceived context within which this final choice is made.

In a second study, we examine whether making the truly unacceptable option more salient triggers a correction process,

hence reducing the effect on final choice. We make the unacceptable option more salient or 'explicit' by having participants mark truly unacceptable levels and corresponding options in an initial phase. Participants subsequently choose from a set still listing the screened out option(s), with the unacceptable level(s) in red and marked with a red asterisk. Participants chose from a three-option set containing an explicit unacceptable decoy and an asymmetric dominance relationship for one of two product categories. To examine whether relative choice share decreased when comparing this explicit unacceptable case to the implicit one, we compared these results to those from our first study. The results show that correction is moderate when making the option's unacceptability salient in the set. Thus, the distorting effect of the unacceptable on choice seems surprisingly robust.

Our third study examines whether consumers retain knowledge of other attributes associated with alternatives containing an unacceptable attribute and whether what consumers report is in accordance with what they actually do with regard to the treatment of these other levels. In an agent task involving selecting a camera for a friend, unacceptable attribute levels (and hence unacceptable options) are defined by the friend's preferences.

Participants overwhelmingly report (98%) that other attribute levels for truly unacceptable options are not examined further. In contrast to this reported lack of attention, an unannounced recall task shows that participants do retain memory for other attributes of truly unacceptable options. For the option with an unacceptable number of rapid fire shots (camera size), 89.5% (42.1%) of participants retained accurate gist information about at least one aspect other than the unacceptable level. Thus, although participants report that they pay no attention to values other than the unacceptable attribute level for unacceptable options, they retain information about other attribute values in an unexpected recall test.

Our results emphasize the importance of truly unacceptable options in the decision process. The influence of an unacceptable option can linger even after it has been 'rejected' by helping to define the context and thus influencing which option to choose. In addition, the important role of context in decision making is once again confirmed, as context matters even if it is (partially) defined by an option that is truly unacceptable.

“Constructive Preferences for Rejected Options: When You Can't Get What You Want”

Wendy A. Boland, University of Arizona

Merrie Brucks, University of Arizona

Jesper H. Nielsen, University of Arizona

What happens when consumers have made a thoughtful decision, only to find out that their first choice is no longer available? One might expect that consumers would simply revert to their second choice, especially if it was a close call between the two alternatives. But anecdotal evidence led us to question that assumption. In this paper, we demonstrate that consumers may reject an option previously ranked as second best in favor of an even lower ranked option. Two explanations may account for this effect: scorn for the “also-ran” or a preference reversal phenomenon due to shifts in attribute weights.

Consider a purchase choice situation in which the consumer is faced with many competing alternatives that may be characterized by a set of attributes. In many cases, a consumer will reduce the choice set based on an initial set of focal attributes. Within that final set, the consumer will probably consider additional criteria to discriminate among them, such as lower-weighted attributes. At the moment the consumer distinguishes their first choice from their second choice; such attributes have more salience than they did

earlier in the choice process. Under certain conditions, such a shift in attribute salience could produce a preference reversal. Specifically, if the remaining alternatives are reevaluated with the updated attribute weights, a lower-ranked alternative may become more attractive. Thus we hypothesize that (1) a segment of consumers will switch from their second choice to a lower ranked option when the first choice is denied; and (2) the switch can be explained by increased salience of the attribute used to distinguish the first choice option from the second choice option. Two experiments were conducted to test these basic hypotheses.

Study 1 provides evidence that some consumers do switch from their second choice, and they do so in a predictable way. In this study, participants examined pictures and descriptions of eight pens, rated the favorability of each pen, and indicated their first and second choices. Participants believed they would receive their chosen pen. The set of eight pens was constructed so that two pens were dominant on each of the attributes identified as potentially relevant to the decision via a pretest. Within each pair, the pens were differentiated by an attribute rated as less important in pretests (the “tie-breaking” attribute). This design allowed us to trace the impact of individual attributes on choice. Upon completion of an unrelated study, participants were informed that their first choice pen was unavailable but that the other seven options remained. The participants then made a new selection from that set (and received the pen they selected). In support of our hypothesis, we found that a significant proportion of participants (20%) abandoned their original second choice by selecting an option that was originally lower ranked. Of these participants, nearly all (91%) selected the pen that shared the tie-breaking feature found in their original first choice, even though this pen was obviously weaker on the original focal attribute.

In the second study we replicated the existence of the phenomenon, increased the efficiency of the experimental design by altering the stimulus set, and ruled out the possibility that a “scorned option” explains the results. In this study, participants were randomly assigned to “unavailable” or “available” first choice condition. In the unavailable condition, participants were told that their first choice was unavailable and were asked to choose a different option in the same manner as Study 1. In the available condition, the experimenter told participants that she had lost their ratings of each of the pens, asked them to complete the rating task again, and then gave them their first choice. All participants rated the favorability of all the pen alternatives before and after completing the unrelated study, allowing us to measure changes in evaluation at the individual level. The results from Study 2 provide even stronger support for the hypotheses than Study 1. Nearly half of the participants in the unavailable condition rejected their second choice option when asked to reselect (46%). In nearly every case of 2nd choice rejection (98%), participants switched to a pen that shares the original 1st choice's tie-breaking feature but is clearly weaker on focal attributes. Results from analysis of the ratings data support the constructive preference explanation while refuting a “scorned option” hypothesis. Favorability ratings of the 2nd option remain stable (comparing before and after measures), whether or not the 1st choice becomes unavailable. Favorability ratings of the option sharing the tie-breaking feature increase over both availability conditions.

These results add to our understanding of why attribute importance weights can change throughout the decision process, and highlights how those changes can induce a re-ordering of preferences when a choice is found to be unavailable. Our findings help to explain how “what I nearly chose” becomes “what I no longer want.”

“What’s Yours Is Mine: Self-construal and Reactance on Behalf of Others”

Sarah Moore, Duke University

Gavan Fitzsimons, Duke University

Humans have been described as having two fundamental but conflicting needs: one for autonomy and one for belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Brewer, 1991). This paper considers two areas where these needs are recognized. First, the literature on self-construal focuses on our needs for independence from and interdependence with others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989; Singelis, 1994). Individuals with independent self-construals view themselves as unique, autonomous persons that are separate from others, while interdependent individuals view themselves as connected with others. Second, the literature on psychological reactance focuses on individual needs for freedom in choice and decision making (Brehm, 1966; Hong & Faedda, 1996). Reactance theory posits that individuals have negative psychological and contrary behavioral responses when their freedom to make a decision is restricted or removed.

We propose an extension of reactance theory’s traditional focus on individual autonomy to incorporate reactance on behalf of others. Further, we suggest that experienced reactance, whether for oneself or on behalf of others, is affected by self-construal. Although we expect independent and interdependent individuals to experience reactance both for themselves and others, individual or situational differences that emphasize one need over another should be reflected in different reactions to self and other restrictions of freedom. Individuals who are more focused on needs for uniqueness should react most strongly, as traditionally shown, when their own needs for autonomy are restricted. Individuals who are focused on needs to belong should react strongly both when their own and when others’ needs for autonomy are restricted.

A scenario study examined the moderating effect of self-construal on experienced reactance for self and others. Individuals were asked to imagine that they had gone to a restaurant with a good friend to spend some time together. Across conditions we manipulated whether or not individuals received what they ordered. In the control condition, both the individual and their friend got what they ordered. In the self-restricted condition, individuals were told that the waiter had forgotten that the restaurant was out of their chosen item and that they would have to choose again. In the other-restricted condition, the individual’s friend was that told their item was unavailable and they would have to choose again. In a restaurant situation, individuals expect freedom to choose menu items and expect to receive what they have chosen; not receiving a chosen item and being asked to choose something else should induce reactance to this elimination of freedom.

We measured experienced reactance using a composite measure that included satisfaction with the restaurant and negative affect experienced during the scenario (frustration, anger). An ANOVA on condition (control vs. self-restricted vs. other-restricted) and measured self-construal (independent vs. interdependent) was performed on experienced reactance and revealed a main effect of condition and the expected interaction between condition and self-construal. Planned contrasts exploring the interaction revealed that participants in the control condition experienced less reactance than individuals who had been in either of the restricted conditions. A second ANOVA that included self-construal and only self- and other-restricted conditions also showed a significant interaction, indicating that self-construal influenced responses to the different restrictions. To clarify the differences in responses by independent and interdependent individuals in the restricted conditions, a spotlight analysis was conducted. As predicted, independent individuals in the self-restricted condition showed more reac-

tance than independent individuals in the other-restricted condition, while interdependent individuals showed no differences in reactance in the self- versus other-restricted conditions.

These results were confirmed by participants’ answers to two open-ended questions (in the restricted conditions), which were coded by an individual blind to our hypotheses. The first question assessed negative emotional reactions toward the restaurant, while the second assessed the attractiveness of the unavailable menu item. Reactance theory predicts that individuals should find unavailable items more attractive—thus, individuals who are experiencing more reactance should rate the menu item as more attractive. Mirroring the results above, independent individuals who were restricted were more upset at the restaurant than independent individuals who witnessed their friend’s restriction. Interdependent individuals, on the other hand, showed no difference in their emotional reactions, regardless of whether they or their friend was restricted. Further, independent individuals in the self-restricted condition, who ought to have been feeling the most reactance, described the unavailable item as more attractive than independent individuals in the other-restricted condition, while there was no difference between interdependent individuals’ responses in the attractiveness of the unavailable item.

This study is a promising initial demonstration of reactance on behalf of others. Our results suggest that the restriction of a close other’s freedom elicits reactance from individuals, just as individuals react to personal restrictions of freedom. Thus, for both independent and interdependent individuals, to some degree, “what’s yours is mine.” However, for independent individuals, even more important is the idea that “what’s mine is mine”—individuals with an independent self-construal react more strongly to personal restrictions of freedom than to restrictions of others’ freedom.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY
The Flavors of Emotions: Interplay of Affect and Decision Making
Monica Wadhwa, Stanford University, USA

“Let’s not forget that the little emotions are the great captains of our lives and we obey them without realizing it.”...*Vincent Van Gogh*

SESSION OVERVIEW

Emotions have been traditionally been considered at war against reason. Ancient wisdom suggests, “rule you feelings lest your feelings rule you.” Similarly, Greek Philosophers such as Plato and Tertullian considered human soul to be the seat of reason. On the other hand, sentimentalists such as David Hume emphasized the critical role of affect in moral judgments and choices and considered reason “the slave of the passions”. In the domain of consumer research not much attention was paid to the role of emotions and feelings in consumer decision making. However, consumer researchers freed themselves from the worship of reason in the early 90’s, and turned their attention to the role of affect in decision making (see, e.g., Hoch and Loewenstein 1991, Kahn and Isen 1993; Luce 1998, Luce, Bettman, and Payne 1997, Shiv and Fedorikhin 2000). The importance of the role of affect in decision making is further supported by the neuroscientific evidence (Bechara, Damasio, Tranel, & Damasio 1997). The broad purpose of this session is to present work that adds to the growing body of research on the interplay of affect and consumer decision making.

The more specific objective of the proposed session is to examine the prevalence of affective processes in a variety of consumer choice contexts. The three papers in this session explore the role of affect in consumer choice, yet they represent a diversity of topics relevant for consumers, ranging from consumption of negative feelings (Andrade and Cohen), to the role of emotional and cognitive systems in preference consistency (Lee, Ariely and Amir), to reward-seeking behaviors (Nowlis, Shiv and Wadhwa)

The session will begin with a focus on consumption of negative emotions. Eduardo Andrade will present his work with Joel Cohen that focuses on why people choose to consume negative feelings such as watching a horror movie. Andrade and Cohen provide evidence for the coactivation of negative and positive feelings when seemingly aversive events (e.g., watching horror movies) are experienced. Furthermore, they show that such coactivation of negative and positive feelings is particularly likely when people are in a “protective frame” and can detach themselves from “harm” resulting from the experience.

The focus of the session will then shift to the role of the emotional and cognitive systems in preference consistency (transitivity). Leonard Lee will present his work with Dan Ariely and On Amir that examines the conditions under which violations of transitivity are more and less pronounced. Lee, Ariely and Amir demonstrate that the emotional system, and not the cognitive system, is associated with a higher degree of transitivity.

Finally, Monica Wadhwa will present her work with Baba Shiv and Steve Nowlis that focuses on the impact of sampling on reward-seeking behaviors. Nowlis, Shiv and Wadhwa demonstrate that sampling a beverage high in incentive value prompts the activation of a general motivational system leading to an increase in subsequent consumption of not only the sampled drink but also food items. Furthermore, they show that the impact of sampling on reward-seeking behaviors is modulated by the state of deprivation.

This session will have the services of Antoine Bechara as a discussant. Bechara is a leading neuroscientist whose research focuses on the neurobiology of emotion and decision making. As a discussant, he will contribute insights about the three papers and the general session theme from the outside field of neuroscience, which is of great interest and appeal to many consumer behavior researchers.

“On the Consumption of Negative Feelings”

Eduardo B. Andrade, University of California, Berkeley

Joel B. Cohen, University of Florida

Is there a conflict between the basic hedonistic assumption and people’s willingness to experience negative affect? If not how can we best explain the latter without discarding the former? Precisely, when and how is pleasantness experienced as people choose apparently “aversive” events? Traditionally, two groups of accounts have been provided. One possibility is simply that there is no such contradiction because people who expose themselves to stimuli observers perceive to be aversive may not be experiencing any meaningful level of negative affect and may actually be experiencing pleasant arousal (Zuckerman 1996). Even for negative affective states, the *intensity* of arousal has been shown to be individual specific and susceptible to adaptation. Further, responses to lower intensity arousal vary considerably, and, because of that, one person’s discomfort can be another’s pleasure. (e.g., “When I watch a horror movie I’m not afraid; I enjoy the excitement!”). A second group of hypotheses proposes that people are focusing on the *aftermath* (Berlyne 1960; Solomon and Corbit 1974; Zillmann 1980). Once the aversive stimuli are removed and some level of arousal remains, subsequent feelings of relief or pleasantness emerge (e.g., “Bungee jumping is fun, when it is over!”). Thus, people may be willing to endure the fear and unpleasant experiences in order to enjoy the positive feelings brought on by relief.

Explanations for exposure to aversive stimuli originating in these two groups of models adopt the traditional assumption that individuals can not experience opposite feelings at the same time. However, there is growing evidence suggesting that mixed feelings or coactivation is not only possible but quite common (Larsen et al. 2003; Larsen, McGraw, and Cacioppo 2001; Schimmack, 2001; Watson, Clark, and Tellegen 1988; Williams and Aaker 2002). We argue that explanations for counter-hedonistic behavior should be consistent with newer evidence that people can simultaneously experience conflicting emotions, though that is presently not the case.

In a series of four studies horror movie watchers and non—horror movie watchers (hereafter “fear avoiding” [FAV] and “fear approaching” [FAP] participants) are exposed to horror movies and asked to report their positive and negative feelings, either after (experiment 1), or during video exposure (experiments 2, 3A, and 3B). An online affect scale (OAS) and an online affect grid (OAG)—adapted from Larsen, Norris, and Cacioppo 2005—are used to continuously capture the intensity and pattern of affective states while participants watch the scenes.

The results show *first* that positive and negative feelings can actually co-occur when people are exposed to apparent aversive stimuli (e.g., a horror movie). Also, such co-occurrence appears in

the shape of a positive correlation between feelings of “opposite” valence (e.g., fear and happiness) *during the exposure* to the event (e.g., “It may seem masochist, but the more scared I feel watching a horror movie, the more I enjoy it!”). *Second*, and contrary to the existing intensity model assumption that negative arousal is experienced *instead* as pleasurable, we show that those who pursue such apparently aversive events, actually experience a similar level and pattern of negative feelings as those who have deliberately avoided them. This is an important demonstration that positive affect does not merely replace negative affect because of interactions with arousal (particularly at relatively low levels). *Third*, we demonstrate that two aspects of existing aftermath models are untenable. If we can establish coactivation of positive and negative emotions during exposure to aversive stimuli, the assumption that people can only experience positive affect in response to feelings of relief *after* the aversive stimulus has been removed needs to be abandoned. We also find that feelings of relief can be stronger among those who have *avoided* the experience in the past compared to those who have frequently chosen to expose themselves to such stimuli. The opposite should be true under aftermath model assumptions since feelings of relief (and consequent positive affect) are held to be decisive in leading people to approach rather than avoid fearful experiences. *Finally*, we propose a moderator that is critical for co-occurrence to be a stable state and that is likely to affect repeated pursuit of “aversive pleasures” such as horror movies as well as truly dangerous activities. To this purpose we adopt the notion of “a protective frame” (Apter 1982, 1992) and directly manipulate this perceived frame of mind to show that individuals can learn how to experience positive feelings while still being absorbed by the fearfulness of the event.

In short, we believe these studies advance our understanding of the consumption of negative feelings by providing evidence of coactivation of negative and positive feelings and the importance of a protective frame as a critical moderating variable as well as by further refining the two prevailing theoretical positions in this domain. The approach and avoidance decisions people make when confronting contexts that are likely to generate negative affect are quite significant (and some may be key stepping stones to reaching important longer-term goals). We need to learn much more about both the conditions favoring and hindering such behaviors and about how subsequent emotional responses (and how they might be modified) affect continuing goal pursuit.

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“In Search of Homo Economicus: Transitivity, Emotions, and Cognition”

Leonard Lee, MIT

Dan Ariely, MIT

On Amir, University of California, San Diego

In this work, we report a set of experiments where we presented participants with many pairs of choices and measured their degree of transitivity. Our objective is not to demonstrate intransitivity caused by systematic biases in decision making, but rather to examine intransitivity attributed to *inconsistency* in decision making as decision makers encounter these decisions over time. Across all experiments, we manipulated whether the experimental conditions caused participants to use their emotional system or the cognitive system when making these choices, and we examined which of these two general systems better comply with the transitivity axiom and hence rationality. We examine the role of these two systems in transitivity for four reasons: first, because the degree of transitivity individuals exhibit over a set of choices can serve as a measure for how consistent they are in “reading” and computing their utility for the alternatives they face; second, because the distinction between the functions of these two systems has been evident across a wide array of research programs; third, because both prior research and lay beliefs suggest that the cognitive system might be more tightly linked to rationality, and the emotional system more to irrationality; and fourth, because despite these commonly held beliefs, there is some evidence from prior research suggesting that decisions makers might have more consistent preferences when they rely more on their emotional system rather than their cognitive system.

In all experiments, we first presented participants with the names, pictures, and short descriptions of a set of electronic gadgets (such as a pen with a built-in FM tuner and a voice-recording keychain). Participants were next given all pair-wise combinations of these products and instructed to choose a product within each pair according to a particular criterion. Some participants were asked to decide in a manner that we expect to rely more heavily on the cognitive system, and others to decide in a manner that we expect to rely more heavily on the emotional system. As a measure of preference consistency, we computed the number of transitivity violations (e.g. $x \geq y$, $y \geq z$, and $z \geq x$, where \geq means relative preference) participants committed during the task.

In Experiment 1, we manipulated emotional versus cognitive processing by manipulating the stimuli that respondents saw. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: the pairs of products were presented either in terms of their names (*low affect* condition), their pictures (*high affect* condition), or both their names and pictures. The results revealed that participants in the high affect condition committed significantly fewer transitivity violations than those in the low affect condition. (Interestingly, when the product pairs were displayed in terms of both their names and pictures, the average number of violations was similar to that in the low affect condition, but greater than that in the high affect condition, suggesting that the availability of product names was sufficient to activate the cognitive system and deteriorate choice consistency.)

We turned our attention from the mode of stimuli representation to the state of the decision maker in Experiment 2: half the participants in the experiment were asked to memorize a three-digit code during the choice task (*low-load* condition) and the other half a ten-digit code (*high-load* condition). The results revealed that the high-load participants (whose attentional capacities were constrained by the code memorization and who presumably had to rely more on their gut reactions and emotional responses during choice) were significantly more transitive than the low-load participants, suggesting a close association between preference consistency and the emotional system.

We next attempted to generalize our findings to explore whether decisions based on hedonic evaluations are more transitive compared to decisions with non-hedonic aspects. In Experiment 3, we manipulated the goal of the choice task: Participants were asked to choose the product they *preferred* (hedonic) within each pair, the product they thought was *more expensive* (non-hedonic), or the product they considered *more popular* (non-hedonic). We found that participants who had to choose their preferred product made fewer transitivity errors than those who chose the more expensive or the more popular product, indicating that evaluations that focus on hedonic aspects and that more heavily involve the emotional system are more consistent than evaluations that focus on non-hedonic aspects.

In sum, these experimental results converged to the same general conclusion: the emotional system, and not the cognitive system, is associated with a higher degree of consistency and transitivity. These results suggest that at least one aspect of Homo Economicus—transitivity—might reside in the emotional system.

“Tantalizing Effects of Sampling: The Influence of Sampling on Motivational States”

Steve Nowlis, Arizona State University

Baba Shiv, Stanford University

Monica Wadhwa, Stanford University

“Let the stoics say what they please, we do not eat for the good of living, but because the meat is savory and the appetite is keen”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Consider a situation involving sampling of a food or a beverage item—an experience that most people are likely to be familiar with. Marketers frequently employ such sampling as a mean to stimulate consumer’s interests. Despite the growing popularity of such sampling, it poses a dilemma for marketers. On the one hand, food and beverage sampling is considered an integral part of promotion mix. On the other hand, common intuition would suggest that such sampling could also make consumers less hungry or

thirsty and, therefore, reduce their subsequent consumption-related behaviors. The results of a short survey that we conducted with twenty-one marketing experts are in concordance with the common intuition.

The above conclusions arising from common intuition and the opinions of marketing experts, however, go against an emerging body of work on consumption cues and drive states. Emerging theories in this domain suggest that a consumption cue high in incentive value can strengthen drive states and, thereby, stimulate reward-seeking behaviors (e.g., Berridge 2001, Toates 1986), a notion we refer to as “reverse alliesthesia.” In other words, reverse alliesthesia suggests that sampling a tasty bit of food or beverage is actually likely to intensify rather than satiate hunger or thirst and, therefore, increase subsequent consumption-related behaviors.

Building on research on consumption cues and drive states, our first goal in this research was to demonstrate that sampling a consumption cue high in incentive value prompts the activation of a general motivational state, thereby, leading individuals to engage in reward-seeking behaviors. We achieved this goal by randomly assigning half of the respondents to a beverage-sampling task. Thereafter, we asked respondents to proceed to a second room, where we had different food items and the sampled drink served for them. We then measured the subsequent consumption behaviors related to food and drink. We also recorded the time taken to cover the distance from the first to the second room. Prior studies conducted in animal laboratories demonstrate that rats when primed with a food pellet work harder for more food, than when they are not primed with the food pellet (Grant and Milgram 1973, Terry 1983). Following the same argument, we had predicted that if sampling activates a motivational state then respondents should walk faster for their reward when they have sampled a drink high in incentive value than when they have not. Regarding the consumption behavior related to food and drink, we had predicted that if our results are consistent with reverse alliesthesia then sampling a drink high in incentive value should positively impact subsequent consumption-related behaviors.

Consistent with our predictions, sampling the drink high in incentive value led to an increase in consumption of not only the sampled drink but also the food items. Furthermore, respondents who had sampled the drink walked faster to the room with food and drink served than those who had not sampled the drink. Study-1, therefore, demonstrates that high incentive-value consumption cues activate a more general motivational state, prompting individuals to engage in reward-seeking behaviors in general.

The nascent evidence that exists in the literature supporting reverse alliesthesia, however, suggests that the effects of reverse alliesthesia operates at three different levels of specificity—specific to the consumption-cue, specific to a drive state and a more general-motivation level. Cue specific hypothesis suggests that eating a bit of food or beverage item is likely to increase the subsequent consumption of the sampled food or beverage item only (Cornell et al 1989). Drive-specific hypothesis suggests that sampling a bit of beverage (say, Hawaiian Punch) should lead to an increase in subsequent consumption of not only the sampled item (Hawaiian Punch) but any drink (Pepsi), but not food and vice versa (Toates 1986). Finally, Kambouropoulos and Staiger (2001) provide evidence in support of a general motivational hypothesis. In their study, they show that presenting individuals with a Beer-can not only led to an increase in urge to drink but activated a general motivational state making individuals more engaged in reward-seeking behaviors related to money in a subsequent task. Thus, the level of specificity at which reverse-alliesthesia effects operate is unclear.

Results from study-1 support a general motivational hypothesis; however, these results do not explain the ambiguity related to the level of specificity at which the reverse alliesthesia operates. Our second goal, therefore, was to examine the factors that could moderate the level of specificity at which reverse-alliesthesia effects operate. Extant research on the neurobiology of motivation suggests that in a deprivation state (e.g., when one is thirsty), behaviors should be directed at specific goal stimulus (say, for e.g., a glass of water); on the other hand, non-deprivation state should result in behaviors that are more exploratory in nature. Building on this stream of research we predicted that when individuals are thirsty, sampling a consumption cue (e.g., Hawaiian Punch) high in incentive value should lead to more drive specific effects, that is, it is likely to increase the subsequent consumption of only drive-relevant stimulus (e.g., only drink). However, when one is not in the deprivation state, sampling a consumption cue high in incentive value should lead to more general effects. In other words, when one is not thirsty, sampling a beverage (e.g., Hawaiian Punch) high in incentive value is likely to lead to an increase in subsequent consumption of not only another drink but also food. In study-2, therefore, we manipulated the state of deprivation and examined its impact on subsequent consumption-related behaviors. In accordance with our predictions, we demonstrate that level of specificity at which reverse-alliesthesia effects operates is moderated by the state of deprivation. To elaborate, when respondents were thirsty, sampling a drink high in incentive value led to an increase only in the subsequent consumption of another drink; however, when respondents were not thirsty, sampling a drink high in incentive value led to an increase in subsequent consumption of not only drink but also food.

In sum, our findings suggest that sampling a consumption cue high in incentive value can activate a general motivational state leading individuals to seek anything rewarding, and these effects are modulated by the state of deprivation. Our findings have important implications for the marketers. These results suggest that sampling a food or beverage items in a grocery store is not only likely to increase the purchase of the sampled food or beverage items but rewarding items in general.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Catching Up With Consumer Visuals: Theory, Evidence, Upgrades, and Plug-Ins

Linda Scott, University of Oxford, UK

SESSION OVERVIEW

In the past twenty years, the landscape of consumer imagery has changed substantially. Not only have the number, size, and venues of pictures continued to expand, but the balance and relationship between images and verbal material has shifted measurably (Phillips and McQuarrie 2004). Even the visual representation of typeface and the space surrounding the images have come to carry meaning—and images are now widely used to represent quantities and statistics (Henderson et. al. 2002; Pracejus et. al. 2006; Tufte 1990). In turn, new technologies from digital cameras to Photoshop have put sophisticated image-creation tools into the hands of ordinary people. Indeed, technology has so profoundly affected the everyday material culture that the objects being pictured are *themselves* often new and strange. Further, as the planetary economy draws cultures with disparate sign systems into closer contact, differences in cognitive approaches to pictures versus language are being studied (Tavassoli 1999). The ubiquity, accessibility, and manipulability of imagery may have even created the world's first democratic pictography (Scott 1993, Scott and Vargas 2007). In sum, the face of popular imagery has changed so much in recent years that new research frameworks are needed to make consumer response intelligible.

This session brings together leading researchers in consumer response to imagery to begin addressing this gap. Our intention is to point to observable phenomena in commercial imagery not currently addressed by research and to propose theoretical extensions for updating scholarly approaches. We believe this session will command attention because of the prominence of imagery in both public and academic discussions of media and the global economy. We also believe the session will have core appeal to a large subgroup of CB scholars who study visuals under a variety of methods and rubrics (see Scott and Batra 2003; Scott and Vargas 2007).

We will use rhetorical theory as the framework for this session. Language theorists have already heralded the 21st century a rhetorical age, a turn brought about by the spread of consumer culture and mass media, the decline of print communication, and the rise of multiculturalism (Bender and Wellberry 1990; Wess et. al. 1996). A robust stream of work has also emerged in consumer behavior since Scott's (1994a) proposal that rhetoric would provide a workable theory for the study of advertising images (McQuarrie and Mick 1992, 1996, 1999; Phillips 1997; Phillips and McQuarrie 2002, 2004). However, this work has focused so strongly on tropes that the field's perception of the rhetorical approach is in danger of being reduced to a "theory of figures," much as rhetoric was during the 19th century (Bender and Wellberry 1990). Therefore, this session will show how other basic theoretical building blocks—identification, argument, and genre—can be used to build a broad theory of rhetorical imagery *beyond* the study of pictorial metaphor.

The three aspects of rhetoric were chosen as a focus because of their foundational importance to theory-building. *Argumentation* has been understood as the skeletal structure of persuasion since ancient Greece. Any true theory of pictorial rhetoric would need to show how pictures can make statements, list evidence, offer reasons, and argue a proposition. *Identification* was the primary building block in the philosophy propounded by the 20th century's leading rhetorical theorist, Kenneth Burke (Burke 1969; Wess et.

al. 1996). *Genre analysis*—sketching the outlines and rules of identifiable types within a corpus of texts—is the essential first step in making sense of any large body of symbolic forms. Thus, we believe this session will help the researchers in attendance to develop fruitful studies of their own. We hope also to stimulate them to look further into rhetorical theory as a basis for grasping trends in picturing.

A quick look at the references provided here will underscore the participants' expertise in consumer imagery. We also wish to remark that our discussant, David Mick, is not only distinguished in the area of visual research, but in both sign theory and consumer relationships to technology as well. Therefore, we anticipate a high quality synthesis for this session.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"Imagining Identity: Technology and the Body in Marketing Communications"

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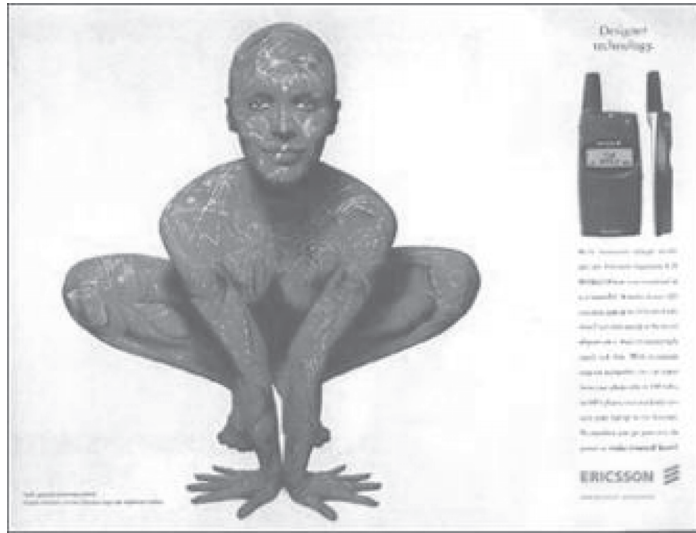
Peter Dobers, Mälardalen University

A key strategy of contemporary marketing is to create a compelling image for products and services by associating brand names to some aspect of personal or group identity. The human body forms a basic building block of this strategy—the body functions as a radiating landmark for innumerable product, social, and emotional attributes ascribed to a vast array of products, services, and ideas in ads, websites, annual reports, and promotional brochures (Schroeder, 2002; Schroeder and McDonagh, 2005). Sophisticated, high-tech products often incorporate the ancient, basic human form within their marketing strategy, attempting to make physical and tangible complex, ethereal, and often invisible goods and services.

This paper takes a pervasive visual theme—the human body and its representation—and investigates its identity building functions within the high-tech category. In a survey of recent IT marketing efforts, information technology products and services were represented in increasingly social ways, infusing their materiality with anthropomorphic and cyborg qualities of human body and soul. We develop a typology of the body in IT ads, drawing on semiotic analysis and interviews with technology and media students, and discuss how images of the body have come to signify technological innovation. We present an interdisciplinary analysis of how the body communicates about IT to illuminate central strategic issues in marketing and representing technological innovations.

We find that within contemporary marketing communications, boundaries between the body and technology have become blurred. Consumers are encouraged to see people and bodies as if they were dispersed and fluid systems of flesh and digits. These cyborg images provide provocative themes for advertisers (e.g., Venkatesh, Karababa and Ger, 2002); this paper joins recent research efforts to theorize the cyborg within consumer culture (Campbell, O'Driscoll and Saren, 2006; Geisler and Venkatesh, 2002). Recent ads collected from magazines such as the *Economist*, *Wired*, and *Time* provide compelling evidence. In print, technology seems to be entering the body, exemplifying the extending capacity of IT—shifting time and space to allow humans to communicate in

FIGURE 1
Sample Ad—Ericsson ‘Designer Technology’ ad, 2001



spectacular ways by expanding our cognitive, physical, perceptual, and intellectual abilities. For example, Ericsson has a series of ads that feature nearly nude bodies, painted blue, that reveal a network of circuits, cables, and computer chips integrated into the body's skin (see figure 1). One ad portrays a bald headed woman, crouching with her palms

resting on the floor, knees splayed out, staring blankly into the camera. Her pose is amphibious—she/it resembles a big blue frog, with the curious addition of computer circuits morphed onto her skin. (Consumer responses to this image vary—some find resonance with the body and the cellphone, whereas others find the image perplexing, revealing the variability of consumer response to rather abstract visual rhetoric.) Radio, internet, and television ads also give technology human-like features and attributes, thus making the nonhuman anthropomorphous. For instance, Swedish tele provider Telia ran spots that showed human “digits”—people labeled with 0s and 1s—discussing the human effects of information technology.

We argue that such ads open up a window of how identity is represented in the electronic economy. Our analytic approach draws on the cultural code of the body as conceptualized from four theoretical domains: (1) life and growth as a controlling paradigm for economics, in which growth, development, nurturance, and life cycles are routinely invoked to discuss economic activity; (2) metaphorical thought, as articulated by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, about the great chain of being (cf. Wilk, 2004). This overarching metaphor places humans—and their bodies—at the top of a ‘great chain’ of life, with animals below; (3) Michel Foucault’s work on how social, economic, and political institutions interact with and influence the body; and (4) the body as an important genre in visual representation, for example the figure in painting and the body in photography (e.g., Shilling, 2005). Further, we discuss the broader significance of the body in marketing imagery, particularly when it is recruited to signify technological progress and information technology products. The paper ends with some speculations on the changing nature of representation in information technology ads (cf. Phillips and McQuarrie, 2002), and offers some conclusions about the body as a basic element of marketing communication.

“Reason and Realism: Image as Argument”

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Patrick Vargas, University of Illinois

Past CB research on advertising visuals has often presumed either that images do not carry brand attribute information or that images of products are used only “realistically” to warrant quality and credibility (Scott 1994a; Scott and Vargas 2007). For images to present arguments on behalf of products, they must be capable of carrying information about product features; however, a key issue emergent from new image technologies is the status of pictures as representations of the real. Not only is there a persistent concern about the alteration of images through various forms of digital retouching, the increasingly stylized visual environment raises questions about the place of the “realistic” in the context of such meaningful variety.

This presentation will begin to explore the new visual environment for brand information and product representation in an effort to conceptualize the image as a form of argument. We will begin by briefly recapping the results of our study (forthcoming JCR 2007) showing that pictures are now capable of representing as specific a list of brand attributes as are words—and that consumers accurately infer the features thus listed.

We will then show new research that explores the range and validity of pictorial “realism” in the representation of objects. This research, like our previous study, makes use of both experiments and interviews to investigate consumer response to object images. Several tasks are employed to investigate how sensitive the perception of “realism” is to context and order effects, to ask what the basis for a judgment of realism is, and to illuminate the ways that the “realistic” and the stylized are attributed meaning in a commercial context. Results in hand already suggest that the notion of “realism” in picturing is undergoing significant revision, becoming quite fluid and subject to shifting interpretations in use.

Our contention will be that evidence points to a response model in which pictures in consumer culture are making “rational” arguments, used to list attributes and to display evidence, but that previous assumptions about the centrality of realism need to be reexamined in light of emergent technologies.

“Pictures, More Pictures, Nothing But Pictures: Image as Genre”

Barbara J. Phillips, University of Saskatchewan

Edward F. McQuarrie, Santa Clara University

A distinctive feature of advertising is its reliance on pictures to persuade. Moreover, documentary evidence suggests that the emphasis on pictures over words in print ads has steadily increased throughout the last century (Pracejus et al. 2006). Unfortunately, there is still not much consumer or marketing theory available for differentiating and organizing the variety of pictorial strategies on display. Though the range of pictorial choices that can be implemented in an ad is now vastly larger because of advancing technology, consumer theory has not kept up.

Our contention is that a separation of advertising images into genres is now required to help researchers make sense of the exploding array of visual strategies. Genre is a combination of a flexible set of constitutive rules and representative members that apply to texts from more than one creator and time period (Fishelov 1993). A genre encompasses a loosely structured set of shared features that can be identified by individuals (Gibbs 1994, p. 49; Stern and Russell 2004); for example, the genre “game” encompasses Monopoly, pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey, and tag. Just as consumers classify movies using genres to frame their expectations and interpretations of the movie’s content (e.g., western, science fiction, romantic comedy), it is our belief that consumers classify advertising images in the same way. That is, the style of the image in an ad provides a supplementary message that presents information to the viewer about expectation, comprehension, and ultimately, response.

One genre of advertising has eschewed most use of verbal copy for decades now is fashion advertising. Ads that present clothing as the embodiment of the latest aesthetic (Entwistle 2000) account for more than half of the pages in men’s and women’s fashion magazines. The clothing industry in the U.S. tops \$180 billion in sales and a one-page ad in *Vanity Fair* or *Vogue* costs more than \$110,000. Despite this economic significance, the genre of fashion images has not been examined in consumer research, perhaps because fashion has long been considered a frivolous, wasteful, or even wicked practice beneath serious consideration and study (Entwistle 2000). Alternatively, it may be that fashion images have been ignored because they are considered “natural” and do not require cultural interpretation—like a catalog picture, fashion ads are believed to represent the clothes to be sold. Although some fashion images are composed this way, many others present models in narrative story situations, and a large number of fashion ads present images that are unnatural, odd, or even inexplicable. As Scott (1994a) reminds us, even the most “representative” ads require cultural interpretation, and researchers have found that fashion ads are not easily coded into the visual categories that neatly organize ads for other products.

We suspect it is consumer knowledge of genre rules that helps fashion advertising to succeed. This suggests that other kinds of primarily visual ads may also make use of, or rely upon, the genre expectations of consumers. Genre expectations, when available, may help to counteract the risk to ad comprehension posed by the absence of verbal copy. This, in turn, indicates an opportunity to define and explore such sub-genres within the print advertising space.

In this paper we define the meaning and operation of genre rules using fashion advertising as an example. We then situate the effort within a broader body of work that attempts to differentiate the visual element within advertising (e.g., the visual rhetorical figure, as discussed by Phillips and McQuarrie [2004]). In short, we

attempt to address the need for better theory and more differentiated accounts of how consumers process pictures in advertising by focusing on extreme cases where the picture *is* the entire advertisement.

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The Moderating Role of Need for Cognition and Counterfactual Thinking on Product Evaluation

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Counterfactual thinking (CFT) refers to the process of reflecting on past events and simulating alternative possible outcomes. Consumer researchers have explored related issues, such as how anticipation of counterfactual regret influences decision-making and behavior (Hetts, Boninger Armor, Gleicher, Nathanson 2000) or how CFT affects information processing (Krishnamurthy and Sivaraman 2003). However, scant research has investigated how and when CFT influences consumers' product evaluations after a purchase success or failure.

Research investigating CFT has found that moods and counterfactual direction may serve as reciprocal antecedents and consequences of each other (Sanna, Turley-Ames, and Meier 1999). For example, suppose a consumer finds that a recently purchased product does not meet the consumer's expectations; the consumer is not happy about the result. As an antecedent, the unhappiness produces upward counterfactuals. The consumer might think, "If I could choose again, I might have made more comparisons and could have bought a much better product." The more the consumer thinks of the negative consequences of the chosen product and the positive consequences of other alternatives, the more dissatisfied the consumer becomes. This dissatisfaction will inevitably produce more upward counterfactuals. Consequently, upward CFT and mood constitute a reciprocal cycle.

We propose that need for cognition (NFC; Cacioppo, Petty, and Kao 1984) may provide a potential boundary for the reciprocal cycle of upward CFT. From a theoretical point of view, an investigation of the moderating effect of cognitive elaboration on the CFT reciprocal cycle may provide an alternative explanation of a contradictory finding.

Two experiments were designed to examine the moderating role of CFT and NFC on product evaluations. The first experiment investigates whether high NFC can break the reciprocal cycle of upward CFT when people encounter a purchase failure and explores the effects that underlie this process. Experiment 2 provides a replication and extension of experiment 1 to establish the robustness of the documented findings.

In experiment 1, two computer purchase scenarios (positive-outcome and negative-outcome) and two thinking instructions (no CFT instruction and CFT instruction) were manipulated. We hypothesize that in a negative purchase outcome condition, respondents engaging in more extensive purchase scenario processing (high NFC) should produce more favorable product evaluations when a CFT instruction is provided after purchase. In contrast, respondents engaging in less extensive purchase scenario processing (low NFC) should produce more favorable product evaluations when a CFT instruction is not provided after purchase. The results are consistent with our predictions. Examination of thought measures provides additional support for the hypotheses.

Experiment 2 replicates the negative-outcome conditions by replacing the CFT instruction with a follow-up customer service survey. In addition, processing extensity was manipulated with motivation instead of being measured as NFC in experiment 1. Our procedure explicitly manipulated respondents' motivation to engage in extensive processing of purchase scenarios in experiment 2.

We propose that the moderating effects of NFC and thinking instruction observed in experiment 1 should be replicated under negative purchase outcome conditions. Specifically, when a follow-up survey was provided after purchase, individuals with high processing motivation evaluated the product more favorably than individuals with low processing motivation. But, when no follow-up survey was given, respondents with low processing motivation evaluated the product more positively than respondents with high processing motivation. Our predictions are supported. Examination of thought measures also provided additional support for the predictions. The results in experiment 2 are important in advancing our understanding of the effects that underlie the process in negative purchase outcome conditions.

Together, the two studies support our proposed theorizing regarding how NFC and CFT can affect people's product evaluations after a positive or a negative purchase experience. The studies reveal that with a CFT instruction, individuals engaging in more extensive processing generate more downward counterfactuals than upward counterfactual after a purchase failure, resulting in higher product evaluations. Individuals engaging in less extensive processing invoke upward CFT as part of a reciprocal cycle after a purchase failure, thus producing lower product evaluations. Furthermore, we find that without a CFT instruction, individuals who engage in more extensive processing generate lower product evaluations after a purchase failure than those who engage in less extensive processing do.

The findings of the two studies contribute to both psychology and consumer research. For psychology, this research suggests that sufficient resources or ability can break the negative cycle that consumers may encounter after a purchase failure. The results not only offer a resolution to the previous contradictory findings, but also provide evidence that cognitive ability or resources impacts the direction of CFT.

Our contribution to consumer research is also substantial. Our research suggests that high NFC or motivated consumers generate more downward counterfactuals and fewer upward counterfactuals, thus producing higher product evaluations if they are given a follow-up customer service survey after a purchase failure. It extends the research domain from the structure of counterfactual thoughts to product evaluation.

From a managerial standpoint, this research has implications for postpurchase marketing efforts. Specifically, marketers can use some postpurchase efforts, such as a follow-up customer service survey in experiment 2, to influence consumers' CFT direction. Comment cards and satisfaction surveys are widely used in the service industry, such as hotels, restaurants and etc. This research enhances our understanding of how postpurchase marketing influences consumers' product evaluations.

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Visualization and New Product Evaluation: The Role of Memory- and Imagination-Focused Visualization

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Really new products (RNPs) allow consumers to do things they have never been able to do before. To help consumers learn about the new benefits associated with RNPs, mental simulation of product usage has been identified as an effective cognitive tool (Dahl, Chattopadhyay, and Gorn 1999; Dahl and Hoeffler 2004; Hoeffler 2003). For example, research has demonstrated that mentally simulating the usage of an RNP increases consumers' ability to predict the benefits of an RNP accurately (Hoeffler 2003). However, because humans tend to be "cognitive misers" (Bettman, Luce, and Payne 1998; Fiske and Taylor 1991), they are reluctant to engage in the extensive cognitive thinking that might be required. Consequently, in the new product domain, when people are asked to visualize new product-related activities, they underestimate the usefulness of the radically new features (Dahl, Chattopadhyay, and Gorn 1999; Dahl and Hoeffler 2004). Consumers base their mental images on their memories about prior consumption routines, which are more easily accessible. Yet focusing on prior consumption patterns may highlight the requisite behavior changes and thus enhance learning-cost inferences associated with adopting an RNP (Mukherjee and Hoyer 2001). As a result, overall evaluations of an RNP are discounted (Dahl and Hoeffler 2004). In this research, we incorporate visual mental imagery with an imaginative focus into new product learning and examine the impact of the imaginative focus on the evaluation of RNPs.

Visualization and Evaluation of RNPs

In the new-product-design domain, Dahl and colleagues (1999) find that when designing a product, use of imagination-focused visual imagery (e.g., going beyond previously seen images, visualizing new and never-before-experienced events) results in more original product designs than use of visual imagery based on existing memories. These findings suggest that changing consumers' focus of visualization from a simple prior product usage to imaginative new uses of a really new product could enhance their evaluations of an RNP. However, for an INP with a low level of complexity, when consumers focus on existing consumption patterns, less behavior changes are required and lower learning costs are involved (Mukherjee and Hoyer 2001). This implies that consumers have the mental resources to estimate the value of the INP's new capabilities, which they would naturally do when focusing on the potential new uses of the product. Therefore, switching the focus of visualization from existing usage situations to new usage situations will not have a large impact on evaluations of an INP. Thus:

H₁: Imagination-focused visualization leads to higher evaluations of an RNP than memory-focused visualization; however, a visualization focus (memory versus imagination) does not affect evaluations of an INP.

Ease of the Visualization Task

Recent research on the accessibility of experiences hints at the potential for the difficulty of the visualization exercise to affect evaluations. Notably, Schwarz (1998, 2004; see also Sanna and

Schwarz 2004) finds that people rely more on the accessibility of experiences (i.e., ease of retrieval) than the accessibility of content. In a marketing context, Wanke, Bohner, and Jurkowitsch (1997) find further evidence of the impact of accessibility. They demonstrate that when participants named ten reasons for choosing a focal car, their evaluations were lower than when they named only one reason. This finding was primarily due to the ease of retrieval. In the new product domain, research has demonstrated that the difficulty of the visualization task can mediate the impact on evaluation (Dahl and Hoeffler 2005). Visualizing others using the new product was easier than self-visualization for RNPs, and that greater perceived ease with visualization led to higher product evaluations.

On the other hand, research has also indicated that for INPs, for which participants have some experience in the domain, preferences will be less susceptible to subtle context effects (e.g., experienced ease during the visualization exercise). In particular, recent research has shown that the level of knowledge can influence the perception of how diagnostic ease of retrieval is likely to be (Tybout et al. 2005). For example, when people were asked to generate thoughts about a focal car, those to whom the features were more familiar relied more on the retrieval content. Thus:

H₂: In the context of imagination-focused visualization, greater perceived ease of the visualization task leads to higher evaluations of an RNP than lower perceived ease. However, ease of visualization has no impact on the evaluation of an INP.

Results and Implications

In Experiment 1, we compared the impact of memory-focused visualization with that of imagination-focused visualization and demonstrated that imagination-focused mental imagery increases the evaluation of an RNP but has no impact on the evaluation of an INP. In Experiment 2, we manipulated the difficulty of imagination by prompting participants to come up with one or eight new activities that they could perform with the new product. The results showed that imagination lowered the evaluation of the RNP when eight activities (vs. one activity) were required but it had no effect on the INP. In Experiment 3, we manipulated the ease of imagination by providing participants with one or eight activities related to the new product. The results show that because of the greater perceived ease, participants who were given eight examples had higher evaluations of the RNP than participants who were given only one example. In both experiments 2 and 3, ease of imagination had no impact on the evaluation of INP.

Our results add significantly to recent research on mental simulation and new product learning by identifying different types of visualization focus. We emphasize the concept of "imaginative-new-usage focus" and show that only if people are explicitly instructed to rely on imaginative new uses will their visualization enhance product evaluations of an RNP.

Our research also extends the accessibility literature with a traditional *retrospective* view (i.e. ease of *retrieval*) by demonstrating the role of ease of imagination from a *prospective* view.

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Design and the Big Five: Linking Visual Product Aesthetics to Product Personality

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Design is not just a cultural phenomenon; it is also a key strategic variable that can assist companies in securing or defending a marketplace advantage. Even though practitioners and consumers have embraced design, consumer research seems to lag behind, and design research is rather fragmented (Veryzer 1999, Bloch, Brunel and Arnold 2003). We believe that this is an important area for consumer researchers and that design research can impact theory and practice.

This research concentrates on visual product aesthetics or those characteristics that create a product's appearance and have the capacity to affect observers and consumers (Lawson 1983). Such characteristics include materials, proportion, color, ornamentation, shape, size and reflectivity. Visual product aesthetics influence consumers' perceptions in at least three ways. First, product design distinguishes products from competitors and helps gain market recognition (Bloch 1995; Schmitt and Simonson 1997). Second, product aesthetics serve a symbolic role that influences product perception, comprehension, and evaluation (Yalch and Brunel 1996). Finally, product appearance is a central channel through which consumers might form relationships with products (Hollins and Pugh 1990; Lewalski 1988), and as such it has been shown to be a source of product attachment (Govers and Muge 2004).

In this project, we contend that visual product aesthetics are marketing variables that can be used to create and influence consumers' perceptions of brand and product personality. We focus our investigation on understanding how visual aesthetic characteristics are linked to product personality perceptions (how the physical product is described in terms of human personality characteristics) (Jordan 1997). It has been shown that consumers' perceptions of product personality can be influenced by variations in design shapes (Govers, Hekkert and Schoormans 2004) and material choices (Kesteren, Stappers and Kandachar 2005). Further, it has been evidenced that designers seem able to convert abstract personality descriptions into actual designs and that downstream, consumers are able to identify these intended product personalities (Govers, Hekkert and Schoormans 2004). Finally, it was demonstrated that consumers prefer product designs with product personalities congruent with their own (Govers, and Schoormans 2005). Yet, even though these findings provide valuable evidence for the importance of the product personality construct, they do not provide a systematic understanding of the perceptual processes that link product design aesthetics to product personality perceptions.

Based on psychological studies on interpersonal personality judgments, we know that attributions of personality traits based on superficial visual judgments are not only prevalent, they are also efficient. Second, although there might be a "hard-wired" ability to perform these personality judgments, it seems that learning and experience also play a key role. Finally, it has been advanced that these attributions or perceptions are implicit and might happen automatically, without direct awareness of their sources.

Though consumers might not be aware of the implicit processes that they automatically use in making product personality perceptions, they can nonetheless reveal to us what their product personality perceptions are and we can also ask them to explicitly articulate evaluations of the design facets of target products. With these two sets of data, across individuals and products, we uncover

the relationships between design facets evaluations and product personality perceptions. Following this research approach can provide insights into the sources and processes behind product personality assessment.

To this end, we conducted a laboratory study designed to test that systematic relationships between visual product aesthetics and product personality could be established. Real products (without identifiable brand names) were used. We selected products in multiple categories automobiles, telephones, TV sets, and wall-clocks) and with varying design executions. Two hundred fifty one students participated in this study. Each participant was randomly assigned two products (not in the same category) to evaluate. We used Aaker's (1997) 42-item scale to assess the five dimensions of product personality (sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness), and we used Ellis (1993) 43-item scale to measure seven design facets (simplicity, harmony, balance, unity, dynamics, timeliness/fashion, and novelty) Manipulation checks based on an overall product style measure confirmed that the products selected for this study reflected different levels of design.

With respect to evaluations of the individual aesthetic characteristics (facets), the results showed significant differences across and within product categories. We also found significant differences for all five product personality dimensions. Although not unexpected, this is a rather remarkable result as respondents had no other information about the products besides the physical appearance as shown in a black and white picture (no brand or feature information was provided). This seems to confirm that consistent and visually-based assessments are made across individuals.

In the second part of the analysis, we used multiple linear regressions to investigate the relationships between each product personality trait (as dependant measure) and the seven aesthetic facets (used as independent measures in the regression). All five models were significant. This result alone is supporting evidence for our contention that product aesthetic evaluations are linked to product personality perceptions, and that our research approach can uncover underlying perceptual processes that drive perceptions of product personality. Further, it should be noted that for at least three personality traits, the variance in product personality that was explained was rather large (adjusted R^2 for excitement: .811; sophistication: .588; and competence: .385).

In summary, three main sets of findings emerged: 1) there were systematic differences in aesthetic facets and personality evaluations across the eight products, suggesting that consumers are able to produce convergent assessments based solely on the visual information about the products; 2) the regression analyses provided convergent evidence that evaluations of product aesthetic facets are linked to perceptions of product personality, and in some cases it seems that this association is very strong and explain a large portion of the variance, but 3) there is a need to further research the linear combinations of different aesthetic facets in order to uncover their potential interactive effects.

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Product Design Perception and Brand Categorization

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ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a theoretical framework for the perceptual processing of information picked up from product design elements (such as product form) and its influence on consumers' conceptual knowledge and categorization of brands. This view of consumer knowledge and brand categorization draws from the ecological approach to visual perception, principles of object recognition by components in perceptual psychology, and the emerging perception-based theory of cognition as a perceptual symbol system. The authors describe four bases of brand categorization derived from product design information, provide examples of each, review empirical findings, and discuss implications for consumer research and new product design.

Despite the increasing importance of aesthetic elements of product design in making products and brands more appealing than others, few marketing or consumer researchers have integrated product design into a more general marketing-theoretical framework (for exceptions, see: Bloch 1995; Veryzer 1993; Wagner 2000). Product design often plays a primary role in creating the identity and value of brands, such as the characteristic styling of Alessi kitchen equipment or the typical shape of a Piaggio Vespa motor scooter, which have become defining elements of the entire brand. Recent research suggests there are at least three central relationships between design and brands (Kreuzbauer and Malter 2005). First, design facilitates product and brand categorization and also influences consumer beliefs about the product and brand (Bitner 1992; Bettman 1979; Berkowitz 1987). Recognition of a new product as belonging to a certain brand category is strongly influenced by brand-typical design attributes. Second, design elements communicate information about the specific functions of a product and how people can physically interact with and use the product or specific brand. Third, designs that are aesthetically appealing lead to positive brand evaluations.

In this way, design elements constitute essential parts of brand concepts, which are stored in long-term consumer memory. Some of these elements are so familiar and accessible (e.g., the shape of the Coke bottle) that when perceived they immediately cue recall of masses of knowledge about the particular brand. Thus design, which we define as the form or shape of a product, to a great extent influences the process of brand concept development as various product signals become transformed into a clear and unmistakable brand construct in consumer memory. One of the primary functions of this conceptual understanding of a brand is that it facilitates a consumer's identification of a new product as a member of a particular brand category. In this paper, we examine consumer information processes that transform product design information into a brand concept, based on a perceptual theory of how specific elements of product design play a key role in the process of brand categorization (i.e. determining whether product X is member of brand Y).

Most brand research based on an information processing approach focuses on a presumed hierarchical relational structure of brand knowledge (Keller 1998). We believe a proper understanding of how product design becomes embedded in brand knowledge also requires consideration of perceptual processes. In the present context this means how product design information is "picked up" by

human sensory systems and integrated into a consumer's conceptual understanding or knowledge of a brand. More specifically, we propose a general theoretical framework of consumer information processing of product design elements and its effects on brand categorization. We focus on the process by which product design signals are visually perceived and become mentally represented and organized as brand concepts within consumer memory (see figure 1). We further discuss the subsequent influence of product design information on brand categorization.

The proposed framework can be used to study possible consumer response to a range of new design alternatives or extensions of existing brands. Thus, the model can be used to consider consumer response to such design questions as:

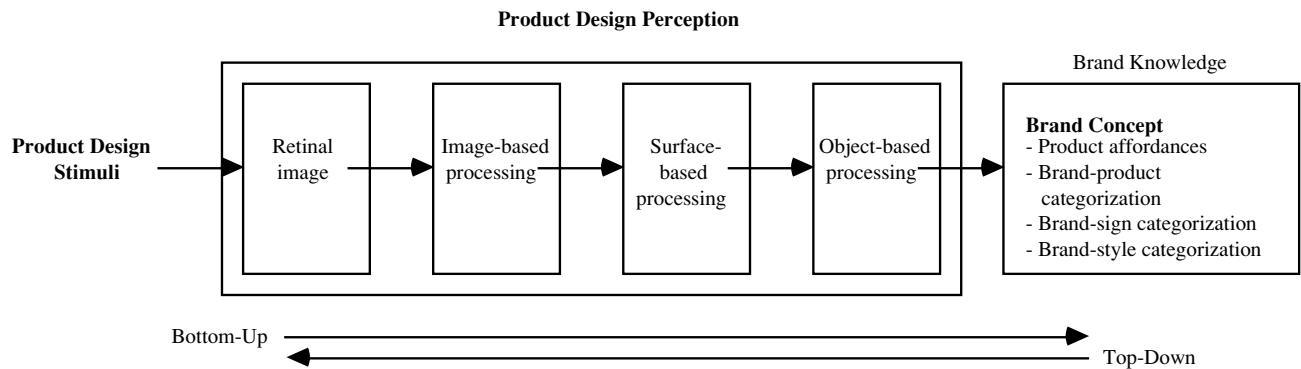
- (1) *Within a given product line (such as Volkswagen cars), which design parts can be transferred to a new model (such as the Tuareg) to ensure brand familiarity? (i.e., that the new model would be considered a member of the Volkswagen brand family);*
- (2) *In the case of a model extension, which design parts from an old model need to be transferred to a new model to ensure brand familiarity? (e.g., when the Volkswagen Golf 5 is introduced, which parts from the Golf 4 need to be transferred to the Golf 5 to ensure that consumers perceive the new model to also be a Golf);*
- (3) *Or more generally, to support strategies to reposition brands through product design, e.g. when a car brand seeks to be positioned as higher in luxury, which design elements need to be added to the design of the car to create the appearance of luxury?*

A FRAMEWORK FOR PRODUCT DESIGN INFORMATION PROCESSING

According to cognitive science and most academic literature on branding, brands can be considered cognitive constructs relating to a certain company's product offerings (Aaker 1996; Keller 1993; Meffert 1998). Thus, product and brand knowledge stored in long-term memory constitutes a mental *concept* (Anderson 2000; Barsalou 1992a, 1999). In general, a concept is the knowledge and accompanying processes that allow an individual to mentally represent an entity or event adequately (Barsalou 1999). For instance, a person's concept of *car* is their mental representation of this specific entity. Yet the car concept is not a simple picture in the mind of one or more perceived cars, but rather an organized unit of a *general car*-derived from several prior car experiences-which enables the individual to identify other objects with similar attributes to cars (Barsalou 1999; Mandler 1992). Consequently, concepts determine whether or not a new object or event belongs to a certain *category*, whereby a category is a set of related entities from any ontological type (e.g., *robins, sweaters, weddings, plans*) in the human brain (Barsalou 1993, 1999; Lakoff 1987). Thus, a concept is the organized set of attributes, features, rules and relations which represent an entity or event. For example, the concept for car might, in part, include the features *4-wheels, sheet metal, consumes diesel fuel or gasoline*. But concepts, and hence rules, for category membership are never fixed and may vary from context to context as a result of situational goals (Barsalou 1983) or developmental experience and physical

FIGURE 1

Framework for product design information processing (adapted from Palmer 1999; Gibson 1979)



action (Mandler 1992; Smith 2005). For example, the car concept constructed on a different occasion might include the features *4-wheels, synthetics, consumes diesel fuel or gasoline or electricity*.

As the framework in figure 1 shows, to gain a proper understanding of how product design stimuli affect the development of specific brand concepts and thus influence brand categorization, we must consider aspects of both (1) perception and (2) knowledge representation and organization. Scholars of brand knowledge representation and organization (Keller 1993; Lawson 1998; Sujan 1985; Zaltman 1997) have applied some findings from cognitive psychology but have paid little attention to product perception in general (cf. Veryzer 1993; Veryzer and Hutchinson 1998) and largely neglected the role of design in brand perception (Keller 1998; Mowen and Minor 1998). While general *gestalt* principles (Köhler 1947; Wertheimer 1912, 1924) were articulated in the early 20th century, these and more recent theories of visual perception and object perception from perceptual psychology (Biederman 1987; Hoffman and Richards 1984; Goldstein 1997; Marr 1982; Palmer, 1990; Treisman 1969, 1993) have not been integrated into theories of consumer information processing or brand concept development. In contrast, our research specifically examines the role of perceptual processing of product design information in brand categorization.

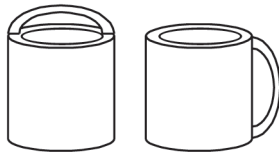
How do consumers process perceptual information such as product design elements? Within product design perception, a process of *selective attention* focuses a consumer's information processing on information relevant to a particular goal (Barsalou 1992a). As shown in figure 1, the process of perception passes through several stages: retinal image, image-based stage, surface-based stage, object-based stage (Palmer 1999). Whenever stimuli are considered relevant, attention is selectively focused on them and concepts are developed and stored in memory. In parallel to this bottom-up process, an existing concept, in a top-down manner, influences the attention to and perception of particular stimuli. Consequently, both bottom-up processes and top-down processes influence product and brand perception. Thus, product and brand perception are, to a large extent, controlled by previously stored brand knowledge as it shapes the consumer's interest and thus the attention that provides guidance in perceiving specific product stimuli. Therefore, with the exception of the retinal brand impression, a consumer's attentional processes operate at each individual stage of product and brand perception where processing capacity is allocated to certain product stimuli (cf. Bettman 1979; Mowen and Minor 1998).

Perceptual Psychology and the Process of Product Design Perception

As suggested by theories in perceptual psychology (Biederman 1987; Marr 1982; Palmer 1999; Treisman 1993) brand design perception follows a four-stage process. The first stage describes a two-dimensional *retinal image* which is a first impression of a visual product stimulus that is projected to the viewpoint of the observer's eyes. A retinal image is perceived without the consumer's attention, and the information is unstructured and uninterpreted (Julesz 1984; Treisman 1993). In the second stage, the two-dimensional retinal product impression is further processed, so that elements such as lines and edges are detected and "sharpened" (*image-based stage*). Further in the *surface-based stage*, general surface and spatial information is recovered. True three-dimensional processing first occurs in the final stage, called the *object-based stage*, since the product perception process does not end with the mere representation of all the visible surfaces. Instead, it is assumed that during perception surface information is related to general stored knowledge about the intrinsic nature of the three-dimensional object (Palmer 1999). An example would be aspects of a product that are occluded from the current viewpoint, such as the back or underside of a camera, TV, car, bottle, etc. Thus, by simply perceiving the curved surfaces of a bottle, the observer is able to make clear predictions regarding the probable appearance and properties of the back of the bottle. Therefore, hidden assumptions about the nature of the visual world are also required to enable the inclusion of information about unseen surfaces or parts of surfaces.

There is also a growing consensus in research on visual perception that representing the functions of an object involves dividing the object's shape into parts (Baylis and Driver 1995a, 1995b; Bennett and Hoffman 1987; Biederman 1987; Biederman and Cooper 1991; Hoffman and Richards 1984; Hoffman and Singh 1997; Marr 1977, 1982; Marr and Nishihara 1978; Palmer 1975, 1977; Tversky and Hemenway 1984), leading perceptual psychologists to seek ways to recover the part structure of an object. Once a set of parts has been identified, higher-level parts can then be constructed by grouping together the more general parts. Biederman (1987) introduced a recognition-by-components (RBC) theory of object perception and recognition whereby objects can be specified as a spatial arrangement of so-called "primitive" or primary volumetric components, which he called *geometric icons*, or *geons*. The idea behind geons is analogous to speech perception, in which all kinds of words can be coded using a relatively small set of primitive elements, or phonemes (Marslen-Wilson 1980). In visual percep-

FIGURE 2
Examples of different object structures composed of the same primitive geons



tion, the primitive elements (geons) are a modest number of simple geometric components such as cylinders, blocks, wedges, and cones (Marslen-Wilson 1980). A major assumption of RBC theory is that the mental representation of an expected object (including products) is a volumetric structural description composed of geons. Depending on the size and type of geon, as well as the relationships between several geons (see figure 2), any kind of object can be represented by the human conceptual system. For example, a geon can be a generalized cylinder (or cone), which is a volume constructed by sweeping a two-dimensional shape around an axis (Biederman 1987; Binford 1971; Marr 1982). To determine how a geon-object structure is constructed, one needs a set of rules for designing geons and the necessary relations among them for constructing a huge number of object representations. For a detailed description of “geon-rules” and other examples of simple object representations, see Biederman (1987) and Palmer (1999).

Organization of Product Design Knowledge and Brand Concept Development

Of past research on brand knowledge organization (Keller 1993; Sujan 1985) perhaps the best-known framework is Keller’s (1998), which distinguishes between two main dimensions: brand recognition and types of brand associations. Although both dimensions may potentially include aspects of design, neither Keller’s model nor other traditional theories of brand knowledge structure (Grunert 1996; Meyers-Levy and Tybout 1989; Mitchell and Dacin 1996; Olson 1978; Sujan and Dekleva 1987) explains how or which types of visual design attributes enable brand recognition or lead to specific brand associations.

A cognitive theory better able to account for visual knowledge representation is Barsalou’s (1999) theory of *perceptual symbol systems* (PSS). In this view, knowledge represented in the human brain is based on an organized set (frames) of *perceptual symbols*, which Barsalou defines as records of the neural activation that arises during perception. Perceptual symbols are neural representations in sensory-motor systems that function either consciously or subconsciously and are also schematic (Barsalou 1999). Through selective attention, a consumer perceives information and stores in long-term memory a record of the neural state at the time of perception. For example, if selective attention focuses on product design elements, the neurons representing these parts are selected and a record of their activation is stored (Kreuzbauer and Malter 2005). Note that perceptual symbols are componential and not holistic (Barsalou 1999). Thus, an object such as a laptop computer is not stored as a whole image but is composed of several perceptual symbols that represent design parts (overall shape, monitor, keyboard, touch pad, etc.). Perceptual symbols are further organized within mental frames or schemata, which explain the underlying stability and yet flexible organizational structure of knowledge (for a more detailed description of frames, see Barsalou 1992a, 1992b).

An important function of a perceptual symbol system is its capacity for constructing mental simulations as a basic cognitive process. Related perceptual symbols become organized within a frame, which then functions as a *simulator*, allowing the cognitive system to construct specific mental simulations of an entity or event in its absence (Barsalou 1999; for applications to social cognition, see Niedenthal et al. 2005; see also Markman, Maddox, and Baldwin 2005; Zwaan 1999). Thus, a person’s mental frame for *computer* can be used to mentally simulate several types of computers based on exemplars that have been previously experienced. Since perceptual symbols are componential, a person is also able to combine different frames and produce novel mixed simulations that have not been experienced previously. For example, a consumer can combine perceptual symbols of the computer frame with perceptual symbols that represent Alessi style brand designs in order to construct a coherent mental simulation of a hypothetical Alessi style computer. Such a computer does not yet exist and hence has never before been experienced, but it can easily be simulated mentally. Similarly, it is also possible to develop mental simulations of novel conceptual combinations that derive from different concepts. For example, consumers can construct a simulation with the concepts *computer* and *luxury* to develop a mental simulation of a “luxury computer,” or they can combine a specific brand (e.g. B&O) with the computer concept to simulate a hypothetical B&O computer.

Simulating conceptual combinations blending various shape and brand concepts produces specific brand categorization effects. We propose four major ways in which product design influences brand categorization through perception: (1) the perception of product affordances; (2) brand-product categorization; (3) brand-sign categorization; and (4) brand-style categorization. The following sections describe and integrate these four bases of brand categorization into the general framework of processing product design information.

FOUR BASES OF BRAND CATEGORIZATION

(1) *Product Affordances*. The functional properties of some products are so closely aligned with visually observable characteristics (product size or shape) that the actions the product affords to the observer, such as how the observer can interact with the object or what they can do with it, can be directly perceived or “picked up” by the observer’s visual system (Gibson 1979; see also Brunswik 1943, 1952; Vicente 2003). Examples of such product affordances are the handle of a mixer that affords “grasping” by the observer’s hand, or a chair that affords “sitting on” by the observer’s body, given its shape and possible movements. During visual perception of product design elements, affordances may be ascertained in the surface-based as well as object-based stages. For example, a smooth texture and surface or an appropriate geon-organization of a handle can afford “grasping” (see figure 3a). These affordances then

become embedded within a particular brand concept. Although these types of products may project certain unambiguous affordances, the essential functional properties of some products, e.g. mobile phones or computers may be more abstract and not directly perceivable. These require additional information from another source (product manual, advertising, direct experience of product use) to identify and comprehend the product's innate meaning or functionality. For instance, a consumer can directly perceive that a mobile phone handset affords grasping and carrying but would need additional input in order to understand its function as a communication tool, portable music player or camera.

(2) *Brand-Product Categorization.* Brand-product categorization represents the 'generic' product-brand relationship. Any brand concept consists of both brand-level design information and also information about the generic product category. For example, the Mercedes brand concept contains both brand design knowledge about Mercedes car models and generic knowledge about the general concept of *car*. Brand-product categorization is chiefly determined by geon-structures in the object-stage process. The link between geon-structures and knowledge organization has been experimentally examined by Kreuzbauer and Malter (2005) who found that motorbike sub-categories (street and off-road motorbikes) can be represented through flexible geon-structures composed of combinations of perceptual symbols in product frames. They further show how alternative organizations of geon-structures enable the consumer to classify a product into either the *off-road motorbike* or *street motorbike* category. Drawings of motorbike designs containing different geons typical of either off-road or street motorbikes produced hybrid product impressions. A motorbike model containing more geon-structures of product-design elements typical of a specific product sub-category (off-road or street motorbikes) was more likely to be perceived as a member of that sub-category.

(3) *Brand-Sign Categorization.* In addition to purely generic product information, branded products also convey information that is characteristic of a particular brand, such as the lights and grill design typical of a BMW car front. As suggested by semiotics and cognitive semiotics (Kreuzbauer 2002; Mick 1986; Nöth 1990; Peirce 1931-1958) brand-sign categorization can be more specifically divided into *brand-symbolic* categorization processes and *brand-iconic* categorization processes. The former occurs when abstract product design elements do not refer to any major external knowledge units except those within the brand concept. For example, the Volkswagen logo does not communicate any inherent meaning by itself but simply represents the Volkswagen corporation. In contrast, brand-iconic categorization derives from design elements that originally refer to non-brand specific concepts, for instance the typical front perspective of a BMW car ("BMW-face") that resembles a predator. Such design characteristics may facilitate analogical transfer of meaning from attributes of the predator-concept such as aggressiveness, dominance, and speed to the entire BMW brand concept and hence to all members of the BMW brand category.

During perception and processing of product design, surface-based processing can lead to brand-sign categorization. Once a product's surface has been perceived by the consumer it becomes embedded within the brand concept, which then facilitates brand-sign categorization processes. Surfaces often determine brand-iconic categorization, since they frequently relate to additional non-brand specific knowledge units. For example the surface of a hypothetical "Philips Alessi" mixer (soft and long radii, non parallel; see figure 3a) suggests an organic body because it shares characteristics with the surfaces of human bodies. Thus, "organic" becomes part of the "Philips Alessi" brand concept. In contrast,

there are product surfaces that are so particular to certain brands that reference to other concepts becomes non-specific, such as the distinctive characteristic line (surface edge) of the body of a BMW automobile (see figure 3b). Brand-sign categorization is also determined by geon-structures. For example a geon-structure of a Volvo station wagon has a particular form and becomes embedded within the Volvo brand concept. In order to be visually perceived as a member of the Volvo brand, another automobile would need to consist of a similar geon-structure.

Brand-sign categorization also frequently occurs during the object-based processing stage. Here the sub-process of brand-iconic categorization is chiefly determined by principles of perceptual grouping such as closure, continuity, proximity, common fate, and similarity of orientation or size (for a detailed description see Palmer 1999; Palmer, Brooks, and Nelson 2003). This is of particular strategic relevance for the extension of existing brands, for example, when a new BMW 5-series model is introduced in the market and partially resembles the old BMW 4-series model. In this case, the new model needs to incorporate enough essential elements from the previous model (see figure 4a) so that the new model will be at least minimally recognizable as a member of the parent BMW brand concept. Similarity here is produced by rules of perceptual grouping such as closure, similarity of orientation and size of salient surface attributes, for example the inner headlights and the overall shape of the headlight assembly. Thus, brand familiarity of product design (shape) elements is important in the case of product line extensions. As shown in figure 4b, the overall shape of the handset and orientation of the keys in two Nokia mobile phone models is likely to produce the desired effect of brand-sign categorization.

(4) *Brand-Style Categorization.* Brand-style categorization describes a special case rather than a distinct process of brand categorization. More specifically, certain style-concepts are determined by various combinations of surface- and object-based perception processes. For example, the "luxury" style concept may include design attributes such as *chrome, shiny, ornaments, etc.* Attaching these attributes to branded products, such as a Volkswagen automobile, produces a conceptual combination of "luxury Volkswagen." Similar examples exist for object-based processes, such as sturdy protective components from the concept of *sports equipment* that when added to a Nokia mobile phone produce a conceptual combination of "sporty and durable Nokia mobile phone."

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Although it is not surprising that design affects brand categorization, the proposed framework is a first step toward better understanding how the perception of product design elements influences consumer development of brand concepts and use of brand categorization processes. Future testing of the framework is needed to better understand the relationships and boundary conditions between specific product design characteristics and brand categorization. First, future experiments can test the possible interactions of different combinations of design elements attached to different brand concepts. For example, country-of-origin effects may constrain the acceptance of certain conceptual combinations, as in the case of shiny chrome metal (part of the luxury concept) producing a mental representation of "luxury car" when linked to the concept of car brands from certain origins (Audi from Germany) but not others (Chery from China). Similarly, further research can examine the effects of conceptual combinations of different style and brand concepts.

Second, although brand familiarity can be produced by several product design attributes in combination with existing brand knowledge, some design attributes may be more suitable than others.

FIGURE 3A

Philips Alessi surface (soft and long radii; non-parallel)

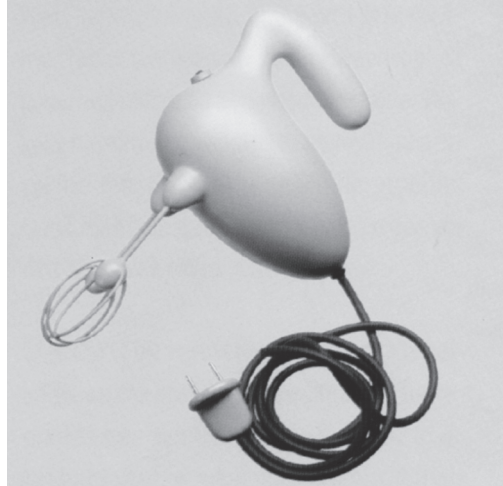


FIGURE 3B

BMW surface (abrupt step)



FIGURE 4A

Perceptual grouping of BMW car front



FIGURE 4B

Perceptual grouping of Nokia phones



Additional research is needed to better understand which design components can most effectively induce perceived similarity, including effects of salience perception within the described perception processes. Third, it is important to study the interaction between design innovativeness and brand categorization processes. When new product models are introduced there may be a trade-off between increasing the probability of brand familiarity through familiar product design attributes and creating arousal through the introduction of very novel design attributes that risk being unrecognizable or unacceptable as members of the brand category. Kreuzbauer, Schoormans, and Snelders (2006) show that both brand familiarity and novelty can be produced when products share similar line and surface structure. However, since line perception is an earlier process during object perception than surface perception, shared line structure ensures stronger brand familiarity than a shared surface structure.

Finally, future research is needed to better understand the process and degree of analogical transfer, including how brand categorization processes affect dependent variables such as consumer perceptions of quality and aesthetic appearance.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NEW PRODUCT DESIGN

The proposed linkage between product design and brand categorization has several important implications for product designers seeking to effectively communicate intended product and brand meanings to targeted consumers. Both designers as well as brand and product managers need to incorporate product design (form and shape) elements within brand strategies more purposefully. For example, managers need to decide which surface or object components can and must be used to support a given brand strategy. This is of particular strategic importance for brand and line extension strategies or for composite branding strategies, such as producing similarity effects between a parent brand and brand extensions, between old and new models, or between two brands. Currently, brand managers must often rely on the designer's feeling about how best to elicit an intended brand-categorization effect. Our proposed framework provides a more principled and theoretically-grounded structure that can be used to consider alternative product design concepts and their effects. This approach may prove useful in evaluating which of many possible design elements can best support a particular brand strategy.

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Playing Games Efficiently: Hedonic Learning and Loyalty

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Time is saved to be spent doing other things. Less time spent on work means more time for leisure; consumers tend to prefer efficiency in utilitarian tasks, to achieve desired benefits with a minimum investment of time and effort (Payne, Bettman and Johnson 1993; Simon 1955). During hedonic tasks, however, consumers are much less concerned with (even oblivious to) their expenditure of time and effort, which is defined primarily by the quality of the experience (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Voss, Spranger and Grohmann 2003).

Consumer behavior on the internet can be utilitarian or hedonic. Consumers are attracted to the internet because it can save them time (Bellman, Lohse, and Johnson 1999) and online shoppers prefer websites that they can use more efficiently (Johnson, Bellman, and Lohse 2003), but longer site visit times are positively correlated with the quality of the users' internet experience (Novak, Hoffman, and Yung 2000). While efficiency is preferred for utilitarian behavior, experiential factors dominate during hedonic consumption (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982). For example, during a "time-filling" (Rubin and Perse, 1987, p. 59) experiential task such as 'surfing' the net, consumers can experience a state of "flow" and be "unaware of the passage of time" (Hoffman and Novak 1996, p. 65; flow applies also to goal-directed tasks where it is associated with, e.g., inhibition of distractions).

The human capital model of consumer choice (Ratchford 2001) contends that both types of consumer behavior can be explained by the efficiency resulting from the accumulation of knowledge, skill or expertise. Specifically, the more human capital a consumer has invested in a particular behavior the higher its utility and the more likely s/he is to repeat that behavior in the future.

The importance of efficiency (i.e., time savings) is intuitive for utilitarian consumption, such as buying a specific book online. The faster the purchase, the greater the return for the time invested. However, it is less clear that efficiency applies to hedonic consumption; in some cases, it is extremely counter-intuitive. For example, will a consumer maximize utility when browsing for a book if the browsing finished faster? Would playing a game be more enjoyable if the game ended sooner? In fact, for many types of hedonic experiences, it would be very surprising if they were more enjoyable the less time they took.

We predict that rather than acquiring skills to achieve maximum value in a minimum amount of time, during hedonic consumption people will acquire skills that allow them to maximize utility within the time available. Hedonic and utilitarian tasks bound a continuum characterized by the increasing importance of the learning component of the task. For hedonic tasks, practice makes this learning component more efficient, increasing the enjoyment of the task (Holbrook, Chestnut, Oliva, and Greenleaf 1984). For example, playing a video game, which is clumsy and slow for a beginner, will be fluid and automatic in a skilled player. But this type of efficiency would not be apparent in task completion time, the typical measure of learning effects (e.g., Johnson et al. 2003; Murray and Häubl 2007). Instead, we expect that efficiency in hedonic tasks will be "hidden" and the power law of practice (see Newell and Rosenbloom 1981 for a review) will be evident only when the learning component is isolated (e.g., game score achieved per second, rather than total score, measures hidden efficiency).

In addition, we predict that the way efficiency affects loyalty is different in hedonic versus utilitarian consumption. Although

ease of use (efficiency) is a sufficient explanation of loyalty toward utilitarian tasks (Murray and Häubl 2007), for hedonic consumption we predict that attitude toward the task will completely mediate the already hidden effect of efficiency on loyalty. Specifically, because hedonic consumption is a multi-sensory and emotive experience (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Voss, Spranger and Grohmann 2003), we expect that liking and enjoying the task will dominate efficiency in determining loyalty (as it is for most tasks: Sheppard, Hartwick, and Warshaw, 1988),

To test our two primary predictions, we built a fighter jet video game similar in style of play and playing time to the Flash-based games used as promotion tools on websites such as CandyStand.com and NabiscoWorld.com. The game was played online and we recorded game time and game score for each game played. We used a sample of the general public that varied widely in video game experience ($n = 118$), who participated for the chance to win one of two Apple iPod minis, awarded via lottery rather than highest score to motivate all players to do their best, even if they were not experienced gamers.

Our results indicate that human capital invested in a hedonic product can be an important determinant of consumer loyalty. In contrast to previous work on learning and loyalty in utilitarian tasks (Johnson et al. 2003; Murray and Häubl 2003, 2007), practice with the product (1 game vs. 10 games) had no effect on overall task completion times. That is, we found "flat" learning curves. Furthermore, practice had no effect on perceived ease of use or loyalty to the product (measured by intention to play the same game again). As predicted, however, we did find evidence for "hidden efficiency" within a hedonic task; people really did get better the more they played the game. With practice, players scored more points per second, which made them more loyal to the game (one standard deviation [28 s] increase in game time to achieve the same score reduced loyalty by .3 on a 7-point scale), but this effect was masked by equal loyalty whether players played one or ten games. Increasing hidden efficiency also made the game more enjoyable. In addition, we found that this positive attitude toward the task completely mediated the impact of human capital on loyal behavior in hedonic tasks (attitude was distinct from loyalty: 95% CI for $r = .59$ to $.78$). This was another contrast between hedonic and utilitarian tasks, for which loyalty results solely from improved ease of use (Johnson et al. 2003; Murray and Häubl 2007). [1000 words]

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Using Public Commitment to Gain Customer Compliance

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ABSTRACT

We investigate the role of public commitment in gaining customer compliance in a long-term service (e.g., online education) where customer adherence to his/her role when away from the service provider is important in the successful delivery of the service. Given the major role customers have in the delivery process of services it is important to understand how service providers can influence customers to comply with their service role. Dellande, Gilly, and Graham (2004) found that motivation is a key customer attribute in gaining long-term compliance when the customer is away from the provider. We examined the effect of manipulating public commitment to motivate customer compliance behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Increasing numbers of services now require customers to comply with their service roles to ensure the successful delivery of the service. Examples of these include weight loss and educational programs, financial services, and others whose clients have to engage in certain prescribed behaviors to gain the maximum benefit from the service provider. Weight loss clients have to comply with the recommended exercise and dietary regimen to lose weight, students have to do the assigned work on a regular basis to learn effectively, and investors have to save money regularly to accumulate enough wealth to create an adequate retirement nest egg.

Gaining customer compliance can be difficult even when the service provider and the client meet face-to-face on a regular basis. For example, non-compliance with physicians' directives has been reported to be upwards of 80% (Dellande and Taylor, 2004). As such, motivating customers to comply with prescribed behaviors becomes exceedingly challenging when the service provider and the client meet infrequently. Since the advent of the Internet, more and more services are being delivered via technology. This may mean that a customer never sees the service facility or personnel (Bitner, Brown, and Meuter, 2000).

Under these circumstances, the provider must find ways of influencing the customer to ensure adherence to his/her roles (Dellande, Gilly, and Graham 2004). We propose that service providers can encourage their clients to make a public commitment to their goals, and that this will result in significantly higher levels of long-term customer compliant behavior. The research findings in this study are important for providers of any service in which customer compliance, particularly long-term compliance, with his/her role determines the success of the service delivery process.

THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTS AND HYPOTHESES

Public commitment

While the concept of public commitment has been around for some time, it has gained renewed attention of late in the consumer behavior literature. Nyer and Gopinath (2005) used public commitment to explain the differential effects of complaining behavior and word-of-mouth on subsequent customer satisfaction levels. Public commitment was shown to increase resistance to counter-attitudinal persuasion (Nyer and Gopinath 2006).

Kiesler (1971) posited that commitment is a binding of the individual to the position implied by his act or decision. He indicated that a key factor that determines the magnitude of the

commitment is the publicness with which the individual declares his/her commitment to a position. According to Pallak, Cook, and Sullivan (1980) attitudes stated publicly are relatively stable and are more likely to result in consistent behaviors. Pallak and Cummings (1976) have shown that when homeowners make a public commitment to energy conservation, they are more likely to comply, compared to homeowners who make the declaration in a less public manner or those who do not make a public commitment at all. Public commitment to a goal is an action (e.g., placing a sticker supporting a presidential candidate on one's car) which contributes to one's motivation to act due to anticipated personal and social disapproval and penalties for failure to follow through with the promised activities (Parrott et al. 1998). For example, the action of recommending a practice has been shown to increase one's behavior via a sense of personal commitment to behave in the prescribed fashion to avoid feelings of hypocrisy. People have a strong desire to appear consistent and rational in the eyes of others (Tedeschi, 1981). The more publicly one states one's attitudes, the more one is committed to and locked to that position (Hollenbeck, Williams, and Klein, 1989). Thus the act of making a public commitment, which is usually but not necessarily, the result of a deeply-held commitment to a goal can also be used to strengthen the commitment that individuals have towards various goals and to ensure behaviors consistent with those goals. The above literature supports the following hypothesis.

- H1: Higher levels of public commitment to a target behavior will result in higher levels of compliance with that behavior.

Goal importance

Foot-in-the-door (FITD) is a behavioral influence technique frequently used to increase compliance. The technique is based on the premise that an individual who accedes to a small request is more likely to agree to a much larger request later. The psychological process of self-perception has been the most popularly suggested explanation for FITD outcomes (Burger, 1999; Tybout, Sternthal, and Calder, 1983). Bem's (1972) self-perception theory posits that people infer how they feel about an issue by examining their past behavior. This inferred attitude then influences future behavior. Thus individuals who make a public commitment to a goal by engaging in a token act (for example, by wearing a Breast Cancer Awareness pin) may later evaluate the goal as being more important because they use their past behavior as a cue to their beliefs on the issue. This research leads us to the following hypothesis:

- H2: Individuals who make a public commitment to a target goal will evaluate the goal as being more important compared to individuals who do not make a public commitment. Further, the effect of public commitment on compliance with the goal will be partly mediated by the evaluation of goal importance.

We hypothesize that goal importance will only partially mediate the effect of public commitment on compliance behavior since we believe that public commitment will have significant direct effects on compliance behavior. In other words, we suggest that the

change in goal importance can only partially explain the totality of the effect of public commitment on compliance behavior.

Susceptibility to normative influence

As discussed earlier, individuals who make a public commitment to a goal are less likely to behave in a manner contrary to their publicly stated position so as to avoid social disapproval and feelings of hypocrisy. However, would all individuals be equally likely to be induced to behave in a manner consistent with their publicly stated goals through a fear of social disapproval? Clearly not all individuals are equally influenced by the opinions of others. Individuals who are high in *susceptibility to normative influence* (SNI) are more willing to conform to the expectations of others (Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel, 1989). These individuals are also more hesitant to engage in behaviors that may lead to the disapproval of their peers (Wooten and Reed II, 2004). We therefore believe that individuals high in SNI will be more likely to engage in the promised behavior following a public commitment compared to individuals who are low in SNI. However SNI is not likely to affect subjects who make no public commitment to the target behavior. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis.

- H3: The effect of public commitment on compliance will be moderated by *susceptibility to normative influence* (SNI) with effects as indicated above.

METHODOLOGY

Design

The study uses a 3 x 2 full factorial design manipulating three levels of public commitment (no public commitment, low public commitment, and high public commitment), and using a median split to generate two levels of SNI (low and high).

Subjects

In this study we investigated the effect of manipulating public commitment on sustained paper conservation behavior among 102 students of an online introductory marketing course. The online course context was selected for this investigation because it was ideal for manipulating the independent variable (public commitment) and for observing the dependent variable (compliance behavior). Also, using a sample comprised of students is a realistic sample given the context of the study—paper conservation in an online course.

The online course was designed for non-business undergraduate students pursuing various degree programs and located in a few geographically dispersed academic centers. All lectures, assignments, quizzes, and tests were conducted online, and the students met face-to-face with each other and with the instructor for the first time on the last day of the term. All assignments were designed to be done by individual students, and since the class roster was not made available online, the students had no direct means of knowing the identity of their course mates.

Procedures

During the first week of the course students accessed the course introduction module which included an outline of the course, instructions on how to read online lectures, take online quizzes, etc. This introductory module also included a one-page essay on the importance to society of minimizing the wastage of paper. It noted that despite the early promise of computer technology promoting a ‘paperless society,’ it had done the opposite by making it easier for computer users to print documents at the touch

of a button. The essay suggested that a significant reduction in paper use could be achieved if computer users were to read online documents off the screen without printing the documents. The manipulations described below were conducted only after it was verified (using the tracking system built into the online system) that each student had accessed this online essay.

The students were randomly assigned to one of three conditions (no public commitment, low public commitment, and high public commitment). Each subject in the ‘low public commitment’ condition was sent a personalized email message a day after he/she had first accessed the course introduction module. This email message included a survey question which asked the student whether he/she would be willing to make a commitment to reducing the use of paper by reading course lectures online. These subjects were advised that they were under no compulsion to make this commitment and that they could ignore any promise made to conserve paper if they felt that it was affecting their ability to do well in the course. Within twenty-four hours after each student responded, they were sent a personalized reply acknowledging his/her decision. All but one student in the ‘low public commitment’ condition agreed to read the course material online. The student who declined to make the commitment was eliminated from the study.

Each subject in the ‘high public commitment’ condition was sent a similar email message asking whether he/she would be willing to make a commitment to conserving paper. These ‘high public commitment’ subjects were informed that the instructor would acknowledge the students who had agreed to conserve paper by listing their names in an email to be sent to their classmates. These subjects too were informed that they were under no compulsion to make this promise and that they could renege on any promise made to conserve paper if they felt that it was affecting their ability to do well in the course. All subjects in the ‘high public commitment’ condition agreed to read the course material online. Within twenty-four hours after each student responded, he/she was sent an email that included what was claimed to be a partial list of the students who had agreed to engage in paper conservation. This list included the individual subject’s name and the names of nine fictitious students. The list sent to the students included fictitious names so as to prevent students from identifying their fellow course-mates (this was required by the Institutional Review Board to protect student privacy). Further, the list sent to students was claimed to be a partial list to prevent subjects from speculating about the percentage of the class that had agreed to the request to conserve paper, and to reduce the likelihood that the subjects would discover the manipulative intent of the researchers. Subjects in the ‘no public commitment’ condition were not contacted and were thus not asked to make a public commitment to conserve paper. However, it was verified that all 102 subjects (including those in the ‘no public commitment’ condition) had accessed the online essay about the importance of paper conservation.

Measures

A few days after the manipulation of the various public commitment conditions, all subjects were sent an email message containing an online survey designed to assess the clarity of course objectives. This survey also included two measures of *importance of paper conservation* and six measures of *susceptibility to normative influence* (adapted from Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel, 1989). The questions were measured on a seven point scale ranging from ‘Strongly Disagree’ to ‘Strongly Agree.’ See Exhibit 1 for a list of the questions used to measure importance of paper conservation and susceptibility to normative influence.

Each online lecture was available in two formats—one optimized for online viewing and the other optimized for printing, both of which were available to all students. The lectures designed for online viewing were broken up into numerous easy-to-read screens, while each print optimized lecture was available as a single printable file. The online course was set up in a manner that permitted us to measure the amount of time each student spent on each of the fifteen online lecture modules. Data from the first lecture module was not included in the study since students may have been unfamiliar with the online lecture delivery system during the first week of the semester. In addition to the above, the system also measured the total number of print-optimized lectures that were accessed at least once by each student. At no point during the course were students informed that the instructor had the ability to monitor their online behavior. Further, during debriefing, no student indicated knowing or having suspected the instructor of having the ability to monitor students' behaviors within the online course environment. Thus it is unlikely that the compliance behavior exhibited by the students was a result of the students' need to please their teacher or caused by a fear of negative consequences for not complying with his instructions.

We make the assumption that a student who reads a lecture online is likely to spend more time viewing the lecture online, compared to a student who prints the document. We also assume that a student who reads the lecture online is not as likely to access the print-optimized page, compared to a student who prints the lecture. While the time spent viewing the online lecture material (or the accessing of the print-optimized pages) can be influenced by many external factors, we believe that the process of random assignment of subjects to the three experimental groups will cancel out most, if not all extraneous influences, leaving compliance with the paper conservation request as the main determinant of the time spent online.

After eliminating students who did not complete the course, we were left with data from 96 subjects (32, 33, and 31 subjects respectively in the no, low, and high public commitment conditions). The only direct meeting between the instructor and all the students enrolled in the course took place on the last day of the course. At this time subjects were asked to estimate the number of lectures they had read online (as opposed to the number of lectures that they had printed), and this estimate was found to be strongly correlated to the number of print-optimized lectures that were accessed ($r=-0.72$) and to the amount of time spent accessing the online lectures ($r=0.79$). A debriefing session was conducted at that time during which subjects were found to have no knowledge of the manipulative intent of the researchers. As indicated previously, the debriefing also revealed that subjects were neither aware nor suspicious that the instructor had the ability to monitor students' activities within the online lecture modules. Further, no subjects reported having downloaded the online lectures onto their personal computers for offline viewing.

RESULTS

The impact of public commitment on compliance behavior

The time spent online on each of the fourteen lectures was added together to yield a new variable representing the total time spent online on the lecture material (TIME). A simple analysis of variance indicated that the level of public commitment had a significant impact on TIME ($F_{2,93}=44.79, p=0.00$). Subjects in the high public commitment condition spent significantly more time online (385 minutes) than subjects in the low public commitment condition (335 minutes; $F_{1,62}=5.79, p=0.02$) or those in the no

public commitment condition (205 minutes; $F_{1,61}=79.90, p=0.00$). Further, subjects in the low public commitment condition spent significantly more time online than those in the no public commitment condition ($F_{1,63}=55.11, p=0.00$).¹

A similar analysis was performed on the number of print-optimized lectures accessed (PRINT) by each subject. The public commitment conditions were found to have a significant impact on PRINT ($F_{2,93}=13.88, p=0.00$). Subjects in the high public commitment condition accessed significantly fewer print optimized lectures (5.23 lectures) than subjects in the low public commitment condition (7.52 lectures; $F_{1,62}=7.10, p=0.01$) or those in the no public commitment condition (9.75 lectures; $F_{1,61}=34.17, p=0.00$). Further, subjects in the low public commitment condition accessed significantly fewer print-optimized lectures compared to those in the no public commitment condition ($F_{1,63}=6.00, p=0.02$).

The above analyses indicate that manipulating the act of public commitment can be very effective in motivating individuals to engage in sustained compliance with a target behavior. Also the degree of compliance obtained with high public commitment was higher than that obtained with low public commitment or with no public commitment, while low public commitment resulted in higher levels of long-term compliance compared to no public commitment.

Prior studies have shown that the degree of compliance declines as the regimen duration increases (Rorer, Tucker, and Blake, 1988; Cummings, Baker, Kirscht, and Levin, 1982). To examine whether the paper conservation compliance behavior was sustained throughout the fourteen week period, we divided the fourteen weekly lectures into two halves and calculated the time spent online on the first seven lectures (TIME1), and on the last seven lectures (TIME2) and we repeated the previous analyses on these two new variables. The level of public commitment had a significant effect on both TIME1 ($F_{2,93}=14.31, p=0.00$) and TIME2 ($F_{2,93}=25.51, p=0.00$). During the first seven weeks subjects in the high public commitment condition spent insignificantly more time online (TIME1=222 minutes) than those in the low public commitment condition (197 minutes; $F_{1,62}=1.52, p=0.22$). However subjects in both the high public commitment condition ($F_{1,61}=27.03, p=0.00$) and those in the low public commitment condition ($F_{1,63}=18.49, p=0.00$) spent significantly more time online compared to the no public commitment subjects (126 minutes). During the second seven week period subjects in the high public commitment condition spent significantly more time online (TIME2=163 minutes) than those in the low public commitment condition (138 minutes; $F_{1,62}=3.65, p=0.06$). Moreover subjects in the high public commitment condition ($F_{1,61}=49.18, p=0.00$) and those in the low public commitment condition ($F_{1,63}=29.22, p=0.00$) spent significantly more time online compared to the no public commitment subjects (80 minutes).

Direct comparisons of the time spent viewing online lectures in the two halves of the semester is not meaningful since the complexity of the topics covered, and the length of the lectures in

¹The online lecture material was not designed to replace the hard-copy text book (which all subjects were required to read), but rather represented a commentary by the instructor that expanded upon or provided a different perspective on some of the topics discussed in each text book chapter. In addition to reading the online lecture notes and the hard-copy text book, students had to complete various online and offline assignments and take numerous online quizzes. The times spent online on these other activities were not included in our measurement of TIME.

EXHIBIT 1

Measures

Measures of Importance of Paper Conservation

- I think conserving paper is an important objective
- The goal of reducing paper wastage is a worthwhile one

Measures of Susceptibility to Normative Influence (SNI)^a

- If I want to be like someone, I often try to buy the same brands they buy
- It is important that others like the products and brands I buy*
- I rarely purchase the latest fashion styles until I am sure my friends approve of them
- When buying products, I generally purchase those brands that I think others will approve of
- I like to know what brands and products make good impressions on others
- I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same products and brands that others purchase

^a These six measures of SNI were used after a pretest of the entire eight item subscale revealed that two measures did not have very high reliability.

* This item was dropped from the analysis in the main study because of low reliability.

the two halves of the semester were not identical. However that does not diminish the significance of the above findings since the analysis was successful in demonstrating that high public commitment resulted in sustained compliance behavior over the entire fourteen week period, and that the weaker low public commitment while not as effective in eliciting compliance over the long run, was better than no public commitment in sustaining long-term compliance behavior.

The preceding analyses indicate that public commitment motivates individuals to engage in sustained compliance behavior and that the degree of compliance obtained varies with the degree of publicness with which the commitment is declared. Further, the compliance obtained through the manipulation of high public commitment was sustained throughout a fourteen week period.

Goal importance as a mediator

Given the prior results, an important question to examine is how public commitment influences subsequent compliance behavior. We suggest that the act of making a public commitment to a goal such as paper conservation will make the goal more salient and important to the individual. Further as suggested by H2, the subjects' evaluation of the *importance of paper conservation* (IMP) is expected to mediate the effect of the experimental manipulation of public commitment on the time spent online (TIME) and on the number of print-optimized lectures accessed (PRINT). Exhibit 1 includes the two measures of IMP. These measures did not show any evidence of scale compression, with the observations ranging from 1 to 7 on the seven-point scales and standard deviations of 1.23 and 1.35 for the two measures.

To verify H2, a two-step MANCOVA was performed. This analysis follows the procedure suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) where mediation is tested using four steps. First, the independent variable (the manipulation of public commitment) should be shown to have a significant effect on the mediator (IMP). Second, the independent variable should be shown to have a significant effect on the dependent variable (TIME). Third, the mediator should be shown to have a significant effect on the dependent variable. In the final step, the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable should be shown to be non-significant when the mediating variable is introduced as a covariate. If all four of these steps are met, then the data are consistent

with the hypothesis that the mediator variable completely mediates the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, and if the first three steps are met but step 4 is not, then partial mediation is indicated.

Steps 1 and 2 were done using a simple MANOVA performed with TIME, PRINT and IMP as dependent variables and the public commitment conditions as the independent factor. As required by Baron and Kenny (1986), the public commitment conditions had a significant effect on TIME ($F_{2,93}=44.79, p=0.00$), PRINT ($F_{2,93}=13.88, p=0.00$), and IMP ($F_{2,93}=12.33, p=0.00$). Steps 3 and 4 were done using MANCOVA, where IMP was introduced as a covariate, with TIME and PRINT as the dependent variables, and the public commitment conditions as the independent factor. IMP had a significant effect on TIME ($F_{1,92}=25.72, p=0.00$), and on PRINT ($F_{1,92}=16.80, p=0.00$). The final step of the test for mediation was to test if the introduction of IMP as a covariate led to the impact of the public commitment manipulation on TIME becoming insignificant. The F test indicated that public commitment continued to have a significant direct effect on TIME (now $F_{2,92}=25.63, p=0.00$ compared to the previous $F_{2,93}=44.79, p=0.00$) and PRINT (now $F_{2,92}=5.40, p=0.01$ compared to the previous $F_{2,93}=13.88, p=0.00$). In keeping with Baron and Kenny (1986), we conclude that the importance placed by the subjects on paper conservation partially mediated the effect of public commitment on the time spent online and on the number of print-optimized lectures accessed.

Susceptibility to normative influence as a moderator

Susceptibility to normative influence (SNI) was hypothesized to be a moderator of the effect of public commitment on long term compliance. Factor analysis revealed that five of the six measures of SNI formed a uni-dimensional construct with principal components extraction leading to factor loadings ranging from 0.69 to 0.86.

After eliminating one SNI measure, (refer to Exhibit 1) the remaining five measures were found to have high reliability (Cronbach $\alpha=0.85$), and therefore a combined scale was formed by averaging the five SNI measures. A new dummy variable SNI was created with a value of 0 to indicate subjects whose combined SNI was at or below the median, and a value of 1 to indicate subjects whose SNI scores were above the median. A two factor ANOVA

FIGURE 1
TIME by Public Commitment and SNI

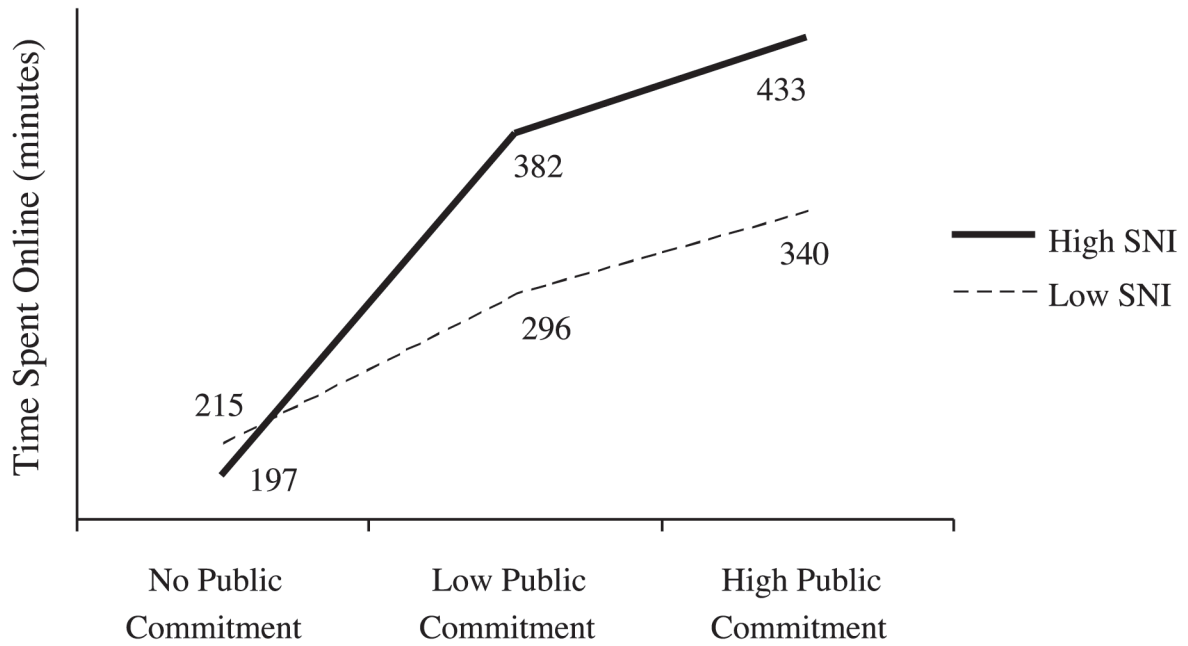


TABLE 1
TIME and PRINT by Public Commitment and SNI

	TIME		PRINT	
	High SNI	Low SNI	High SNI	Low SNI
No Public Commitment	197.10	214.96	10.35	9.07
Low Public Commitment	382.21	295.70	4.73	9.83
High Public Commitment	433.01	340.54	4.67	5.75

(Public Commitment and SNI) was run and both Public Commitment ($F_{2,90}=57.17, p=0.00$) and SNI ($F_{1,90}=14.20, p=0.00$) were found to have significant main effects on the time spent online (TIME). More interesting was the significant two-way interaction between Public Commitment and SNI ($F_{2,90}=6.32, p=0.00$) depicted in Figure 1. Similar results were found when using the number of print-optimized lectures accessed (PRINT) as the dependent variable. Public Commitment ($F_{2,90}=17.00, p=0.00$) and SNI ($F_{1,90}=6.78, p=0.01$) were found to have significant main effects on PRINT. Once again there was a significant two-way interaction between Public Commitment and SNI ($F_{2,90}=8.98, p=0.00$).

To explain the interaction we examined the values of TIME and PRINT for the three experimental conditions for both the high and low SNI subjects (see Table 1 and Figure 1). Subjects high in SNI spent significantly more time reading lectures online compared to the low SNI subjects under conditions of low and high public commitment. There was no significant difference in the time spent online between the high and low SNI subjects under the no commitment condition. Similar results were obtained with PRINT as the

dependent variable. These analyses provide support for our hypothesis that *susceptibility to normative influence* (SNI) is a moderator of the effect of public commitment on long term compliance. Thus the low public commitment manipulation was adequate to ensure high levels of compliance from subjects high in SNI, but the high public commitment condition was required to gain maximum compliance from subjects low in SNI.

DISCUSSION

This study contributes to the consumer behavior literature by identifying a technique that providers can use to gain compliance when customer compliance with his/her role once away from the firm is integral to the successful delivery of the service. We determined that public commitment was a significant motivator in ensuring compliance behavior over an extended time period. Subjects who made a public commitment to conserve paper by reading lectures online were found to have done so compared to subjects who made a less public commitment, and compared to those who made no commitment at all. This result is particularly interesting

because the study participants did not benefit significantly from the outcome (paper conservation). Public commitment should have an even more significant impact on customer compliance in the case of services where consumers directly benefit from being compliant—services such as weight loss programs, long-term financial planning, and debt management programs.

Further it was found that the act of making a public commitment to a goal caused subjects to assess the goal as being more important. This appraisal of the importance of the goal was found to mediate some of the effect of public commitment on the compliance behavior (paper conservation). Finally we found the personality trait *susceptibility to normative influence* (SNI) to be a determinant of how effective public commitment would be in gaining compliance. Subjects high in SNI were more likely to be affected by public commitment, compared to those lower in SNI. Providers may want to explore alternate motivators for consumers low in SNI.

Prior investigations of long-term compliance in the medical arena have shown that regimen duration is predictive of compliance, with compliance decreasing with increasing regimen length. Long-term regimens tend to be more complex and often involve substantial behavior modification and this usually results in low levels of compliance. This despite the fact that the behaviors being requested are ones that the subjects should be highly motivated to comply with, e.g., weight loss, cholesterol reduction, hemodialysis treatment (Fishman, 1995).

In this study, we investigated compliance with the request to conserve paper by reading online course material off the computer screen rather than printing the online material for offline perusal. This compliance request required customers to engage in a modified behavior over an extended time period (fourteen weeks)—a behavior which is not intrinsically motivating to most subjects, and which was to be performed outside of the purview of the service provider. Under these circumstances, the ability to find significant differences in compliance behavior lends greater support to our hypothesis that the publicness with which a commitment is made will have a significant and favorable impact on long-term compliance behavior.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The study examined the role of public commitment as a means of motivating customers of an online marketing course to comply with a one-time request to conserve paper. The findings of this study have important managerial implications for services marketers and others as it addresses how they can manage behavior when the customer is away from the provider and gain compliance needed to create the service.

First, public commitment was found to have a significant impact on compliance behavior despite the fact that the outcome of paper conservation did not significantly benefit the subjects, illuminating the potency of public commitment. Thus service providers should consider requesting their customers to make at least a low level public commitment to comply with his/her service role. Secondly, a one-time request to make a public commitment was asked of subjects, a more conservative test than found in most real life situations. Nevertheless, the impact of the one-time request, to make a public commitment, on compliance was robust. Repeated public commitments by subjects may significantly boost their motivation to comply with their stated goals. For example, in weight loss programs, counselors should repeatedly remind clients to “eat right.”

Thirdly, service providers may want to determine, in advance of providing the service, the importance of goal attainment to customers. Customers who evaluate a goal as being important may be more inclined to stay on task, e.g., adhere to a debt management

program. And lastly, service providers should determine whether customers are susceptible to outside influence. Providers have more influence over customers who are concerned about hypocrisy or social disapproval. For example, individuals who are more susceptible to such social influence could be reminded of the undesirable consequences of not complying with the prescribed actions. At the same time, service providers may want to use other means of eliciting compliance behavior from those customers who are not susceptible to normative influence.

STUDY LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Though we found that subjects in the public commitment condition evaluated paper conservation to be more important than the subjects in the no commitment condition, we were unable to measure the pre-post change in *Importance of Paper Conservation* (IMP) caused by the manipulation of public commitment. The way this study was structured, there would have been only a few days between the two measurements of IMP. We concluded that two measurements of IMP in quick succession would have caused subjects to base their second response on their recollection of their previous response and also cause them to suspect the manipulative intent of the researchers. Thus IMP was measured only once, following the manipulation of public commitment, but before the measurement of compliance behavior began.

Future research should examine whether the manipulation of public commitment causes a change in the assessment of the importance of the target behavior by utilizing pre and post measures of goal importance. Additionally, future research should investigate and attempt to validate the role of public commitment in gaining compliance in the context of other services with different types of subjects and compliance behaviors. While this paper has examined the personality factor susceptibility to interpersonal influence, there are other individual factors, e.g., preference for consistency, which could impact conformity (Lasco and Zinkhan, 1999) and should be studied.

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Consumer Experiences and Market Resistance: An Extension of Resistance Theories

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Consumer scholars have “yet to develop an integrated theoretical perspective of the phenomenon that considers the many and varied ways in which resistance of the marketplace and its offerings impacts consumer behavior” (Fournier 1998 p.89). Penaloza and Price provide (1993) a conceptual overview as a basis to understand consumer resistance. While we may never be able to understand consumer resistance to *all* aspects of the marketplace, perhaps we may work towards tackling this issue by striving to understand consumer’s resistance to certain “markets” in their unique contexts. For instance, one may consider holiday markets.

Marketed holidays (e.g., Christmas, Valentine’s Day, Halloween) represent one type of market that is in part resisted by consumers. Holiday festivities are a key aspect of contemporary consumer culture, yet scholars have not devoted research to understanding consumers’ resistance of traditional holiday markets. Valentine’s Day is an event charged with consumer meaning (Close and Zinkhan 2006) and it is an interesting context to study consumer resistance because it is the holiday for love—typically one of the most desired, involved, and uplifting human experiences.

Thus, we seek to advance understanding of consumers’ resistance manifest in the Valentine’s Day market. Our objectives include:

1. to introduce a definition of “market resistance”,
2. to understand and explain consumer experiences that are associated with resistance to a market and its related events,
3. to show what consumers are moving towards via their acts of resistance.

To address the objectives, we use multiple methods. We focus on describing a category of experiences that are associated with resistance and creation of new traditions. The article is organized as follows. First, we conceptually define terms and introduce relevant areas of resistance theories. Second, we discuss the analytical methods, data analysis, and theme development. Then, we present findings and interpretation of meaning. To clarify the processes, we deploy constructs based in resistance theory. We ultimately discuss limitations, implications, and avenues for future research.

CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESISTANCE THEORIES

In general, resistance entails an opposing or retarding force (Dobscha 1998). Resistance is the:

counter-hegemonic social attitudes, behaviors, and actions that aim at weakening classifications among social categories and that are directed against the dominant power and against those who exercise it, with the purpose of redistributing equality (Fernandes 1988 p.174).

Here, we define *market resistance* as *an opposition to traditions in the marketplace, with the purpose of creating new behaviors*. Market resistance is not a “non-behavior”; it entails purposive behavior to re-create the traditions manifest in the marketplace. Our definition has some key advantages. Past definitions from psychology apply to resistance to one particular message, or “persuasive attack,” (e.g., Tormala and Petty 2002) within a short period. We

focus on resistance to a *lifetime* of messages, promotions, marketplace activities, and consumers’ built-up associations. Second, our focus is on behaviors—specifically alternative-consumption behaviors, for example, consumer rebellion behaviors as described by Dobscha (1998) or consumer activism behaviors as described by Kozinets, Robert and Handelman (2004). In contrast to our proposed definition, past definitions focus on affective or cognitive components of resistance.

In the literature, resistance theories include two key areas that apply to the objectives of this study: 1) ambivalence and 2) avoidance. In resistance theory, ambivalence refers to a consumer’s neutral attitude about change (Arkowitz 2002). As Valentine’s market-based activities and “events” (e.g., card exchange, romantic dinners) have become a holiday tradition, the ambivalent consumer may be less likely to participate in such traditional activities and events.

Other consumers may purposefully avoid the holiday and the associated traditions. Avoidance of unpleasant feelings is another aspect of resistance (Perls et al. 1951). For some people, this holiday may trigger negative memories or feelings of inadequacy or loneliness. While some people reconstruct memories (Braun-LaTour and LaTour 2005), others may try to avoid unpleasant feelings and avoid the marketplace completely on the holiday. Resistance theorists agree that while consumers act ambivalent or avoid the holiday exchange, they often have a purpose of doing so. We revisit these aspects of resistance after describing the methods and findings.

METHODS

We employ synergistic methods spanning several years. Table 1 summarizes the methods, sample sizes, informants, period, and research focus.

Sampling and Procedure

We recruited consumers in various relationship stages to participate in the study. We did not specify sexual orientation, although most were in a heterosexual relationship. Many informants were recruited through advertisements in the city newspaper and were paid \$30. Others participated as part of an extra credit class assignment.

One hundred forty-nine consumers in various relationship situations, professions, and geographic backgrounds wrote diary entries about their experiences and any resistance surrounding this holiday and the related marketplace activities. To complement the offline diaries, we collected e-diary entries/postings about the holiday for rich, less-censored sentiments. To incorporate group interactions, we conducted group interviews with females in romantic relationships because this is more of a female-oriented holiday. Females (half in a dating relationship under six months and half in a relationship of six months or more) discussed their experiences and resistance points with the female moderator for ninety minutes as a female author took notes and reviewed body language.

Data Analysis and Theme Development

We iteratively analyzed the data based on the objectives, theories, and themes identified in the literature. Via axial, open, and selective coding, we grouped similar findings and observations into categories of meaning. This contributed towards revealing emer-

TABLE 1
Multiple Methods

Method	Informants	Time	Focus
Diaries [D]* (n=149)	-Males & Females; 18-67 -Single, Dating, Married	2002- 2005	Resistance/enjoyment factor, cultural rituals, gender roles, ambivalence
E-Diaries [E]** (n=47)	-Posters to e-diaries & boards during Valentine' s Day -Males & Females -Single, Dating, Married	2000- 2005	Naturalistic consumer thought of holiday meaning and resistance
Group Interviews [G] (n=6)	-Females; 18-22 -Dating	2003	Rituals, traditions, purchases, meanings behind purchases and non purchases

*denoted by [D]; ** web posting date, sources: diaryland, opendiary, mydeardiary.com, my-diary.org, diarist.net

gent patterns (Wolcott 1990). Authors reviewed each other's data interpretations until saturation. In the process, many new themes became apparent; however, we focus on findings of consumer resistance. We used suggested approaches (Spiggle 1994) to increase validity and reliability. Multiple methods were employed in order to depict a holistic understanding as suggested by Creswell (1998). We triangulated the data in quest of a full phenomenological understanding (Moustakas 1994).

FINDINGS: CONSUMER EXPERIENCES AND MARKET RESISTANCE

We find that a segment of consumers challenge the norms of the holiday market due to financial reasons as well as non-financial reasons. Some resistant behaviors are overt, and others are more covert. The less-financially motivated, more overt resistant behaviors tend to be more creative. These consumers creatively resist traditions of the holiday and create new rituals. Creative resistant consumers rename the holiday as "Singles Awareness Day," or "Maximized Profit Day." They spread negative experiences via (electronic) word-of mouth. More extreme examples include boycotting marketers or creating defaming/satiric websites; however such cases are not the norm and may be more deeply-rooted. Some examples are shown in Figure 1.

Key consumer experiences associated with market resistance are unfulfilled expectations, exclusion, terminal materialism, obligations, role exhaustion, and low need perception for the holiday (Figure 2). Note that three of the consumer experiences appear to influence market resistance and in turn are influenced by market resistance. The framework is shown in Figure 2.

Unfulfilled Expectations

A primary reason that Valentine's Day seems to breed market resistance is that many people have high expectations that often go unrealized. Many do not verbalize these expectations, as they are internal and build from a lifetime of Valentine's experiences. Consumers often do not know or are unclear about what they expect, or what others expect from them. Unfulfilled expectations of Valentine's Days often begin with childhood, as the rituals develop along with the person.

Egalitarian Expectations. Informants reference childhood as a time that primes expectations for this holiday. In grade school,

rituals of card, candy, and exchange of affection are often egalitarian; everyone expects involvement. Valentine exchange is for every child at school. Such early behaviors seem to prime expectations for a lifetime of being recognized.

Dates, Sex, and Intimacy. Informants have expectations surrounding dates, sex, and intimacy. Some expect the evening will entail sex. Although some novice daters appear to have little clue about what their date expects [G],¹ most males in a dating relationship of six months or longer know what is expected of them [S]. Furthermore, males expect to "be expected to" spend first. Sex and food are two things males mention with their expectations for Valentine's. This food is not always the characteristic food of Valentine's Day (e.g., chocolate) or even the more expensive steak or seafood dinners. Sometimes it is simple as sex and pizza (in that order).

Reactions to unfulfilled expectations sometimes affect third parties who otherwise may have had a delightful day, such as in the case of this resistant woman's roommate:

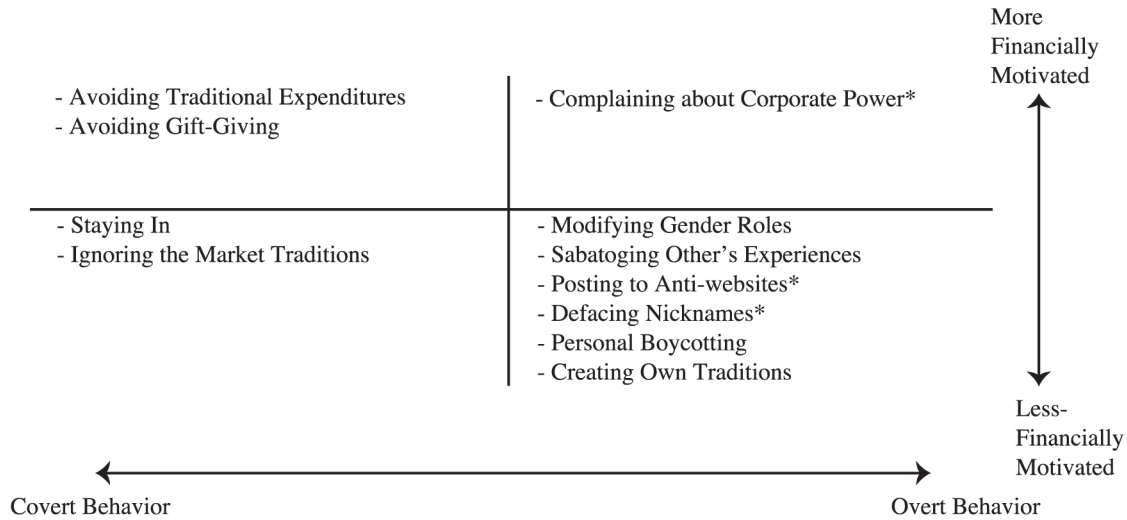
I did not have a Valentine today. My roommate did though. When she was out having dinner with her lover, I ate all her candies and cut up all her flowers. When she got home and saw what I did, she was so angry with me! I told her to not be so uptight... the situation was actually hilariously funny. If someone bought me a box of candy or flowers, this never would have happened.... Even the cheap-o brand chocolates that say "I choo-choo-choose you!" would have been great. Now I am fat and alone. Maybe I'll fall down the stairs. Great. [F, 2-14-2003, E]

This woman expects something, even a "cheap-o" box of chocolates. Chocolate is embedded with meanings of sensuality (Belk and Costa 1999) and here, with self-loathing and expectations of loneliness. A more common expectation, however, is for recognition, intimacy, and love.

Expecting Love. Some expect love during this season, and are disappointed if they do not experience or share love. Consumers

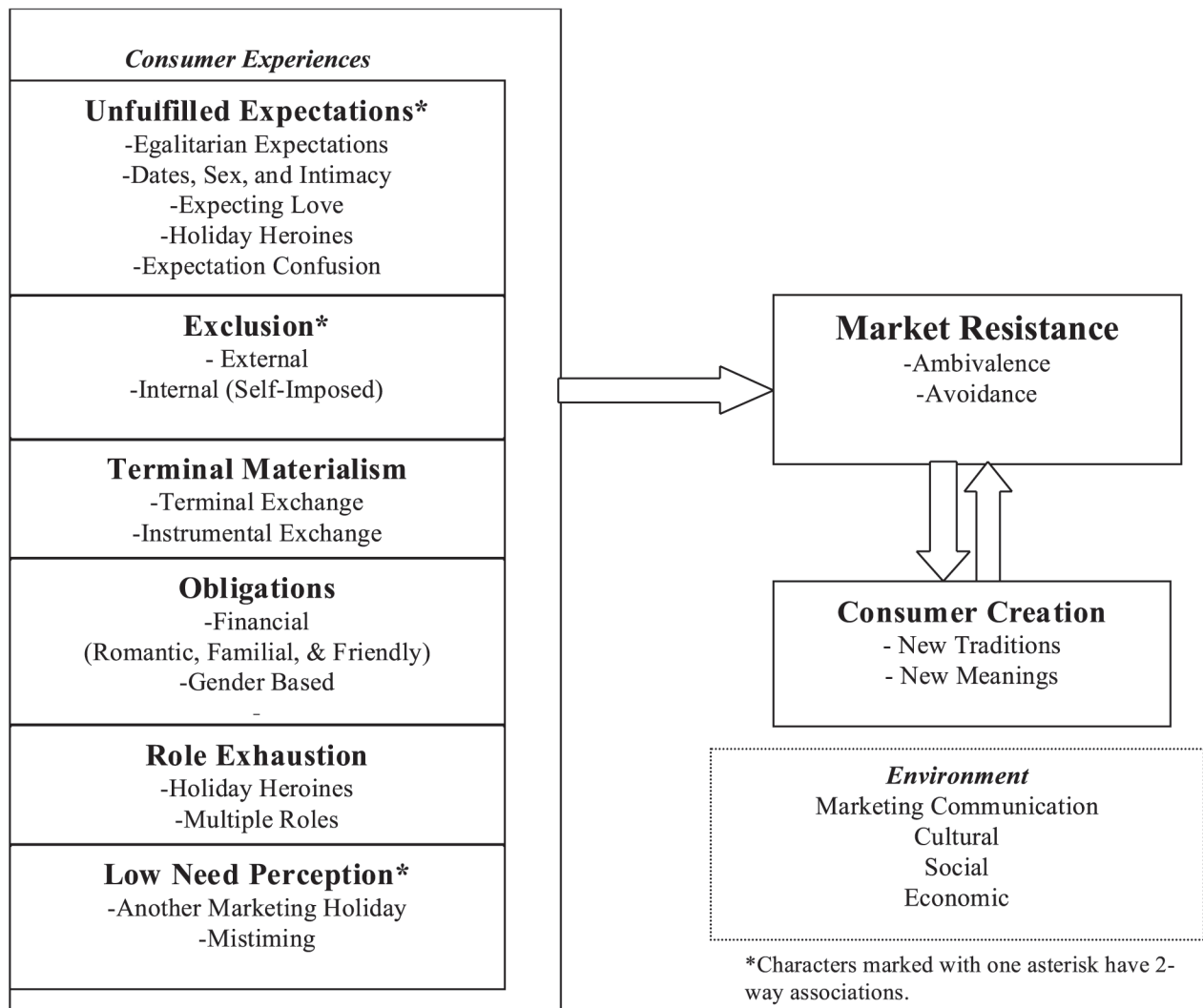
¹[G] indicates a finding from the group interviews; [S] survey; [D] diary; [E] electronic diary.

FIGURE 1
Market Resistance Behaviors



* These entries represent negative word-of-mouth behaviors.

FIGURE 2
Consumer Experiences Associated with Market Resistance



equate love with the purpose of this holiday. Moreover, they expect to see unavoidable signs of it everywhere:

The purpose of Valentine's Day is to tell your loved ones that you love them. Everywhere you go everything is red and all about Valentine's Day. You can't get away from it. But I had to work, so I then heated up leftovers and studied. [F, 22, Dating, D]

Love between friends—especially females—is a large part of this holiday. Consumers do not limit their expectations to romantic love. Philosophical contexts of romantic exchange, as during Valentine's Day, link to love's psychological significance. Various theorists address love. Freud claims that falling in love is a substitute for personal achievement. One may not excel in his or her career, but he or she still may succeed in the love department. Flowers and other visible exchanges on Valentine's Day announce this success. A competing idea is that falling in love is an attempt to obtain qualities that one lacks (Reik 1944). Valentine's Day is a socially acceptable time to pursue a lover. In some ways, this pursuit is to complete the self.

Holiday Heroines. Valentine's Day caters to females—the “heroines of the holiday.” Many females share expectations for an extraordinary day. One woman describes her lavish evening:

I went to dinner with my husband. We also went to a movie. We took in some dancing at the restaurant. I received roses on Valentine's Day. [F, 44, Married, D]

She contributes her night out to making her expectations clear to her husband. Without “instructions,” some informants are confused about what is expected from them.

Expectation Confusion. Confusion surrounds whom to recognize for this holiday. Some wonder if there is an expectation to give to family members, friends, or colleagues. One woman sees her bosses' disappointment each year, so she took the role of her husband:

I gave a rose to my manager. Her husband of ten years had never given her anything (for Valentine's Day)! [F, 24, Single, D]

Sometimes expectations are high from years past. As a result, the behaviors become more extravagant every year. However, fanciness peaks, and the couple adapts to a low-key version of the holiday with acts of voluntary simplicity. Such consumers still recognize the holiday, yet they do not buy the traditional goods associated with the mainstream Valentine's market. They exclude themselves from such culturally constructed normative behavior.

Exclusion

Exclusion is an experience that appears to influence market resistance and, at times, is influenced by market resistance. Exclusion is traditionally associated with power loss (Skvoretz and Willer 1993). Much extant knowledge of exclusion assumes that the person does not choose to be excluded. Although some informants exclude themselves from mainstream behavior (i.e., internal exclusion), many informants also cite instances of perceived (external) exclusionary forces. In this way, exclusion may be a confidence-reducing, negative force.

External Exclusion. Some informants feel excluded from activities and events (e.g., dinner packages; vacations). In considering Valentine's Day as an event, some feel uninvited. Relation-

ship status often serves as a basis of this “invitation.” Many describe it as a market for couples' only. One male suggests to re-name it **Singles' Awareness Day**. A single woman writes how Hallmark reminds her that she feels left out during the holiday seasons:

Well it's been almost 2 months since Christmas, and us single folks are finally recovering from the psychological damage making it through the holiday season does to us. So as I am almost fully recuperated myself, I would like to extend a warm thanks to Hallmark, the official sponsor of Valentine's Day, for reminding me that without a significant other, how truly worthless my life is. [F, Single, 2-14-04, E]

One woman, although in a dating relationship, feels excluded nonetheless:

I could not see him (her boyfriend) on Valentine's Day and I was constantly reminded of that. [F, 22, Dating, D]

In these cases, retailers, other couples, and marketed holiday events are externalities that appear to stimulate exclusion from the marketplace. Singles, separated individuals, and those in non-traditional relationships feel excluded and often, in turn, exclude themselves from this holiday.

Internal Exclusion. Self-imposed, internal, exclusion may be gratifying, empowering experience. Still considering the holiday activities as an invitation-only event, some do not want to be invited. In these cases, exclusion is welcomed. For example, some are relieved after hearing denial of dinner reservations on this night or that the store is out of red roses. Many informants do not imply that their excluded state is set in stone. Some end their diary entries with future-oriented statements (e.g., “next year I will be out for a romantic dinner”). Just as relationships are dynamic, so is the quantity and quality of gift exchange each year.

Terminal Materialism

Many informants exchange gifts because it is “the thing to do,” or because the holiday is about “going to dinner and exchanging gifts.” Gift exchange becomes a means without an end. Instead, the things exchanged have become the focus for what is meant as an intimate holiday. One male highlights misdirected materialism as a source of resistance:

Guys are pursued to make romance happen through tangible items. [M, 23, Dating, D]

Terminal Exchange. Materialism theories provide guidance for understanding resistance to the traditional Valentine's Day market. Materialism is the importance a person attaches to material possessions and the belief that certain possessions are a main source of happiness (Belk 2001). Terminal materialism is consumption for the mere sake of consumption (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981), elements of which are apparent during Valentine's Day. We present the concept of “terminal gift exchange” to describe exchange that is without a deeper meaning.

I don't like the cheap chocolate, teddy bears, etc. And my boyfriend doesn't like the flowers... especially for specific occasions such as Valentines. Even though it doesn't make me want to buy any of the traditional Valentines products... it does get me excited before hand when I see decorations. [F, 22, Dating, D]

For some, lavish nights out and “stuff” become a fixation. A common feeling is that the time together and shared experiences are much more valuable and desired, yet downplayed.

Instrumental Exchange. Valentine’s has distinct gift exchange traditions (e.g., red roses, jewelry, cards), some of which bring enjoyment and further relationships. Informants in more established relationships note that exchange should represent meaningful human emotions.

You always hear stories from men who missed the mark on the gift and give the woman an exercise tape while she gives him sand gathered from the beach where they first said ‘I love you.’ [M, 44, Married, D]

In this case, otherwise little valued items (e.g., some sand) become cherished items. Known as instrumental materialism, possession of things serves goals that are independent of greed, and these goals are associated with forming bonds or links with other human beings (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981). Thus, gifts serve as vehicles to bring people together. Resistance may breed however, with feelings of obligation (e.g., to give such gifts).

Obligations

Most informants feel obligated to some extent for this holiday. Most obligations are financial, with the majority of the burden going to the male. Males who are dating especially feel obligated.

Males *have to* take the girls out to eat and give them presents. [M, 22, Dating, S]

Often the obligation is towards meeting the partner’s expectations:

Males are expected to give their partner gifts because they don’t want to get in trouble— instead of because they want to or because they love the person. Women love the idea of romance so they usually have high expectations and give good gifts to their partner in return. [F, 23, Dating, D]

Females do not feel as obligated to purchase a gift for their partner, and they do not feel as much pressure as males (Otnes et al. 1994). Women feel more obligations to buy for friends and family.

Males are robots, always doing the same thing. Females hate Valentine’s Day because of their male partner. It is geared toward females because that’s what advertisers want us to see. [F, 21, Single, D]

Obligation appears to be associated with negative attitudes towards marketing and retailing. The consumer may feel subordinate (i.e., has less power than the marketer or retailer) as he or she is in a perceived state of purchase “necessity” stemming from obligatory feelings. This state seems quick and intense, partially due to the last-minute purchases common to the season. Negative attitudes may form towards the holiday and associated marketers and retailers, other consumers, and an internal desire to carryout multiple roles.

Role Exhaustion

Gender roles govern Valentine’s Day. Where Superbowl Sunday is a “man’s day,” this is the female day. Some males feel uncomfortable stepping out of their masculine norm:

It’s not very masculine. There are ways of marketing “love” without making us feel like pansies. Most companies can’t figure it out though. [M, 23, Dating, D]

Females are the heroines of this holiday, where males enact roles that often recognize the female.

Holiday Heroines. Some note the gender roles in terms of who does the “wooing”:

The male role is to sweep the female off of her feet. The female role is to be swept away.... Males should be the ones to show how sweet they can be because of romance’s history. [M, Dating, D]

Wooing sometimes places pressure on the male:

Males play the role of somebody that cares about their significant other on this day. I feel that a lot of pressure is put on men to plan an acceptable Valentine’s Day. [F, 41, Married, D]

Traditionally, the male is the giver, yet we see a move towards the females gaining a giving role.

Multiple Roles. Some consumers serve multiple roles, which exhaust them. For example, some women recognize their significant other, mother, friends, sisters, colleagues, and neighbors. Other women strive to fulfill the sexy and the practical role:

How many women buy something other than a sexy outfit for their husbands? I bought my boyfriend something practical—a back scrubber and guitar tuner. [F, 21, Dating, D]

Women who are interested in taking the relationship from girlfriend to wife seem especially concerned with fulfilling sensual and practical roles. They appear to show that they are fun and sexy; yet, someone who would also make a good partner and mother in the future. For some, this is a good chance to show the ability to enact multiple roles. Others see no need for the holiday.

Low Need Perception

Another Marketing Holiday. Some informants do not want to set aside one particular day for love—feelings they can express on a day of their choosing. This is an example of a kind of avoidance, in that consumers avoid celebrating the holiday on February 14th. At the same time, there is a creation process as consumers identify a new time for celebration. Others feel that the holiday is “wholly unnecessary” or not needed to maintain a healthy relationship.

I personally do not make a big deal out of Valentine’s Day. I know the traditions involved, and I have participated in some in the past, but at this point of my life, it’s just another day. My husband and I just make it a point to spend some time together and eat dinner at the dining room table, instead of at the breakfast bar or in front of the television. I don’t need anything fancy from him, because, honestly, I like a 3 Musketeer’s bar more than a box of expensive chocolates, and my husband brings home flowers at least once a month. [F, 38, Married, D]

Mistiming. Love... Now! Some consumers resist commands of *when* to show their love, not the concept of the holiday itself. People feel that they should not reserve love for this day. It is rare that someone makes a connection with why February 14th is specifically “the day” for romance.

I don’t necessarily disapprove of the holiday, but I don’t see why I should suddenly feel more or less romantically inclined on a certain day just because the general public, with eager support from retailers, has decided that this day should be celebrated in a certain way. [M, 33, Single, D]

Such individuals do not like having an external source dictate when to exhibit affection. However, some may “put up” with the holiday because of the perception that women enjoy it.

DISCUSSION: RESISTANCE THEORY AND CONSUMER CREATION

Our research shows that consumers resist and re-create. Based on resistance theory, we introduce a definition of market resistance, which is seen when a consumer does not engage in culturally established or ritualized marketplace behaviors. Some consumers are ambivalent to and other consumers resist traditional activities and the pre-packaged solutions that business has developed. Situational and socio-cultural factors facilitate and moderate this evolving behavior (Figure 2). We find that the day arouses strong attitudes that appear to trigger behavioral resistance. The process may be partially explained by struggles with business, society, culture, marketing communication, economic and other environments.

The findings help to extend two key areas of resistance theory—ambivalence and avoidance.

Extending Resistance Theory

Ambivalence. Here, ambivalence refers to uncertainty or indecisiveness as to which course to follow. In the literature, resistance entails a feeling of ambivalence about change (Arkowitz 2002), and ambivalence often includes coexisting opposing attitudes. However, in this context, we find consumers are certain about which course to follow. Furthermore, they are often either pro-change or anti-change. The two polarities often do not coexist within a person. That is, with little ambivalence, people have strong opinions (e.g., for or against partaking in Valentine’s Day traditions) and are highly involved (e.g., with the holiday memories).

Avoidance. Research states that resistance entails avoidance of unpleasant feelings (Perls et al. 1951). We find that consumers who report unpleasant feelings or experiences associated with Valentine’s Day avoid the holiday traditions in the formal marketplace. However, facilitated by the growth of electronic environments, we see counter-trends emerging. Using new communication media, consumers who avoid the traditional marketplace often find new “places” to share negative feelings. Thus, we revive the works of Perls et al. (1951) into the digital age by making the distinction that consumers do not avoid their negative feelings completely. Instead, they often create new (e.g., electronic) channels for the negative feelings that are less apparent in the traditional marketplace.

Considering the nomological framework as a whole, we clarify the role of consumer creation with market resistance. Along with acts of market resistance, consumers create new traditions, meanings, rituals, and trends. While some informants are passionate to maintain traditions, many are *changing or re-creating* traditions. Informants commonly welcome a change in tradition and serve as change-agents. Often, advocates seek to bring sincere romance to a day that many feel that has become overtly commercial and expensive. Advocacy to create new holiday rituals and traditions are based on motivations that are financial and non-financial.

Limitations and Avenues to Extend this Study

This framework serves as a base for scholars to continue theoretical development. Given our research design, we focus on one U.S. consumer holiday. We encourage cross-cultural extensions—especially considering the emerging international status of

holiday markets and related events. On a broader scale, more insight is needed in the areas of the resistance to the globalization of holiday markets and events.

Few researchers have focused on what motivates people to resistance markets at different stages of life. For instance, while we found financially-based motivations for resistance behaviors, children likely would not recognize the financial component. Our findings suggest that resistance against traditional holiday behaviors build from memories and years of experiences beginning in elementary school. Valentine’s Day begins as an egalitarian holiday with gender-neutral exchanges of cards and gifts. How does all of this change by the adult years, which focus attention on the female? Behaviors and potential resistance drivers learned at an early age evolve over the course of a lifetime and merit further study.

Further, other antecedents to resistance behaviors are thought to stem from the broader marketing communication environment during unique markets and events. For instance, perhaps advertising seen after experiences (such as during Valentine’s Day and its related events) may alter a person’s memory of the experiences (Braun-LaTour and LaTour 2005), and in turn, impact one’s market resistance behaviors. Future studies should recognize and depict how these marketing communications and message timing issues interplay with a consumer’s resistance.

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Reducing Reactance Induced Backlash Responses to Recommendations

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This research examines factors that might reduce reactance induced backlash effects to persuasion. Marketers often seek to persuade consumers, however, such influence attempts may fail due to a variety of reasons including poor message delivery (Kardes et al. 2005; Zhang & Buda 1999), lack of attention (Petty et al. 2005), dislike for the ad (Edell & Burke 1986) or suspicion of marketers' intent (Friestad & Wright 1994). This research focuses on another, less oft researched, reason for the failure of marketers' persuasion attempts, *consumer reactance*.

Reactance is a motivational state that individuals experience when they perceive their freedom to choose or act is being threatened (Brehm 1966). Prior research has shown that due to this freedom-motivation, consumers often react against marketing communications. In doing so, consumers do not merely ignore reactance-inducing messages, but rather act against them, generating backlash effects (Mann & Ward 2001; Plant & Devine 2001). For example, individuals provided with a recommendation against an option not only failed to decrease choice of that option, but instead increased choice of it (Fitzsimons and Lehmann 2004).

Such reactance-induced backlash effects (e.g., when consumers increase a recommended against behavior) are of particular concern to marketers. In this research we examine four factors that might affect reactance induced backlash and some strategies marketers might undertake to reduce such effects. The four factors examined are: freedom of choice, substitute availability, repetition, and elaboration.

In study one, we examine both freedom of choice and substitute availability. Substitute availability may be an important factor in reactance because when consumers adhere to a marketing-communication, they may be forced to change their preferences and may end up with an option they were initially less interested in. Such switching may carry significant opportunity costs. We vary these opportunity costs by varying the availability of close versus distant substitutes and examine whether reactance induced backlash levels are affected. If reactance is driven by high opportunity costs, it should be significantly reduced when a close substitute is available.

At the same time, we also vary the psychological costs of reactance by manipulating perceived freedom of choice. If reactance is caused by a perceived threat to freedom, it should be significantly reduced if no freedom exists to begin with. We conduct a 2 (Freedom of choice: Yes/No) by 2 (Opportunity cost: Close/Distant substitute) between subjects design with a recommendation against a given product. We find that individuals who perceive they have freedom of choice enact high levels of reactance, choosing the recommended against option almost 80% of the time; the presence of a close/distant substitute has no effect on the level of reactance. However, when no freedom of choice is given, reactance is significantly reduced (25% and less).

These findings suggest that reactance is driven by psychological rather than opportunity costs and that attempts to minimize reactance via changes to the product mix may not be effective. Instead, marketers should reduce the psychological cost of adhering to recommendations, for example, by embedding messages in less threatening environments (e.g., product placement), or constructing messages that do not as obviously dictate a certain path for behavior (e.g., comparative ads or elaboration; see study 3).

In study two we examine the effects of multiple recommendations on consumer reactance. Although advertising research has shown that repetition can serve to enhance message effectiveness (Appel 1971; Hasher, Goldstein, and Toppino 1977; Haugtvedt et al. 1994), this may not be the case when reactance is involved. Specifically, individuals who find one recommendation as an attempt to limit their freedom may find ten such recommendations an even stronger, more reprehensible freedom-limiting attempt.

We find that whereas low levels of repetitions (i.e., 1) increase reactance, higher levels (i.e., 3 and 10) serve to reduce it. These findings suggest marketers might be wise to repeat their messages to gain compliance. However, this tactic may only work under certain circumstance. First, the recommendations used in this study differed from one another. Additionally, the message source was reportedly other consumers, a source likely to elicit less suspicion than marketers might (Friestad and Wright 1994). Thus, to maximize the effectiveness of repetition, marketers should attempt to convey the same message via different means repeatedly, using slightly different messages, and attempting to enhance credibility of message sources.

In study three we examine the effects of externally provided versus internally elaborated upon behaviors on consumer reactance. It is possible that reactance is caused by consumers' elaboration on the behavior recommended; such elaboration can be balanced (considering both pros and cons) or can be negative only, considering why the behavior is being recommended against. If elaboration underlies reactance, patterns of behavior in elaboration and direct recommendation should be similar. Such similarity is important to identify, since some marketing communication (e.g., comparative advertising or "teasers") may involve elaboration (Chebat et al. 2001).

Additionally, in this study we examine a real-life, long-term, consequential behavior, pursued outside of the lab. Such reactance responses have not been examined to date, and this study allows us to see whether reactance effects have lingering real-world effects. We also examine whether any of these effects are affected by chronic individual reactance (Hong 1992).

In study four we find that reactance is not driven by an elaboration process, as responses to balanced/cons only elaboration differ from responses to direct recommendations. We find responses to a direct recommendation are affected by chronic individual reactance, whereas responses to elaboration are not. Specifically, individuals high in chronic reactance who received a direct recommendation against a behavior, showed the highest levels of engagement in that behavior. This finding suggests that reactance induced backlash effects persist outside of the lab and thus should be a cause for concern for marketers.

At the same time, study three shows that elaboration (especially on the cons only of the behavior) seems to provide a strong remedy against reactance induced backlash effects.

Thus, the utilization of open-ended (albeit guided) communication with consumers in which they are allowed to reach their own conclusions may be a strong remedy for reactance induced backlash behaviors.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY
Advances in Understanding Consumers' Price Sensitivity
Joseph Simmons, Yale University, USA

**“The Persuasive Power of Quality: Consumers’
Misprediction of their Reactions to Price Promotions”**

Cenk Bülbül, New York University

Tom Meyvis, New York University

Consumers often need to predict how they would react to changes in price or quality. Results from six experiments indicate that consumers often overestimate the relative impact of quality differences on their consumption decisions. Consumers underestimate their sensitivity to promotions on low quality products, overestimate their sensitivity to promotions on high quality products, and overestimate the general effect of quality on the amount they will consume. We conclude that consumers’ predictions rely on an abstract image of themselves as principled consumers and ignore pragmatic realities, such as the need to consume more low quality products to achieve the same level of utility.

ing whether or what to purchase. Our research suggests, however, that opportunity costs are not spontaneously considered. In four studies, manipulations that increased the salience of opportunity costs either deterred purchase or increased price sensitivity by inducing a shift toward the cheaper of two competing products.

**“Intuitive Confidence: When Consumer Choices are
Sensitive to Matching Prices”**

Joseph P. Simmons, Yale University

Leif D. Nelson, New York University

When choosing between equated alternatives, people often choose the option that is superior on the most important, or *prominent*, dimension. Investigating consumer decisions, we show that this *prominence effect* disappears when we make people less confident in the prominent option’s superiority before equating the options on price. This occurs even when we decrease confidence by having people list too many reasons for their preference, and by presenting the options in a difficult-to-read font. Generally, people’s choices are more sensitive to willingness-to-pay responses when they are uncertain that an option is superior in quality than when they are certain.

**“Lay Scientism: Ignorance of Value in Compensation
Decisions”**

Claire Tsai, University of Chicago

Christopher Hsee, University of Chicago

How should one compensate a consumer who loses something irreplaceable because of someone else’s fault? Normatively, compensation should equal the value (utility) of the lost item and thus make the victim as happy as she would be had the damage never occurred. Our experiments demonstrate that people’s compensation decisions often ignore value and are based on the normatively irrelevant factor of cost (the price that the victim originally paid for the item). We explain this phenomenon in terms of lay scientism (a tendency to base decisions on objective factors) and discuss how the popular cost-based compensation rule hurts consumer welfare.

**“The Effect of Opportunity Cost Salience on Purchase
Decisions”**

Shane Frederick, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Nathan Novemsky, Yale University

Jing Wang, Yale University

Ravi Dhar, Yale University

Stephen M. Nowlis, Arizona State University

Opportunity cost is a fundamental concept in economic theory, but little is known about the degree to which consumers incorporate (or exclude) opportunity costs from their consideration when decid-

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Belief Confidence and Consumer Reactions to Persuasive Messages: Measures, Models, and Mechanisms

J. Wesley Hutchinson, University of Pennsylvania, USA

Yanliu Huang, University of Pennsylvania, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

Consumer confidence in their knowledge is an emerging issue in consumer research (Alba & Hutchinson 2000). The central issues that unite the three papers in this session are (1) the measurement of consumer confidence in their own beliefs about the costs and benefits of products, (2) how advertising and other persuasive messages affect belief confidence, and (3) the role that belief confidence plays in determining attitudes and behavior. Although each paper addresses the construct of belief confidence, each does so from a distinctively different perspective. The Albarracin paper treats belief confidence as an individual difference variable and shows that people who are high in confidence are more willing to expose themselves to counter-attitudinal information. She reports the results of lab and field studies on information seeking behaviors concerning HIV-prevention (see also Albarracin et al. 2005). The methodological perspective of this paper is that of attitude research. The Huang and Hutchinson paper treats belief confidence as an indicator of the elaboration of an idea during exposure to an advertisement. They observe response, reaction times, and confidence ratings for specific beliefs and show that they can be reliably connected to the contents of advertising and (therefore) the likely cognitive responses experienced during ad exposure. The methodological perspective of this paper is that of memory. The Soll perspective treats belief confidence as a subjective probability that a belief is correct to within some specific interval of error. The reported empirical evidence reveals overconfidence and confirmation bias, and he presents a knowledge sampling model that predicts these effects as a form of sampling bias. The methodological perspective of this paper is that of judgment and decision research.

As can be seen from this brief synopsis, the three papers draw upon different literatures and experimental paradigms, but have intriguing areas of overlap (cf. Wyer and Albarracin 2005). The Albarracin and Soll papers each examine how confidence leads to vulnerability in decision making. In Albarracin's work, this vulnerability arises from openness to *disconfirming* information; in Soll's work the vulnerability is in the overweighting of *confirming* information. The Albarracin work uses psychometric methods to measure a *stable individual trait* that affects virtually all beliefs; Soll's work and that of Huang and Hutchinson use stochastic models of decision processes to measure *dynamically changing levels of confidence in specific beliefs*. By juxtaposing these three perspectives on belief confidence, we hope to (1) provide an introduction to each area of theory and method, (2) identify more precisely where the same constructs are intended and where different constructs are intended, and (3) begin to resolve apparent conflicts and synthesize a broader, more unified perspective.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"Believing That One is Strong as a Defensive Weakness: Using Defensive Confidence to Attract Reluctant Audiences"

Dolores Albarracín, University of Florida

Amy L. Mitchell, University of Florida

Marta R. Durantini, University of Florida

Allison Earl, University of Florida

Justin Levitt, University of Florida

Joanne Gunnoe, Alachua County Health Department

History presents abundant examples that people who strongly advocate and defend a given attitudinal position often change this position, becoming "converted" to points of view that are opposite to the ones they initially held. We argue that one reason for such changes is the degree to which individuals perceive that they can defend their attitudes from attack. Ironically, this trait can make them vulnerable to attitude change (Albarracín, 2002; Albarracín & Mitchell, 2004). Presumably, people who are confident that their attitudes will survive future challenges are more willing to examine evidence that both supports and contradicts their prior attitudes. In contrast, people who doubt their defensive ability may prefer proattitudinal information over challenges (see also Byrne, 1961; Olson & Zanna, 1982b; for related views in other domains, see Tesser, 2001). Although denial may in many ways be relatively a primitive defense mechanism, avoiding counterattitudinal information may preserve the attitudes of people who doubt their defensive abilities. In contrast, individuals who believe that they will effectively self-defend may willingly receive counterattitudinal information that succeeds in changing their prior attitudes.

The present paper addressed various questions about the role of defensive confidence and the way to use it to the persuader's advantage. First, we were interested in determining whether people vary in defensive confidence. If so, we were also interested in analyzing the origins and structure of defensive confidence as an individual difference. Because general demographic and personality variables are often inadequate to predict attitude change (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993), it is important to understand stable individual differences that relate specifically to people's attitudes and their responses to persuasion. In addition, we investigated whether high (vs. low) defensive confidence renders people more open to receiving and changing more in response to counterattitudinal information. Identifying the consequences of defensive confidence is critical to producing change in different populations.

Defensive confidence is defined as people's perceptions that they can defend their attitudes when information coming from the environment contradicts these attitudes (Albarracín & Mitchell, 2004). These perceptions of defensive capacity should lie at the heart of one's resolution of the conflict between approaching information that challenges one's attitudes and approaching information that supports these attitudes (Festinger, 1957, 1964; see also Cannon, 1964). That is, individuals who trust their defensive abilities may also expect to trust their initial attitudes. Similarly, people who are high (vs. low) in defensive confidence should anticipate more effective counterarguing of the discordant information and possibly greater self-enhancement. Thus, the effects of

defensive confidence may be mediated by attitude confidence, expected effective counterarguing, expected self-enhancement, and expected information novelty or strength.

The ultimate influence of defensive confidence on attitude change was also of interest. We hypothesized that people who doubt their defensive abilities should be more cautious in approaching counterattitudinal information. In contrast, those who believe they will successfully self-defend may be more apt to confronting information with which they disagree. Hence, they may become vulnerable targets of persuasion attempts. One of our studies examined the influence of defensive confidence on approach to proattitudinal information and on ultimate attitude change, as well as the perceptions that mediated these effects.

Consistent with our hypotheses, our research indicated that people who lack confidence in their ability to defend their attitudes prefer information that agrees with their views. In contrast, people who are confident are less biased in their selection decisions. Instead, they appraise information regardless of whether or not it agrees with their own position. We also found that people who trust their defensive ability expect to counterargue attitude-inconsistent communications effectively, to continue to trust their initial attitudes despite the communication, and to receive novel information. In addition, chronic defensive confidence increased exposure to counterattitudinal communications and ultimately, attitude change, by mediating influences on expected counterarguing success, attitude confidence, and information novelty.

We then used these findings to design ways of attracting audiences to a target program. These methods were tested in two field studies. Participants were clients from the Alachua (FL) County Health Department and were recruited through flyers or direct referrals. Referral was made to what was described as a "health survey" and participants who called were asked various questions about health, including sexual activity. Only participants who were sexually active in the last six months and not currently pregnant were considered eligible and scheduled to come in for an interview at a subsequent time. At the time of this interview, after signing the informed consent, the participant responded to a questionnaire administered by a member of the research team. Among other things, the questionnaire measured prior attitudes about condom use and actual condom use. Critical to the research problem of interest in this paper, halfway through the interview, the interviewer paused the administration, announcing a 30-minute break. At that point, a confederate entered the room pretending to do work unrelated to the interview, and unobtrusively observed the participant's exposure behavior. Specifically, participants had the opportunity to (a) read six HIV-prevention brochures, (b) watch a video on HIV-prevention, and (c) participate in a brief HIV risk-reduction counseling session that the interviewer offered to him or her. Thus, the behavior of the participant could be recorded with respect to the brochures, the video, and the counseling. Following this ostensible break, the interviewer returned and administered measures of material recognition, among other things.

The second field study manipulated the introduction to the brochures, the video, and the counseling in different ways. In one of the conditions (defensive confidence), the introductions highlighted that the materials/program did not impose a point of view and that most people exposed to them remained unchanged. In a second condition (change confidence), the introductions highlighted that the materials/program were highly effective at inducing condom use. The third and fourth conditions were control groups. Analyses indicated that instilling defensive confidence was more effective at increasing participation.

"Counting Every Thought: Indirect Measures of Cognitive Responses to Advertising"

Yanliu Huang, University of Pennsylvania

J. Wesley Hutchinson, University of Pennsylvania

The traditional method of measuring the cognitive responses to an advertisement focuses on the thought-listing technique (e.g., Cacioppo and Petty 1981; Ericsson and Simon 1980). Specific responses have seldom been used to predict attitudes. Usually, the cognitive responses are coded for valence and summed to form measure of net affective response. This measure is a reliable and strong predictor of attitude. Recently, the confidence expressed by people in the validity of their cognitive responses has been shown to also be a strong and reliable predictor of attitude (Brinol, Petty, and Tormala 2004; Petty Brinol, and Tormala 2002).

In this research, we focus on the key assumptions (1) that specific cognitive responses occur during the processing of persuasive messages and (2) that each such response exerts some effect on subsequent attitudes. Despite their success in predicting attitudes, thought-listing techniques are necessarily introspective. As such, they are suspect because retrospective methods rely on memory processes that are potentially errorful and biased and concurrent methods create potential problems of reactivity that could distort the measurement of cognitive responses and the processing of ad information itself (e.g., Nisbett and Wilson 1977). To address these concerns, we desire methods that have a clear causal relationship to the occurrence of specific cognitive responses and are less susceptible to the contaminating biases of introspection.

The first method we examine is *thought recognition*. In the research reported here, we used a common sentence frame within which a single sentence was varied across trials. An example is "When viewing advertisements, people often have a variety of thoughts and reactions. Regardless of what you believe now, when viewing the magazine ads earlier in this experiment, did you ever think to yourself, 'The Fiat SUV is fast'?" The final sentence varied across trials and the underlined word occurred after a delay. The target attribute was suggested or implied by the target ad but was not explicitly mentioned in the ad. Subjects pressed buttons to indicate "Yes" or "No" responses. Reaction times for this response and confidence ratings in its validity were also collected. Although the response itself is explicit and introspective, reaction times are not easily controlled consciously and such conscious process are detectable because the greatly increase time compared to natural responses.

The second method we examine is *belief verification*. As for thought recognition, we used a common sentence frame across trials (e.g., "The Fiat SUV is fast." and the underlined word occurred after a delay). Subjects pressed buttons labeled "Agree" or "Disagree". Belief verification should be much less susceptible to contamination than thought listing or thought recognition because the task makes no reference to the advertisement. Thus, all measures derived from this task (i.e., the response, valence, reaction time, and confidence) are indirect.

All of the experiments reported here manipulate the likelihood that an advertisement will produce a specific cognitive response using target ads (for which thought-listing pretests showed a high likelihood of a specific thought) and control ads. The thoughts that people have when reacting to advertisements should leave a measurable memory trace. Moreover, the tasks that should reveal that memory trace include thought recognition and belief verification for sentences that express those thoughts. In these tasks, the memory trace should reveal itself in a variety of ways, and these expected effects of memory traces form the basis of our experimental hypotheses.

First, an advertisement that has a high likelihood of eliciting a specific cognitive response (i.e., target ads) should yield more positive responses than an advertisement that has a low likelihood of eliciting that cognitive response (H1). Strong support for this hypothesis was found for both thought recognition and belief verification.

Second, target ads should yield faster positive responses than control ads (H2). For both tasks, the cognitive response is a form of elaboration that should enhance the accessibility of the information required to make a positive response. The mechanism is similar to that postulated for many standard priming and sentence verification tasks, as well as for attitude judgments. Strong support for this hypothesis was found for both thought recognition and belief verification.

Finally, target ads should yield higher confidence ratings for positive responses than control ads (H3). Confidence should increase because more positive evidence is retrieved from memory. Strong support for this hypothesis was found for both thought recognition and belief verification.

Although H1-H3 were strongly supported in our experiments, they pertain to positive responses only. This is because the evidence used for negative responses in these tasks is neither obvious based on common sense nor well-known in the related literatures. To test our hypotheses using both positive and negative responses, we estimated a Poisson counting of jointly observed responses, latencies, and confidence ratings (similar to those commonly used for traditional perceptual and recognition tasks). The key model parameters are the rates with which positive and negative evidence is recruited by memory processes. Model estimation provided strong evidence that the rate parameter for positive evidence was larger for target (vs. control) ads and that the rate parameter for negative evidence was smaller for target (vs. control) ads. These rate parameters are indirect in the sense that the measures were indirect and the relationship between observed measures and the rate parameters are complex; however, theoretically are the construct most directly related to the occurrence of a specific thought during ad exposure.

A third experiment replicated the results of the first two and showed that, in predicting attitude, reaction times and confidence ratings accounted for significant incremental variance in a regression model that also included response valence. A fourth experiment used a battery of belief statements to construct indices reflecting a variety of beliefs and showed that valence-weighted indices based on reaction times and confidence ratings predicted incremental variance in attitude judgments when the baseline was valence-weighted indices based on agree/disagree responses.

“Sampling, Overconfidence, and Consumer Decisions”

Jack B. Soll, Duke University

Joshua Klayman, University of Chicago

Consumers often make decisions based on estimates and predictions. For example, consider a consumer who is deciding whether to drive to next town to buy a television set. The consumer is confident that the store closes between nine and ten in the evening, and that the television is cheaper than in the local store. Everything may go as expected, in which case the consumer happily returns home with the television. However, it is also possible that the consumer will be surprised. The store may be closed when the consumer arrives, or the price may be higher than anticipated. More positively, the television may unexpectedly be on sale.

A robust finding in the literature on judgment and decision making is that people are overconfident. In this talk I will focus on interval estimates, which are typically associated with high levels of overconfidence. Studies of intervals typically ask participants to

give lower and upper bounds for unknown quantities. For each interval, the participant is supposed to be 90% sure that the correct value lies inside the specified range. For example, the consumer above may be 90% sure that the store closes between nine and ten. Across many judgments, the intervals should contain the correct answer 90% of the time. In many studies, however, the “hit rate” is closer to 40%.

In several recent papers (Klayman et al., 1999; Klayman et al., 2006; Soll & Klayman, 2004) we have sought to explain overconfidence in intervals. Both confirmation bias and statistical effects are implicated. Interestingly, both of these explanations can be construed as a form of sampling bias. Consider confirmation bias, which holds that evidence that favors an initial hypothesis has a retrieval advantage. Our consumer may initially recall other stores that close late, which leads to an initial hypothesis that the store closes late, which leads to the generation of reasons that support a late closing (e.g., “Best Buy is open, Circuit City is open, so Joe’s Stereos should be open late also to compete”). The fact that Joe needs to compete may indeed be a good reason. However, it is only one reason drawn from a population of reasons. Overconfidence will result when the process of sampling of reasons is slanted toward the initial hypothesis, provided that additional processing fails to correct for this bias.

Confirmation bias is sufficient but not necessary for producing overconfidence. There are two ways in which random error alone can lead to biased judgment. First, Soll and Klayman (2004) considered the possibility of random error in setting interval width. In theory such error can lead to overconfidence, but Soll and Klayman showed that the effect of error is small compared to the effect of intervals simply being too narrow. Second, for some types of judgments intervals may be inferred from a sample of related instances. For example, a consumer might recall the closing times of other stores in order to estimate the unknown closing time of a specific store. People will be systematically overconfident if they infer variability in the population from variability in the sample (Klayman et al., 2006).

In this talk I will offer data that is consistent with both explanations for overconfidence. I will also discuss two methods for reducing overconfidence and improving judgment. Both methods are related to sampling. The first method involves asking multiple questions (“What is your upper bound? Ok, now what is your lower bound?”), rather than just one question (“What is your range?”). When multiple questions are asked, people appear to sample knowledge multiple times rather than just once. The effect is not only wider intervals, but also intervals that are better centered on the truth. This method improves both calibration and forecast accuracy simultaneously (Soll & Klayman, 2004). Note that the first method entails extracting non-overlapping samples of evidence from the same person. The second method involves sampling across people. To the extent that people rely on different samples or are prone to different errors, averaging across people should improve calibration and accuracy for point estimates.

Understanding the mechanisms that underlie overconfidence is important to consumer behavior. One reason is that, in many cases, marketers would be better off if consumers were surprised less often. It may be possible for marketers to encourage consumers to sample more (either from memory or by asking others). The desired result of such interventions is reduced overconfidence and greater information search. In other situations, marketers might actually benefit from consumer overconfidence. To discourage information seeking, a leading brand might pose questions to a consumer in a way that encourages limited as opposed to expansive sampling.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Recent Research on Implicit Motivation

Andrew Mitchell, University of Toronto, Canada

SESSION OVERVIEW

Recent research in social cognition has examined implicit motivation or how goals operate in implicit or nonconscious ways. While some research in this area has examined whether goals can be activated nonconsciously, recent research has examined the complex ways in which both consciously and nonconsciously activated goals influence thought or behaviour through a variety of implicit mechanisms.

The three papers in this session address a number of questions with respect to implicit motivation: Which “mind” leads to more efficient goal pursuit—the conscious or the unconscious? Can the automatic evaluation of a goal predict goal-relevant behaviour better than explicit measures? And finally, in the context of a self-control dilemma, does a positive automatic evaluation of the goal make one more resistant to temptations?

In the first presentation, Gordon Moskowitz and Kai Sassenberg argue that conscious and unconscious goal pursuit may vary in effectiveness. In some cases, conscious goal pursuit may trigger interfering cognitive routines that deter successful goal pursuit which does not occur with unconscious goal pursuit. They demonstrate that conscious goal pursuit of the creativity goal may activate associations that inhibit creativity, while the unconscious pursuit of this goal will inhibit these associations.

Melissa Ferguson suggests that an automatic evaluation toward a goal should reflect a person’s tendency to approach that goal, which in turn should predict goal-consistent behavior. In a series of experiments, she finds that an automatic evaluation of goal constructs (i.e. abstract, desirable end-states) significantly predicts goal-relevant behavior. Interestingly, the automatic evaluations of the goal served as a better predictor of goal consistent behaviour than explicit attitudes, explicitly measured goal commitment, and automatic evaluations of concrete, goal-relevant objects.

In the last presentation, Darlene Walsh and Andrew Mitchell examine automatic goal activation and automatic evaluations on consumption under high and low cognitive load. And rather than focusing on more general temptations and goals, they focus on a specific self-control dilemma among only restrained eaters. They find that only individuals who automatically activate a goal while exposed to a real temptation activate an automatic self-control process. Interestingly, they find no relationship between behaviour and automatic evaluations of the goal. However, they do show that activation of a goal during exposure automatically decreased the positivity of automatic evaluations towards objects not useful in attaining that goal. In other words, although these restrained eaters had an automatic positive evaluation of the temptation before exposure to the temptation, during exposure their automatic evaluation became neutral. Participants who did not automatically activate a diet goal during exposure to the temptation did not have an automatic positive evaluation of the goal; however they did have an automatic positive evaluation of the temptation and there was a relationship between the positivity of the automatic evaluation and consumption.

Taken together, this session should be of interest across a broad range of research areas including self-regulation, automatic evaluation, implicit attitude, goal activation, and automatic goal pursuit. The three papers in this session examine implicit motivation from somewhat different approaches and results converge in some cases, and diverge in others. Given this, the purpose of this

session is actually two fold: first, we want to expose consumer behaviour researchers interested in implicit motivation to some recent theoretical approaches used in the area; and second, we want to highlight the differences in the papers in order to resolve what may appear to be inconsistencies, consequently leading to a more complete understanding of the implicit motivation and its effects.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“Unconscious Goals and Creativity: Activating Creativity Goals Breaks Established Associations and Leads to the Generation of Original Ideas”

Gordon B. Moskowitz, Lehigh University

Kai Sassenberg, University of Jena

It is known that the unconscious mind can be smart. People asked to consciously ruminate over important decisions can make worse choices than those simply asked to sleep on it and let the difficult options tumble through the unconscious (Dijksterhuis et al., 2006). Can the unconscious mind also be creative? Our research illustrates that creativity goals, and an associated “think different” mindset, operate in the preconscious to produce novel solutions and inhibit old/established associations—people exhibit unconscious creativity.

Being creative implies, by definition, the attempt to avoid the conventional routes of thinking and, therefore, the avoidance of the activation of typical associations. Research on idea generation has painted, however, a fairly bleak picture regarding human ability to consciously pursue the goal of being creative. Despite participants being explicitly instructed to generate new, original ideas, and not to copy any feature of some examples that are provided, participants copy the given examples (or at least certain features of them). If asked to generate a novel and creative name for a new pasta and being provided with sample pasta names (e.g., spaghetti, fettuccini, linguini), people produce something that sounds perfectly non-creative, a blending of the existing names (e.g., fellini). Individuals are not able to control this so-called inadvertent plagiarism intentionally. The conformity to given examples did not decrease when participants were explicitly instructed to create ideas that were very different from the examples, even though they were able to list the features they were asked to avoid (Smith, Ward, & Schumacher, 1993; Marsh, Ward, & Landau, 1999). The plagiarism occurs most likely because examples are highly accessible during idea generation, and this activated knowledge impacts idea generation without awareness (Marsh, Bink, & Hicks, 1999) and thus beyond intentional control.

While these findings point to the fact that thinking differently by conscious intent is difficult, the implicit volition model (IVM; Moskowitz, Li, & Kirk, 2004) suggests that unconscious goals may have greater success. Implicit motivation and preconscious goal pursuit involve processes of goal shielding that occur outside of awareness that are not subject to the pitfalls of conscious intent. As an example, considering the case of creativity goals, facilitation and inhibition processes help to implicitly allow for goal pursuit, by keeping goal-relevant concepts (such as being novel) accessible and keeping goal-competing concepts (such as being typical) inhibited. A mindset to “think different” is triggered by the creativity goal, and this mindset has preconscious effects on cognition that promote goal pursuit, with wide ranging consequences.

In our research it is established that the priming of creativity goals allows participants to overcome inadvertent plagiarism. Moreover, the rebound effect (i.e. higher accessibility of features of the examples after they have been suppressed successfully) is not found after creativity priming. Subsequent research further suggests that typical associations between stimuli and concepts are less likely to be activated after being primed with creativity. This is tested first in the important domain of stereotyping. We expected that the African American stereotype would be less likely to be automatically activated after seeing the face of an African American when people were primed with creativity beforehand (compared to a control condition). The “think different” mindset was shown to break the typical association, thus allowing people to free their thoughts from the shackles of the stereotype. People primed with faces of African Americans had stereotypes triggered in control conditions, but not when primed with creativity goals. In another experiment this effect of “inhibiting typical associations” was found to generalize to the underlying phenomenon: the automatic activation of any “typical” associations was reduced by priming creativity. Thus, associations between “bread and butter” and “doctor and nurse” that have been broadly replicated in research paradigms using lexical decision tasks were found to not exist when creativity goals were being unconsciously pursued.

Taken together, being primed with creativity allows for generating original ideas because one is able to think differently without the unwanted side effects of suppressing thoughts triggered by the intention to suppress them. The “thinking different” mindset induced by priming creativity operates by reducing the automatic activation of typical associations, all without the person’s conscious intent or awareness. Importantly, this preconscious goal pursuit allows for the control over automatic stereotype activation. Advantages to this method of stereotype control are that a) it is a proactive strategy of stereotype control, one that prevents stereotypes from ever coming to mind (as opposed to strategies that require one to suppress the use of stereotypes after the fact or attempt to prevent these activated concepts from biasing one’s judgment; e.g., Devine, 1989), and b) it is not restricted to preventing the activation of a single stereotype, but most likely undermines the automatic activation of any stereotype and other unwanted thoughts (unlike interventions using the training of new associations, goals and intentions, and developing new expectancies; e.g., Blair & Banaji, 1996; Kawakami et al., 2000; Monteith et al., 2002; Moskowitz et al., 1999, 2000, 2003). The unconscious mind is not only smart, it is an efficient goal pursuer, and thus can be highly creative.

“The Automatic Evaluation of Goals”

Melissa J. Ferguson, Cornell University

Research in social cognition has demonstrated that people immediately and unintentionally evaluate the people, words, pictures, faces, letters, and even odors they encounter (e.g., Bassili & Brown, 2005; Fazio & Olson, 2003; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Musch & Klauer, 2003; Zajonc, 1980). The automatic activation of an evaluation, or attitude, toward a stimulus can occur even when one is unaware of the respective stimulus itself (e.g., Greenwald, Klinger, & Liu, 1989). To date, this body of work has almost exclusively addressed the automatic activation of attitudes in response to stimuli that denote objects that one can literally move toward or away from in physical space—in other words, “graspable” stimuli such as concrete objects (e.g., apple, garbage) and group members (e.g., Blacks, elderly; Bargh, Chaiken, Govevender, & Pratto, 1992; Fazio, Jackson, Dunton, & Williams, 1995; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998; cf. Nosek, Banaji, & Greenwald, 2002).

In contrast, there has been virtually no research on the attitudes that are automatically activated in response to more abstract constructs such as the goals and values that govern behavior more generally within and across situations. This relative lack of attention might stem from assumptions about what attitude objects typically do and do not entail. Whereas one’s evaluations of physical objects (e.g., puppy), people (e.g., the elderly), and issues (e.g., abortion) are normally classified as attitudes, one’s evaluations of end-states (e.g., being thin) and modes of conduct (e.g., egalitarianism) tend to be classified as indices of goal importance or strength (and sometimes values; Allport, 1961; Feather, 1992, 1995, 1996; Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004; Locke & Latham, 1990; Maio, Olson, Allen, & Bernard, 2001; Rohan, 2000; Rokeach, 1968, 1973, 1980; M. J. Rosenberg, 1960; Schwartz, 1994, 1999; cf., Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). However, such assumptions notwithstanding, an attitude object can consist of anything one can imagine (Allport, 1961; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Fazio, 1986). From this perspective, attitude objects are clearly not limited to the targets of one’s behavior, such as other persons and items, but rather can include any “psychological object” (Thurstone, 1931) including the abstract goals, values, and social norms that might more generally guide our behavior across various targets.

What would an automatically activated attitude toward a goal construct reflect? If the evaluative information that is automatically activated on perception of a stimulus is reflective of the person’s approach versus avoidance tendencies toward that stimulus (e.g., Cacioppo, Priester, & Berntson, 1993; Fazio, 1986, 1989, 2001; Ferguson & Bargh, 2002, 2004; Katz, 1960; Lang, Bradley, & Cuthbert, 1990; Öhman, 1986; Pratkanis, Breckler, & Greenwald, 1989; Roskos-Ewoldsen & Fazio, 1992; Smith et al., 1956), then one’s automatic attitude toward a goal construct should reflect the person’s tendency to approach (i.e., pursue) that goal, which in turn should predict her or his goal-consistent behavior. For example, just as automatic attitudes toward stereotypically Black names can predict subtle and overt behavior during a subsequent encounter with a Black person (e.g., Fazio & Olson, 2003), automatic attitudes toward egalitarianism might be equally or differentially predictive of egalitarianism-related behavior. In this way, the evaluative information that is automatically activated in response to a goal construct might be understood as an implicit index of that goal’s likely influence on the person’s behavior.

To address this possibility, the current set of experiments tested whether automatic evaluations of goals predict and influence goal-pursuit. In the first experiment, the goal of egalitarianism was subjected to subliminal evaluative conditioning. The goal (i.e., the words fair, equal) received positive, neutral, or no conditioning. Participants then were asked to read a vignette and make a hiring decision according to ethnicity. Those who received positive conditioning were significantly less likely than both those who received neutral and those who received no conditioning to exhibit prejudicial decision-making. This finding suggests that the implicit positivity associated with an abstract goal causally increases the likelihood of behavior relevant to that goal.

In the second experiment, the predictive validity of automatic evaluations of goals was compared with that for explicit attitudes toward the goal and explicitly measured goal commitment. The goal under investigation was the goal to be thin. Participants were asked in the first phase of the experiment to complete the 3 types of measures mentioned above. Participants were then contacted after 1 week or longer, and asked to indicate the number of times over the past week they had resisted eating tempting foods (a strategy identified by pilot testing as important for the goal to be thin). Only participants’ automatic evaluation of the goal was a significant predictor of the reported behaviors.

In a third experiment, the predictive validity of participants' automatic evaluation of the goal to be thin versus their automatic evaluation of a tempting food was examined. Participants' were told that they would be sampling either a tempting or non-tempting snack. They then completed an implicit attitude measure (toward the goal as well as the tempting food). They then sampled the snack, and the amount they ate was measured. Participants' automatic evaluation of the goal significantly predicted how much of the tempting snack they ate (but not the non-tempting snack), while their automatic evaluation of the tempting food did not.

Together, this set of findings extends the work showing that automatic evaluative processes play an important role in goal pursuit and self-regulation (e.g., Ferguson & Bargh, 2004). In particular, they suggest that automatic evaluations of abstract, desirable end-states possess predictive validity for goal relevant behavior, more so possibly than explicit attitudes, explicitly measured goal commitment, and automatic evaluations of concrete, goal-relevant objects.

“Automatic Evaluations and Self-Control”

Darlene Walsh, University of Toronto

Andrew Mitchell, University of Toronto

Research on implicit motivation has shown that the activation of a goal automatically increases the positivity of automatic evaluations towards objects useful in attaining that goal (Ferguson & Bargh, 2004). In addition, Custers and Aarts (2005) find that creating automatic positive evaluations of a goal enhances the motivation to achieve the goal i.e. a positive automatic evaluation towards a goal “pushes” you to succeed. However, in the context of a self-control dilemma, it is unclear whether a strong positive automatic evaluation of a long-term goal guarantees successful self-control. Thus, the role that implicit motivation might play in terms of the self-control process is the central focus of the research described below.

A secondary focus of this research is to examine the mechanism underlying self-control. Traditionally, the process underlying self-control process has been thought of as a controlled process (e.g. Baumeister, Heatherton and Tice, 1994; Muraven and Baumeister, 2000; Trope & Fishbach, 2000). Recent research, however, finds that pursuing goals does not always involve deliberate, conscious intention (see the auto-motive model by Bargh, 1990). Applying this to self-control, the process that underlies successful self-control need not always be controlled. In support of this concept, Fishbach, Friedman and Kruglanski (2003) have shown that exposure to short-term temptations may automatically activate one's long-term goals and consequently prevent these temptations from influencing one's behaviour. However, in a previous experiment, we found that although restrained eaters with automatic goal activation prior to exposure to a temptation were able to resist a temptation under low cognitive load, they nevertheless succumb to temptation when placed under high cognitive load (Walsh and Mitchell, 2006). While these results are intriguing, we do not know whether they hold when goal activation is measured while exposed to an actual temptation. Said differently, will individuals who automatically activate the goal during exposure to a real temptation also succumb to temptation when placed under high cognitive load.

In order to tackle the research issues outlined above, we designed two experiments that incorporate both theoretical approaches (i.e. implicit motivation and goal activation) to better understand the self-control process. Rather than focusing on more general temptations and goals, we focus on a specific self-control dilemma among restrained eaters the ability to resist fattening foods. In the first study, we measure goal-temptation associations

and automatic evaluations of both goals and temptations before exposure to a real temptation, and then again while participants are exposed to a real temptation—mini-chocolate chip cookies. Participants were then left alone in the room with the cookies for approximately 2 minutes under either low or high cognitive load. The main dependent measure was the amount of cookies each participant consumed under the two cognitive load conditions.

Interestingly, we found differences in terms of goal activation before and during exposure. In fact, we classified restrained eaters on 2 dimensions: whether they activate the goal before exposure (or not), and the whether they activate the goal during exposure (or not). Under low cognitive load, restrained eaters with goal activation (regardless of whether the goal activation occurred before or during exposure), are better equipped to deal with temptations as shown through their consumption patterns, relative to the individuals without activation, suggesting that goal activation facilitates self-control. Under high cognitive load, restrained eaters who automatically activate the goal during exposure do not succumb to temptation when placed under high cognitive load, suggesting that temptations are capable activating an automatic self-control process. However, individuals who do not show goal activation before or during exposure consume the same regardless of load. And individuals who automatically activate the goal before, but not during exposure, consume much more under high cognitive load. These individuals seem to inhibit the diet goal when faced with a temptation.

In terms of automatic evaluations, all restrained eaters have strong positive automatic evaluations of cookies before exposure to the real temptation. The interesting theoretical question is whether these evaluations change when measured during exposure to the temptation. Interestingly, the individuals who automatically activate the diet goal while exposed to a temptation no longer have a positive automatic evaluation towards the temptation during exposure—the evaluations become neutral. We also found a positive relationship between the automatic evaluation of cookies and consumption among those who do not automatically activate the diet goal. In terms of automatic evaluations towards dieting, only those who show goal activation before exposure automatically evaluate diet as positive before exposure. Similarly, only those who activate the goal during exposure to the temptation have an automatic positive evaluation of the goal during exposure. Interestingly, there was no significant correlation between consumption and automatic evaluations of diet.

In a second study, we again measure goal-temptation associations and automatic evaluations of goals and temptations before and during exposure to a real temptation (e.g. tray of mini-chocolate chip cookies). This time we measured moment-to-moment tracking of their approach and avoidance reactions to a temptation i.e. we elicited spontaneous reactions to the cookies via a joystick that recorded evaluation every second. We found that over time, individuals who activate the goal during exposure neither avoid nor approach the temptation. Restrained eaters who inhibited the diet goal when faced with a temptation, however, initially approach the temptation, but over time, they begin to strongly avoid the temptation. Finally, those who never activate the diet goal mainly approach the temptation; over time, they begin to lose the approach, but never to the point where they avoid the temptation.

The present research makes important contributions to the literature. We find that individuals who automatically activate a long-term goal while exposed to a real temptation activate an automatic self-control process. We also show that activation of a goal automatically decreases the positivity of automatic evaluations towards objects not useful in attaining that goal. We interpret

this to suggest that the self-control process is one that modifies the evaluation of the temptation. Further, individuals who automatically activate the diet goal before exposure, but not during exposure, succumb to temptation when placed under high cognitive load, suggesting that exposure to real cookies inhibit the diet goal among these individuals. Cognitive resources are required in order for these individual to convince themselves that the temptation is not appealing, which will then lead to successful self-control.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

It's All in How You Look at it—The Impact of Having an Incremental or Entity Theory on Consumer Behavior

Subbu Sivaramakrishnan, University of Manitoba, Canada

SESSION OVERVIEW

It is well known that people have lay or implicit theories—informal theories about different phenomena, often not based on any scientific evidence. One such category of implicit theories is the theory that people have about how likely something is to change. Research in social and developmental psychology by Dweck and her associates (see Dweck 1999 for a review) has posited that everyone holds a theory, with varying magnitude, on the extent to which their traits are likely to change, which they term “self-theories”. For example, those with an *entity theory* of personality believe that personality consists of fixed, static traits and people are inherently made in a certain way that cannot be changed. On the other hand, those with an *incremental theory* of personality believe that personality consists of dynamic personal qualities that can be changed and developed. A number of studies by Dweck and her associates have shown that entity theorists hold attitudes that are relatively rigid and are more likely to make stereotypical judgments from limited information. In contrast, incremental theorists, who believe that people’s behavior is not static, hold attitudes that are relatively malleable and are much less prone to making stereotypical final judgments and instead base their evaluations on a variety of available information (Erdley and Dweck 1993). Dweck posits that entity or incremental theories can be held for any trait pertaining to the self—personality, intelligence, social skills, etc.

It can be easily seen how people could have an incremental or entity theory about variables that are of interest to marketers and have significant implications for consumer behavior. For example, one may have an incremental or entity theory about how likely a salesperson’s personality is to change, to what extent a particular brand’s traits can be extended to other products, how likely a particular product category is to change what it claims to (e.g., weight loss programs, hair growth formulas, memory-enhancing supplements), and so on. These are just some examples of consumer behavior research in a domain that the larger marketing academic community has had limited exposure to. While implicit theories can play a major role in consumer behavior, research pertaining to the concept is only beginning in our area.

The objective of this proposed special session is three-fold. First, it will provide a forum for consumer behavior researchers to be exposed to the richness of the research on implicit theories, specifically self-theories—a domain that is yet to be tapped in the consumer behavior literature. This will be accomplished to a large extent by the first presenter, complemented by the next two presenters. Second, it intends to highlight the relevance and implications of self-theories in consumer behavior. This will be done through two presentations that will present research examining the role of self-theories in two quite different consumption contexts—the first on perception of salespeople and the second on acceptance of brand extensions. Third, the most valuable objective of this session is to kindle interest and encourage consumer behavior research involving self-theories. With the exception of Flaherty and Pappas (2000), to our knowledge, there is no current published research in marketing that has addressed self-theories. Therefore, the content of this session will be novel and informative to the conference audience. All three presentations have been chosen such that they are based on research at the completion or near-completion stage (working

manuscripts will be made available). The first presentation is based on thirty years of published and unpublished research; the second and the third presentations are each based on three empirical studies. Concurrent with the third objective, the discussion and Q&A session is expected to initiate substantive interaction and generate interest in an area rich in consumer research potential.

The first talk will be by Carol Dweck (Stanford University), who has researched implicit theories for over thirty years. She has numerous papers on the role of self-theories in journals such as *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Psychological Inquiry*, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *Developmental Psychology*, and *Child Development*, to name a few, besides several books on the topic. In Dweck’s talk, she will review existing research on implicit theories, present new work (not yet published), and describe the implications of her work for consumer behavior. Dweck will explain how self-theories guide people’s attitude and behavior, both in marketing and non-marketing contexts. Using data from numerous fascinating studies, she will demonstrate that when people believe that an ability is dynamic and can be developed, they are motivated to do so, but when people are led to believe that ability is static and cannot be changed, they adopt a performance orientation trying to prove they already have the ability. In particular, Dweck’s talk will include the role that having an entity or incremental theory plays in consumer behavior, such as how the theory (incremental or entity) that consumers have determines the products and brands they buy, how they react to celebrity endorsements, and how they form impressions of salespeople in retail encounters.

The second presentation by Subramanian Sivaramakrishnan (University of Manitoba), Harish Sujan (Tulane University), and Mita Sujan (Tulane University) will be on the moderating role of implicit theories in cognitively busy consumers’ ability to revise their initial judgments of salespeople. They will present the results of experiments in which they examine the role of self-theories on consumers’ ability to revise their negative initial judgment of a salesperson while interacting with the salesperson. In study 1, they establish that judgment revision is a resource-consuming task that can be impaired by cognitive busyness caused by thinking of questions. In study 2, they show that whether the consumer has an incremental or entity theory of personality moderates the effect of cognitive busyness on judgment revision. In study 3, they show that information signals enable judgment revision even among those cognitively busy consumers whose initial judgments may be relatively rigid. Their research argues that when the initial impression of the salesperson is malleable (incremental theory), overcoming cognitive busyness caused by active listening is possible. Even entity theorists can overcome cognitive busyness and make a judgment revision, provided they are given pointers of the information to follow.

The final presentation by Eric Yorkston (Texas Christian University), Joseph Nunes (University of Southern California), and Shashi Matta (Ohio State University) will demonstrate how the theories people have about their own personality impact their assessment of brands’ personality, particularly in the case of brand extensions. They will present the results of three experiments in which they examine the role that the theory one has about one’s own

personality traits influences their theory on the malleability of product traits. In study 1, they show that incremental theorists are more accepting of brand extensions or repositioning. In study 2, they show that acceptability of a brand extension is based on the implicit theory that the consumer has and not on the number of brand extensions generated. In study 3, they examine boundary conditions for how far incremental theorists are willing to stretch a brand's traits before they experience a violation of their implicit theory. Their research presents an alternative view to product adoption by suggesting that early versus late product adoption may not be as much a function of risk tolerance as it may be of the implicit theory (incremental or entity) that consumers carry about their personality. Specifically, those with an incremental theory are more willing to adopt new products due to the malleable view they have of product traits.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“Implicit Theories: Implications for Consumer Behavior”

Carol S. Dweck, Stanford University

My research on implicit theories has demonstrated the power of simple beliefs to affect people's judgments, motivation, and behavior. In this talk, I will review past work on implicit theories, I will present new work (not yet published), and I will describe implications for consumer behavior. The implicit theories I have focused on relate to whether individuals believe that human qualities are fixed or malleable. An “entity” theory posits that human traits, such as intelligence or personality, are immutable entities: Each person has a certain amount of intelligence or a certain personality and cannot do much to change it. In contrast, an “incremental” theory rests on the idea that human traits can be developed: Everyone can take measures to increase their intellectual or social abilities.

What is the impact of these implicit theories? The research shows that they affect two broad classes of phenomena. First, implicit theories affect the personal goals people pursue and, second, they affect the judgments and decisions people make about others. I discuss each in turn.

Self-Theories

It has been consistently shown that when people hold an entity theory, their primary goals revolve around *proving themselves*. In other words, if you only have a fixed amount of competence, then you will be invested in documenting its adequacy. Entity theorists may reject valuable learning opportunities—even at great risk to their future success—if there is a danger of making errors or revealing a deficiency. They may also give up readily in the face of setbacks, worrying that the setback reflects on their ability. In contrast, when people hold an incremental theory, their primary goals revolve around *improving themselves*. For them it is not about presenting and glorifying, but bettering the self. As a result, they welcome challenges and see errors and setbacks as a natural part of learning.

In several new neurophysiological studies, we monitored people's brain waves (ERP: event-related potentials) as they worked on a task. We found that entity theorists really harnessed their attention (and showed strong reactions) to information that told them whether their answers had been right or wrong. Once they knew that, they had little interest in further information. In contrast, incremental theorists paid most attention to information that taught them something new.

Perhaps most important, we have shown that implicit theories can be primed or changed—and when they are, motivation and

behavior are changed as well. That is, when people are led to believe that an ability can be developed, they become motivated to do so, but when they are led to believe that the ability is carved in stone, they simply want to show they already have it.

Implications of Self-Theories for Consumer Behavior

This work on self-theories has a number of implications for marketing and consumer behavior. First, it suggests that entity theorists are more likely to seek status, popularity, and the appearance of competence through their product purchases—brand names and the status of other product users will matter more to them. In contrast, incremental theorists will seek growth and will favor products that foster self-development. In line with this, the work also suggests that if a product's appeal will be mostly for entity theorists or for incremental theorists, then messages may be best communicated by inducing an entity or incremental theory mindset at the start of the message. If a product requires a period of learning (as did, for example, the Nordic Track exercise machine), entity theorists may too quickly conclude they are incompetent at it and may reject the product. In short, individuals with different implicit theories are looking for different things, and messages or products that match their mindset will be processed and reacted to preferentially.

Theories About Other People

When people believe that human qualities are fixed, they seek to judge those qualities in others—in other individuals and in other groups. Moreover, they believe that these fixed traits are readily apparent and easy to judge. As a result, entity theorists form rapid judgments—and stereotypes—that are hard to overturn. In contrast, incremental theorists, not believing in fixed traits, form their impressions over time, taking account of the situation and readily updating first impressions in light of new information. Moreover, they are more impressed by people who gain competence over time than those who start off with competence but don't use it.

New research, for example, shows that entity theorists are far more likely to fall prey to the “fundamental attribution error.” When forming an impression of a new person, they are much less likely to take account of the situation the target person is in and much more likely to think the behavior reflects underlying traits. In contrast, even when under cognitive load, incremental theorists factor the situation into their judgment of the person.

Implications of Theories About Other People for Consumer Behavior

Because entity theorists make rapid and rigid judgments, their first impression of a product or a marketer are paramount. A negative impression will be hard to overcome. However, this also means that once a positive impression has been made, entity theorists may be more loyal to the product and to the marketer. This also suggests that attaching a star, an authority, or a high status individual to a product will affect entity theorists' judgments more. They will invest these individuals with more credibility than will incremental theorists, and will also desire the products they think these individuals use. More compelling to incremental theorists would be individuals who have stretched, struggled, and overcome obstacles, for it is these people that they hold in higher esteem, and they are likely to attach more credibility to their testimonials.

In summary, implicit theories tell us a great deal about people's motivation and decision processes, and hold promise of revealing much about consumer behavior.

“Revising Negative Initial Judgments of Salespeople: The Role of Implicit Theories in Overcoming the Perils of Active Listening”

*Subramanian Sivaramakrishnan, University of Manitoba
Harish Sujan, Tulane University
Mita Sujan, Tulane University*

Consumers often cope with persuasion attempts by careful message and source scrutiny, active counterargumentation, or source derogation. Such coping strategies require the consumer to be an “active recipient” of the persuasive information being presented while attempting to evaluate the persuasion agent. For example, during a retail encounter, a consumer may ask the salesperson questions about the product while simultaneously trying to assess whether the salesperson is trustworthy or is merely trying to make a quick sale. Research on making judgments and judgment revision suggests that when the consumer is an active recipient of the information, versus a passive recipient, the information is more likely to be utilized in making judgments due to greater comprehension and/or elaboration (Greenwald and Leavitt 1984; Petty and Cacioppo 1986). However, there is also research that points to the contrary. Krugman (1965) suggested that actively processing television commercials results in counterargumentation and hence, less persuasion. Gilbert, Pelham, and Krull (1988), in the context of person judgments, demonstrate that counterargumentation is not necessary—even simple active listening (which they argue causes cognitive busyness) results in perceivers lacking the cognitive resources to use the information. More recently, research by Campbell and Kirmani (2000) and Johar and Simmons (2000) also concur with the finding that when cognitive capacity is constrained, it prevents integration of the information in the judgment process, although the information may be encoded.

In this research, we identify contingencies under which cognitive busyness produced by a questioning mindset is indeed debilitating for making accurate judgments on the source of the persuasive message. After establishing that a questioning mindset causes cognitive busyness, impairing the ability to revise initial judgments, we study two further issues: 1) ascertain for which individuals a questioning mindset is indeed debilitating. Specifically, we isolate lay theories of people’s personality change (Dweck 1996) under which cognitive busyness indeed impairs (does not impair) judgment, and 2) examine whether information signals (Lorch Jr. and Lorch 1985) enable judgment revision based on information for those who hold an entity theory of personality change that prevents them from revising.

In the context of a customer-salesperson interaction, we examine consumers’ revision of the initial judgment of a salesperson whose behavior is inconsistent with the initial judgment. In study 1, we establish that a questioning mindset results in cognitive busyness, thereby rendering consumers unable to integrate information pertaining to a negatively stereotyped salesperson’s positive behavior to revise their initial impression of him/her. In study 2, we show that those consumers with an *incremental* theory of personality (a belief that personality is not static and is changeable) are able to overcome the debilitating effects of cognitive busyness and integrate information on the salesperson’s behavior for judgment revision whereas those with an *entity* theory (a belief that personality is fixed and difficult to change) are unable to. In this study, we argue that when the initial impression of the salesperson is malleable (incremental theory), judgment revision requires fewer cognitive resources allowing incremental theorists to overcome cognitive busyness to revise their judgment. In study 3, based on research by Lorch Jr. and Lorch (1985) and Plaks et al. (2001), we show that when consumers are provided information signals in the form of

pointers for questions to ask the salesperson, it encourages processing the sales pitch and makes the stereotype-inconsistent information explicit, enabling judgment revision even among cognitively busy entity theorists.

In the context of implicit theories, this paper makes two important contributions. First, it has been argued that actively processing persuasive information can result in the lack of integration of the information into judgment (Gilbert, Pelham, and Krull 1988; Johar and Simmons 2000; Krugman 1965). We demonstrate that this depends on the malleability of the initial judgment; when the initial impression is malleable due to an incremental theory of personality, integration is possible. Second, we extend research by Plaks et al. (2001) by demonstrating that when consumers are presented with information signals in the form of pointers for asking questions, even cognitively loaded consumers with an entity theory of personality can integrate information and revise their initial judgments.

“The Role of Implicit Theories in Brand Extendibility”

*Eric Yorkston, Texas Christian University
Joseph Nunes, University of Southern California
Shashi Matta, Ohio State University*

For decades, consumer behavior research has devoted attention to the set of human characteristics people associate with brands, such that the construct of *brand personality* has begun taking on a life of its own. As researchers moved away from the historic conceptualization of the self possessing a stable set of personality traits, support for brand personality theories continued to amass. Recent work now often takes into account the notion of malleable or multiple self concepts. In her work on the self-expressive role of brands, Aaker (1999) argues that different situations lead consumers to evoke different self-schemas that vary in their associated personality traits. While demonstrating how usage situations, brand personality and self-concept interact, Aaker (1999) accepts the brand’s traits as fixed while considering the consumer’s malleable. There is evidence to suggest, however, that consumers make inferences as to the malleability of the brand, suggesting that the traits associated with a particular brand might be more flexible than previously thought.

Research in social psychology supports the notion that people possess lay theories about the malleability of their own personality traits and that these “implicit theories” affect the inferences made when judging the traits of others (Dweck, Chiu, and Hong 1995). Therefore, an individual’s predisposition to view his or her own personality as fixed or malleable as well as external prompting will affect how fixed or malleable the personality of another person, or even a brand extension, is subsequently judged. Accordingly, the ability for a brand to assume the appropriate traits for a particular situation should depend on the consumer’s implicit theory of the self and whether it is fixed or malleable.

In study 1, we find evidence suggesting that one’s implicit theory of the self applies to brand personality such that, the more malleable one sees an individual’s traits, the more likely they are to see a brand as being malleable, reflected in the endorsement of a greater number of brand extensions. The results provide evidence that a brand’s traits can be affected by implicit theories with regards to the fixedness or malleability of one’s traits.

Study 2 demonstrates that the effects of implicit theories affect beliefs about the underlying nature of brands (personality traits) and do not trigger a general belief that things can “change”. In other words, we sought to exhibit how implicit theories operate by affecting beliefs in a brand’s traits just as they affect beliefs in individual’s traits, rather than by affecting beliefs in a brand’s

ability to alter its physicality. In doing so, we reveal how implicit theories, studied exclusively to date in the domain of human personalities, affect how individuals perceive brand personalities. As such, we add to the growing literature on brand personality and offer a new perspective from which to examine the fit of a brand extension.

In study 3, we manipulate rather than measure people's implicit theories of the self. We find that by activating generalized trait beliefs we can affect how malleable consumers believe brand can be. This has important implications for marketing managers, as persuasive communication can either lead consumers to believe that their brand is more malleable or more fixed with respect to traits.

In study 4, we explore what happens when people's implicit theories are violated. Plaks, Grant, and Dweck (2005) have found that implicit theory violation creates a "warm state," wherein individuals are motivated to protect their activated theory in the face of disconfirming evidence. Violations should therefore engender negative attitudes towards the extension that goes too far, as attempts to maintain cognitive consistency between a parent brand and its extension are thwarted. Although incremental theorists are more willing to stretch a brand's traits than entity theorists, we've seen evidence in the first three studies that incremental theorists will not stretch traits indefinitely and too far of a stretch should violate their implicit theory.

This research presents an alternative view to product adoption by suggesting that early versus late product adoption may not be as much a function of risk tolerance as it may be of the implicit theory (incremental or entity) that consumers carry about their personality traits. Specifically, those with an incremental theory are more willing to adopt new products due to the malleable view they have of product traits, in comparison to those with an entity theory.

REFERENCES

References will be made available upon request.

Minority Consumers' Experiences of Marketplace Discrimination in Services: A Conceptual Model of Antecedents and Customer Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

Marketplace discrimination is common in commercial transactions, and is mainly experienced by members of ethnic minorities. However, discrimination can be attributed also to age, gender, physical ability, and sexual orientation. Drawing on Social Identification Theory, marketplace discrimination is conceptualized as an outcome of service employees distinguishing between customers in terms of in-group and out-group members, whereby the latter are perceived more negatively. The aim of this research is to develop a conceptual model that links perceived marketplace discrimination to potential determinants as well as customer outcomes. Based on a review of the literature and depth interviews, specific research propositions are developed that offer insight into the types of discrimination members of different minority groups experience and of their coping strategies.

INTRODUCTION

The probability of discrimination in any given service encounter is roughly one to five percent (Siegelman 1998). However, the important question of how consumers perceive and cope with the internal strains produced by discrimination remains an under-investigated topic in service marketing. This study has several goals. First, drawing on Social Identification Theory, we attempt to explain why marketplace discrimination occurs in service-delivery contexts. Second, potential antecedents of discrimination are discussed. Third, we examine which disadvantaged groups experience marketplace discrimination and pay particular attention to consumers with limited physical ability and gay and lesbian consumers. Fourth, based on the review of the literature and the qualitative survey a conceptual model (see Figure 1) is proposed that integrates determinants and consequences of marketplace discrimination, and key propositions are suggested.

BACKGROUND

By drawing on Social Identification Theory (Tajfel and Turner 1986) it is possible to explain *why* marketplace discrimination happens. Identification, which can have a powerful influence on behavior, is viewed as the perceived belongingness to a group of which the person is a member, and with which a person identifies. Social identity consists of salient group classifications, usually based on such observable traits as gender, race or demographic categories (Bhattacharya et al. 1995), but can also include factors such as religion, physical ability, and sexual orientation. Social Identity Theory generally suggests that individuals are alert to out-group members and will evaluate in-group members (people perceived as members of the same category as self) with an in-group bias and more positively than out-group members of a different category (Deshpandé et al. 1986). When processing group-related information, people tend to classify others on the basis of their similarities or dissimilarities with the evaluator (i.e., service employee) and thus create an in-group and an out-group when serving customers. Similarly to research on customer outcomes, *antecedents* of marketplace discrimination have received limited attention. It is likely that two basic types of determinants can cause discrimination, employee- and firm related determinants. Two types of variables appear relevant in regards to employee-induced customer discrimination, employee attitudes/tolerance and demographics.

Firm-related determinants include; an employee's customer orientation and job satisfaction as well as the existence of service scripts. We suggest the following key antecedents-related propositions.

- P1. The more positive attitudes a service employee has toward minority consumers and the more tolerant he/she is, the less likely will he/she engage in discriminatory behavior.
- P2. Service employees' level education is negatively related to customers' perceived discrimination.
- P3. Service employees' age is positively related to customers' perceived discrimination.
- P4. Service employees' gender is related to customers' perceived discrimination, such that female employees are less likely to engage in discriminatory behavior.
- P5. Service employees' customer orientation is negatively related to customers' perceived discrimination.
- P6. Service employees' job satisfaction is negatively related to customers' perceived discrimination.
- P7. The restrictiveness of service scripts will have a negative impact on customers' perceived discrimination.

METHOD

Data for the present study were collected through forty depth interviews with consumers from disadvantaged groups (ethnic/immigrants, women, senior consumers, consumers with disabilities, and gay and lesbian consumers). The interviews were conducted from the perspectives of the participants, i.e., had a phenomenological focus (Thompson et al. 1989). During the interview informants were encouraged to talk about as many negative service experiences, that they had experienced first-hand, as they wished. The researchers asked informants to talk about what they thought was intentional and unintentional discrimination. A topic list and interview guideline was created which outlined a broad agenda to be followed during the interview.

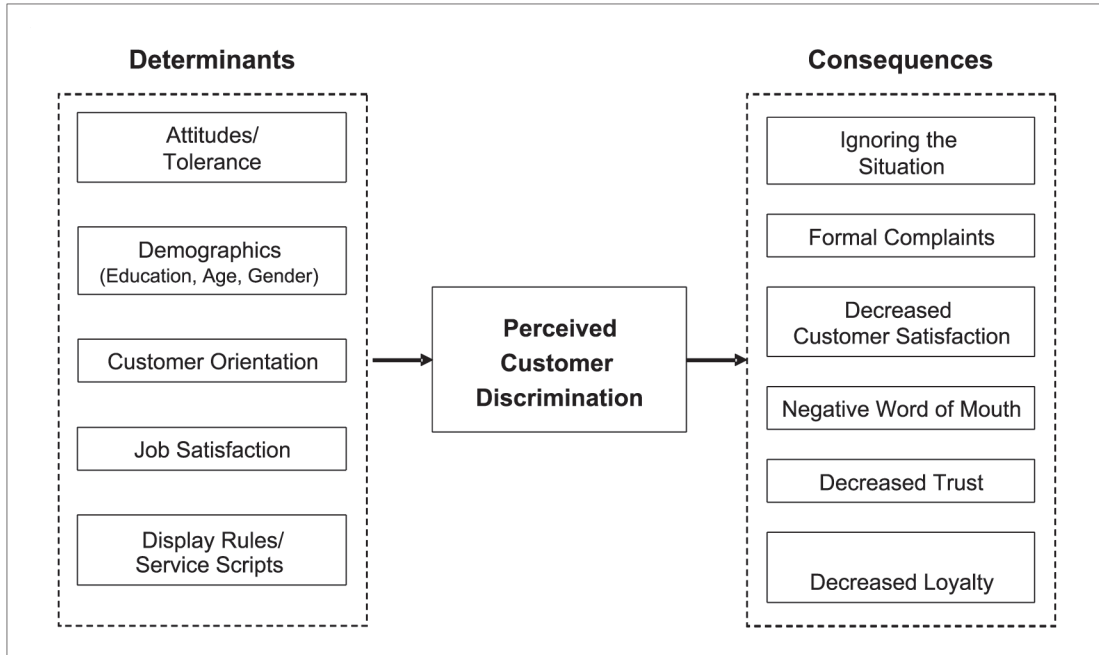
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

All informants stated that they experienced discrimination at least occasionally. During the interviews informants were also instructed to talk only about coping strategies in relation to perceived discrimination. The individuals interviewed all employed a variety of coping mechanisms. The most common responses were; 1) Ignoring the situation, 2) Formally complain, 3) Decreased satisfaction, 4) Engage in negative word-of-mouth, 5) Decreased trust, and 6) Decreased loyalty.

Through this research, we demonstrate that several disadvantaged groups experience marketplace discrimination in service establishments. Using Social Identification Theory, we argue that service employees perpetrate marketplace discrimination against consumers from minority groups because they view them as dissimilar, and implicitly inferior, to themselves. By exploring potential determinants and identifying consequences of marketplace discrimination through depth interviews we can propose a conceptual model which is shown in Figure 1.

Our conceptual model and the propositions derived from it support the notion that perceived discrimination is a relevant phenomenon. Disadvantaged or minority customers, who experi-

FIGURE 1
Conceptual Model



ence marketplace discrimination, will become frustrated and dissatisfied, and take their business to other service firms. An implication of our findings is that service firms need to find means which allow them to identify marketplace discrimination in their organization and to rectify the problem. Service firms could use mystery shopping to find out how well their employees comply with company procedures, ethics policies, and whether they display discriminatory behavior toward minority consumers.

Future research could investigate if our findings can be confirmed across different service types. When we interviewed informants we did not ask them to talk about their experiences in a specific service context. Using a service taxonomy, marketplace discrimination could be examined in low, medium, and high interaction services. This would allow researchers to detect context-specific discrimination. Finally, this study examined only one side of the service employee-customer dyad. All of the findings are based on the self-reported perceptions of the customers. Ideally, service employees would have been questioned to ascertain that their (discriminatory) behavior was deliberate.

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Brand in the Hand or Sand in the Hand? A Contextualized Account of Adolescents' Mobile Phone Consumption

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ABSTRACT

This paper contributes to the movement away from the "solitary subject", offering a contextualized account of adolescent experiences of mobile phones. It reports on discussions with sixteen small groups, informed by phenomenological principles. The antipathy towards commercial applications suggest that the technology brings marketers no closer to this elusive target. This is attributed to the roles it plays in the social lives of adolescents: to include and exclude, to organise, experience, re-live, and redefine everyday experiences. Young people's relationships with practitioners were more akin to the elusive "sand in the hand" than the hoped for "brand in the hand".

INTRODUCTION

The mobile phone has had a profound effect on social behaviour over the last decade (Pedrozo and Wilska 2004), quickly becoming essential to contemporary living. Mobile phone penetration was recently estimated at 89% of all households in the UK (Office of Communications 2005), with almost universal use by adolescents beyond the most deprived of communities (Harper and Hamil 2005). Indeed, by March 2006, there were on average 103 mobile phones in use for every 100 people in Western Europe (Ahonen 2006). Given such high levels of penetration, and the convergence of audio, video, and data services within a single device, Steinbock (2005) echoes the belief of Anssi Vanjoki, executive vice president of Nokia, that mobility will be the "glue" binding different media together. However, consumer acceptance will play at least as significant a role as technological capabilities in shaping the future of mobile communications, and this highlights the need for consumer research in this field. Indeed, as Agnelli *et al* (2004:1) observe,

"The adoption of mobile communication devices has been as fast as subtle, as radical as invisible: in the past ten years, a number of battery powered devices, unconceivable only a few years before, have come to constitute such an intrinsic part of everybody's life (at least in first world countries) that it has become difficult to imagine a world without them. The consequences of this worldwide invasion have still to be properly mapped and understood."

Young people's consumption of mobile phones merits particularly close attention. Adolescents are highly literate consumers of media and advertising in general (Ritson and Elliott 1999), and have been dubbed the 'electronic generation' in light of their considerable exposure to, and consumption of, new forms of media (Buckingham 2002). For these reasons, the 'youth market' has become extremely attractive to mobile phone marketers, and mobile phones are increasingly seen as an exciting medium for targeting and interacting with young people (Rohm and Sultan 2005).

Research on mobile phone consumption is still in its infancy, however, with many studies treating consumers as "solitary subjects" (Ritson and Elliott 1999:260), isolated from their social and cultural contexts. This is particularly problematic when the focus is on young people, whose primary use for mobile phones appears to be connecting with and mobilizing peer networks (Berelowitz

2005). In this paper, we offer a critical review of existing research in this area, particularly amongst young people, and present findings from an interpretive study of British adolescents' consumption of mobile phones in the context of their everyday lives.

RESEARCH ON MOBILE PHONE CONSUMPTION

Research to date has largely been influenced by individualistic theories concerning personal demography, lifestyles and motivations for media use. Researchers have sought to link mobile consumption with age (Mante-Meyer and Haddon 2001), gender (Igarashi *et al*. 2005), social background and technological literacy (Skog 2002), and lifestyle traits (Leung 1998). Studies of user motivations are typically grounded in uses and gratifications theory, assuming a positive mediated experience, and an active, goal directed orientation. Leung and Wei (2000), for example, identified seven gratifications: 'fashion/status,' 'affection/sociability,' 'relaxation,' 'mobility,' 'immediate access,' 'instrumentality,' and 'reassurance'.

Recent studies into mobile consumption point to more negative consumer experiences, in terms of personal concerns and relationships with external agencies. Problematic issues identified include the potential for increased surveillance and the difficulties of drawing boundaries between spaces for work, leisure and consumption, or between the private and public domains (Dholakia and Zwick 2003; Agnelli *et al*. 2004). Feelings of anxiety and ambiguity (Moisio 2003) have also been reported, as has irritation at commercial communications (Monk *et al*. 2004).

Adopting a personal-cognitive perspective, many previous studies of mobile phone consumption fail to acknowledge the wider socio-cultural context of consumption practices (Holt 1995). Indeed, social theorists such as Geertz (1983) have argued that conceptualizing practices as contextualized, local understandings offers a richer understanding of phenomena. Given the nature of mobile phone use, it is surprising how few studies have recognized mobile consumption as contextually influenced, socially constructed and at times contradictory in nature. One exception to this was Moisio (2003), who discussed the irritations, anxieties and ambiguities surrounding mobile consumption.

A contextualized understanding of mobile consumption is increasingly important as mobile devices attract increasing interest from commercial advertisers: mobile interactivity, personalisation and timeliness provide powerful incentives for marketers seeking new forms of engagement with consumers (Rohm and Sultan 2005; Spurgeon 2005). As Morris (2000:49) has observed,

"The old advertising mantra of creating relevant, distinctive and involving messages... was only ever applied to the *content* of the advertising. In the new media world it will have as much to do with the *context* of the message and how the connection is made with the target".

Practitioners and academics seeking to improve advertising media effectiveness have long studied media context (Dahlén 2005). Unfortunately, most studies continue to focus on "the semantic context that surrounds the message rather than the social context in which the reader or viewer (of the advertising message) is located" (Ritson and Elliott: 1999: 260), privileging the cognitive

interpretation arising from a particular context rather than the socio-cultural interplay of medium and environment.

Furthermore, many studies of mobile phone use aim to improve commercial communication effectiveness rather than to deepen our understanding of consumption phenomena. Research is needed that recognises consumers as “interpretive agents” in this context (Arnould and Thompson 2005), allowing them to voice potentially critical accounts of mobile consumption experiences, not least as a counterpoint to the existing literature which is often practitioner-orientated and largely celebratory.

TOWARD AN EXPERIENCE-BASED UNDERSTANDING OF ADOLESCENTS’ MOBILE PHONE CONSUMPTION

In this paper, we seek to explore adolescents’ mobile phone consumption experiences, both positive and negative, as they are woven into rather than separated from their social and cultural context. The paper draws on a broader study which aimed to explore young people’s relationships with contemporary forms of media in the context of their everyday lifestyles. Mobile phone consumption was therefore never isolated from other aspects of their lives, including other forms of mediated activity.

Thompson *et al* (1989) argued that an approach based on the principles of existential-phenomenology allows for analysis of context-dependent, ‘lived-in’ experiences; researchers ask participants to articulate their own “personalised understandings of consumption phenomena” (Thompson and Haytko 1997: 19). This implies that any meanings derived from an experience are always situated in their current experiential context. For this study, experiences of mobile consumption were recounted in the context of adolescents’ everyday lives beyond school hours, in order to provide thematic descriptions of the consumption phenomena in question (Thompson *et al* 1989: 137). Our focus on adolescents reflects not only their status as media- and marketing- literate (Buckingham 2002) and as heavy, enthusiastic and sophisticated users of mobile phones (Harper and Hamil 2005), but also their role as barometers of social change, impacting on society and surrounding culture (Widdicombe and Woffitt 1995). In a new media context, Tapscott (1998) emphasized that young people are often the opinion formers and market mavens in markets for cultural commodities such as mobile phones, mp3 players and games consoles. More broadly, this age-group merits particular attention since the transition from adolescence to adulthood leads to the constant questioning and development of identities, behaviors, attitudes and values (Roth and Brooks-Gunn 2000), with attendant implications for consumption practices.

RESEARCH METHOD

In keeping with phenomenological principles, this study used a series of mini group interviews completed by Spring 2004 with adolescents in the east coast of Scotland. Three schools were selected on the basis of geographic area and socio-cultural background, incorporating McLoone’s (1997) deprivation criteria; the resulting sites were a rural state school, a (less affluent) suburban state school, and an urban fee-paying school with a more affluent student profile. Across the three schools, a total of forty five 14-17 year-olds took part in the study. Naturally forming ‘friendship triads’ were created by asking participants to select friends they would like to join up with. Such mini groups provide for more intimate discussion, with each individual given greater space to express their ideas (Krueger 1994). Sixteen groups were recruited, reflecting a range of social background, age, gender and attitudes towards new media.

Each group met with the first researcher three times over a period of several weeks. The first meeting served as an ice-breaker and orientation to the study. Each participant was at that time given a disposable camera, and asked to take photographs of a week in their lives. The second meeting involved participants talking about these photographs; this autodiving or photo diary approach (Heisley and Levy 1991) allowed them to locate mobile phone consumption in the context of their everyday lives, and offered them time and space to reflect on their own experiences and interpretations of the world (Russell and Tyler 2005). In the final meeting, participants talked about their experiences of “new” media and their relationships with brands and marketing communications.

Once transcribed, the data were analysed using phenomenological interpretation as advocated by Thompson *et al.* (1989). The first stage sought an understanding of each transcript, identifying broad themes emerging out of the photodiary discussion and media consumption transcripts. Salient themes, recurring ideas and patterns of beliefs linking people and cultural setting together were identified. A second stage then involved relating patterns of commonality between different transcripts and seeking different interpretations of similar phenomena. Wittgenstein (in Thompson *et al.* 1989) referred to this as ‘seeing as’-identifying similarities or differences in how participants experienced a situation.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Kline (2004) argued that patterns of contemporary media use are diverse but intrinsically bound together by lifestyle and cultural forces. Throughout these research discussions, it was evident that mobile phones were an interwoven, omnipresent (Kopomaa 2000) and normalised (Livingstone and Bober 2004) aspect of adolescents’ everyday lives. Indeed, mobiles were taken for granted to such an extent that few participants even considered taking photographs of them. The exception was the emerging generation of multi-media phones which at the time of the fieldwork had novel content features such as photo messaging and enhanced WAP access.

It should not however be assumed that mobile omnipresence translated into a stream of positive experiences. In and out of home, young people’s experiences were both positive and negative, contingent on the socio-cultural context rather than the attributes of the consuming object. Four themes emerged from the analysis, each showing the interaction between context and consumption.

Social Engineering: Including and Excluding

For most adolescents, their mobile phone represented a constant companion, a social necessity that rarely left their side:

A: Mine is on 24/7 and through the night and everything and if it’s charging, it is still on. I leave it on all the time. I know a lot of people that do that, just in case something happens... (female, 14, suburban state school)

Frequent texting, sometimes almost continuously, was reported from very early in the morning till late into the evening. Nightly sessions of texting back and forth were not uncommon, characteristic of Pedrozo and Wilksa’s ‘addictive texters’. For A., having a phone constantly at her side was as much about the fear of missing out as about social gratification. The phone had become an essential aid for negotiating everyday social relations, an ‘always-on’ link to closest friends and wider peer networks. The dynamism of youth culture requires constant synchronisation between peers (Tully 2002). In this sense, mobile phone consumption enhanced

social relations, providing the stimulus to foster and sustain networks of relationships.

Social engineering through mobile consumption had differing consequences dependent on geographic locality. For those living in more rural contexts, mobiles were used to maintain social connections when distance was prohibitive. The ability to exchange gossip and stories at any precise moment meant that texting was often preferred to cheaper options such as the internet or landline phones (which would typically be paid for by parents). It also acted as a ready replacement for getting together. As two boys explained:

Researcher: Tell me why it is important to you then?

M: Because I can just talk to my friends and text my friends

A: It is a way of going out without going out

M: Yes, it's a way of going out with your friends whilst you are in your bedroom

(males, 14, urban fee-paying school)

This example illustrates how mobiles have further contributed towards the media richness of 'bedroom culture' (Brown *et al.* 2004), encouraging adolescents to retreat further into their own personalised spaces, safe in the knowledge that their social participation can continue whilst at home. This suggests that new media forms are creating new patterns of socialisation which no longer rely on physical presence. This was not restricted to cases where there were significant geographic barriers to meeting, however: one 14 year-old girl explained how one of her favourite activities on the way home from school was exchanging texts with her cousin-even though she lived in the same street and shared a bus home. Even spending time with "best friends" did not preclude being in mobile contact with others. S. for example, could not imagine spending any time away from home without her mobile phone as this provided her with her virtual link to a wider network of friends, and if needed, parents.

S: ... well most nights when I go out, I usually go down to A.'s for a cup of tea. I usually go to her house for a cup of tea and then into her back garden for a fag basically, most nights, because no-one in her house smokes like...sometimes we go into the kitchen and get the chocolate biscuits out when I'm starving ...

I don't go anywhere without my phone, it's always next to me (female, 15, rural state school)

As Moio (2003) points out, mobile phone consumption can also have negative consequences. Ling (2000) suggested that from mid-teens onward, a minority of young people are ideologically opposed to mobile consumption, exhibiting cynicism towards such status-driven attractions. The mobile phone can therefore be the catalyst for rejecting social conformity. In this context, one group was keen to explain that although they owned mobiles, they were not "obsessed" by them, and had reservations about their social impact:

Researcher: Tell me about why you haven't taken pictures of mobile phones then?

B: I don't have one but my brother lends me one

S: Mine is about sixth hand, I do use it sometimes when we go out to keep in contact with my friends

Researcher: Describe how important it is to you...

E: We aren't obsessed with it

S: E. used to be obsessed with it!

E: I wasn't obsessed with it but I realised that I don't really need to use one now. But we wanted to have a phone because

my brother is always on the internet. Or his phone is engaged.

We can hardly ever get through

E: But I think phones are anti-social... because everyone that has got a phone, is just sitting there, speaking with the phone.

I get annoyed when T. always has his on. His is a video camera on his phone, which is quite sad that people can't live without their phone. (mixed group, 16, rural state school)

For this group of older adolescents, mobiles represented an almost unwanted necessity, at odds with their identity and underlying values, and perhaps even stimulating a search for alternative ways of expressing their sense of self. They also expressed concern about using mobile phones in company. As Agnelli *et al.* (2004) observe, mobile phone etiquette is not particularly well established. This was the only group which appeared troubled by such matters however.

Social Facilitation: Organising, Enhancing and Re-Living Experiences

Mobile phones facilitated the organisation, enhancement and re-living of cultural experiences. Two contrasting examples show how cultural context influenced out of the home mobile consumption. The first example relates to the use of mobiles to organise the activities of larger groups of adolescents, referred to by Petersen (1996) as 'gangs' or 'cliques'. In this case, adolescents from a radius of over fifty miles got together for a snowboarding 'expression session' at their local dry ski slope (Hillend):

D: This is us on snowboards [looking at photograph]. We hike the jump at Hillend, getting the toll, to hike up three hundred meters up the slope and jump

Researcher: Tell about who goes to these sessions?

D: Anything up to fifty people really. I mean there's a lot of people you don't know as well who come up for it. Maybe twenty you know by name. We go on a Friday night after school...

Researcher: ...so how do such evenings happen?

D: Well, we all exchange numbers and when someone makes the first call, well it just goes from there. It's a spontaneous kind of thing. (male, 15, urban fee paying school)

Such sessions allowed adolescents to demonstrate their skill and creativity in social, often sport-related contexts, as members of loose 'subcultural' or tribal groupings (Maffesoli 1996), bonded together, even temporarily, over common interests. Sometimes, groups could be half a dozen; other times almost one hundred people strong, depending on formality of arrangement and chosen location. As D. suggests, mobiles played a peripheral role in the actual event but an essential one in organizing it. D. went on to discuss how on the way home, participants constantly exchanged texts to re-live and dissect the evening's experiences. This example shows how intrinsically linked mobile consumption is to adolescents' out of home experiences. Gillard *et al.* (1998) referred to this constant adjustment of everyday activities as 'micro-coordination', using the flexibility of mobile texting to respond almost immediately to an ever-changing cultural context. A more extreme example in which mobiles have moved from the periphery to the forefront of cultural experiences as been the 'flash-mobbing' phenomenon, the orchestrated formation of apparently 'spontaneous' crowds of people through their mobiles.

A second example involved the use of camera phones to disseminate visual images of cultural experiences. Images taken from a musical concert were swiftly disseminated to best friends and sometimes wider networks of peers, even before the event had

finished. Such practices show vividly how new forms of media such as camera phones extend cultural experiences to a wider audience, offering visual as well as verbal exchange. Such practices were conducted with complete disregard for any legal contraventions; the risks involved might even have heightened the consumption experience. Furthermore, they appeared to provide an outlet for asserting peer group credibility, contributing to an enhanced sense of self-identity. The subsequent texts and postings on bulletin boards continued the practice, intensifying word of mouth through either positive or negative feedback. This illustrates how new forms of media speed up and broaden the process of consumption, altering the consumption context almost instantaneously.

Social Reconstruction: Re-Defining ‘Private Space’

Mobile consumption can also be understood as a means of reconstructing social norms and space. Ling and Campbell (2006) argue that wireless communication is contributing to new spatio-temporal contexts, changing definitions of public and private space. Texting transformed what might have traditionally been considered a public place into an intensely private one:

A: You can say what you want without having to say, it’s more private. If you want to say it to someone and maybe they are in a public place, they can beep and they can read it without anybody else hearing that conversation (female, 15, suburban state school)

This can have both positive and negative consequences, depending on the nature of that communication and the impact on significant others nearby. In this research, young people valued the increased intimacy such communication allowed, enabling them to conduct social interchange in contexts that might discourage face-to-face communication. Texting in this example allowed young people to conduct social conversations in public places sometimes in close proximity to those not included-friends, teachers, or of course parents. Notwithstanding one group’s concerns about the etiquette of this, using mobiles in this way can be understood as a way of circumventing social barriers and potential embarrassment. Indeed, a recent study amongst British 11-21 year-olds found texting to be preferred over talking by phone or emailing for flirting, arranging a first date, and even ending a relationship (Haste 2005).

Mobiles also allowed young people to extend their ‘private space’ well beyond the home, safe in the knowledge that they had a tangible link back to home and their parents. Mobiles were seen an important way of increasing independence whilst maintaining a virtual connection:

A: When I go out, I always make sure I have got my phone on me, in case they need to contact me or I need to get in touch with them. It makes them feel better and I know they won’t be worrying about me (female, 15, suburban state school)

Indeed, by reassuring parents that they were always within reach, carrying a mobile phone may have allowed them to venture further afield or even stay out later.

Social Screening: Resisting the Intrusion of the Commercial Text

Adolescents recounted a torrent of negative experiences involving text-based commercial communication, both solicited and unsolicited. Even when they had granted permission, continual commercial texting built up feelings of resentment. Attempts to unsubscribe were seen as excessively complex. As J. and M

explained, commercial advertising through mobile phones were intrusive, blocking the everyday exchanges of communication between friends:

J. Because my phone only holds about ten text messages, and then you are getting sent messages from others taking up your whole box, and then you might get excited, because you think your friends have texted you, and you get this boring phone message from a company you don’t want to hear from... (female, 16, rural state school)

M: You just want to hear the voice of the person you are talking to, a mobile for me is like not receiving any junk mail or whatever or just wasting your time. Whereas I use my mobile phone to talk to my friends (male, 14, urban fee-paying school)

In general, the intensely private and time-sensitive nature of mobile communication highlighted earlier left little room for commercial communications. There were few examples of participants responding to commercially orientated communication, and these only occurred at a time and place that suited them; in this sense at least, the asynchronous nature of digital forms of media (Ruggiero 2000) such as mobile phones could work in marketers’ favour. Such positive examples, however, were far outweighed by accounts of insensitive and persistent attempts to initiate or extend relationships with young people. The concept of an active, skeptical “reader of texts” is a familiar one in traditional advertising contexts (Scott 1994), and these findings in relation to new media are consistent with other forms of consumer resistance (Holt 2002). This is not a case of pockets of resistance: most young people in this research were deeply sceptical towards attempts at mobile (and indeed internet) marketing, regarding such actions as invasive and intruding on their rights to personal privacy. Literally and metaphorically, they “rejected the text”.

DISCUSSION

In keeping with this paper’s focus on the social context of consumption, we recognise that the findings reported here are specific to a particular group of adolescents, living in particular parts of Scotland, at a particular time. Indeed, this market is so dynamic that the technical capabilities and pricing structures of mobile devices have changed considerably since these participants talked about their experiences. Nonetheless, we hope that these findings raise questions and challenge assumptions about mobile phone consumption in other contexts, amongst other groups.

Ritson and Elliott (1999) have highlighted the range of social meanings and uses surrounding British adolescents’ consumption of advertising. This study suggests that social context is also fundamental to their mobile phone consumption. In some respects, this is hardly surprising: by definition, there can be no solitary subject of mobile phones, since their key purpose is to connect people to each other. Despite this, much prior marketing and consumer research on mobile phone consumption has focused on private and intrapersonal rather than interpersonal factors.

Although the social purpose of mobile phones is self-evident, this paper highlights the different forms and meanings of social connection it offered the adolescents in this study. Mobile phones were their constant companions, but in contrast to marketers’ visions of an exciting new medium for reaching and engaging with youth audiences, participants in this study resented and resisted commercial messages intruding into the main business of mobile phones: including or excluding their peers; organising, enhancing

and reliving experiences; and redefining social spaces. This asymmetry between marketers and their young audience resonates with Gronröös's (1994) argument that if relationship marketing is to work, it must benefit companies and consumers alike. In this context, marketers would do well to reflect on the following metaphor:

"Relationships-of all kinds-are like sand held in your hand. Held loosely, with an open hand, the sand remains where it is. The minute you close your hand and squeeze tightly to hold on, the sand trickles through your fingers. You may hold onto some of it, but most will be spilled. A relationship is like that. Held loosely, with respect and freedom for the other person, it is likely to remain intact. But held too tightly, too possessively, the relationship slips away and is lost." Anonymous quotation, Thinkexist.com 2005

Commercial messages that respect the socially constructed nature of mobile consumption—and offer young consumers some form of social capital—may allow marketer-consumer relationships to bear fruit. If, however, marketers' enthusiasm for mobile phones as a "brand in the hand" leads them to grip young people too tightly through intrusive and insensitive mobile-directed messages, they may find their market slipping away like the "sand in the hand" depicted above.

These findings contribute to the 'marketplace culture' strand of consumer culture theory (Arnould and Thompson 2005), in that they illustrate how a group of adolescents "forge feelings of social solidarity and create distinctive, fragmentary, self-selected, and sometimes transient cultural worlds through the pursuit of common consumption interests..." (p.873). The centrality of social networks and consumption communities to their consumption of mobile phones resonates with Cova's (1994) argument that in postmodern societies, goods and services may be desired more for their "linking value" than their functional or private symbolic value.

Just as consumers' responses to ads cannot be determined by the texts themselves (Scott 1994, Mick and Buhl 1992), the patterns of social exchange arising from these adolescents' use of mobile phones were wider, richer, and more nuanced than could be inferred from their technical specification. This suggests little room for manoeuvre by marketers seeking to communicate with adolescents through this medium, or for researchers who examine such phenomena through the lens of the "solitary subject" rather than that of the agentic, socially situated consumer.

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A Multivariate Segmentation Model of the Older UK Consumer Market

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In terms of sheer size, longevity of demand, and potential profitability the older consumer market is an increasingly important one (Barak and Rahtz 1999). However, there is tendency for older consumers to be treated as a homogenous mass by marketers, despite the fact that as people age they become more dissimilar (Moschis, Lee and Mathur 1997).

Early attempts to segment older consumers tended to be based on a limited number of socio-demographic variables (for example, McCann 1974). Over time, new segmentation models applicable to older consumers emerged, but were generally industry specific (Oates, Shufeldt and Vaught 1996; Sellick 2004). Only a small number of studies, not applied to specific product categories, incorporated a variety of social, psychological and biophysical measures (for example, Sorce, Tyler and Loomis 1989; Moschis, Lee and Mathur 1997). Although these could be considered as models for segmenting the older market generally, they were all developed in the United States and there was no evidence to suggest that they had any relevance to the UK market. Therefore, this paper presents the first general market segmentation model of the older (50+) market in the UK.

As part of a wider study into the consumer behaviours of older UK adults, a self-administered questionnaire containing questions relating to socio-demographics, health, media usage, lifestyle, and a battery of scales relating to a range of psychographic, psychosocial and consumer behaviours was developed. In order to attain a sample that mirrored the older UK population in terms of age bands, quota sampling was employed. This procedure resulted in a usable sample size of 650 adults aged between 50 and 79. Using the age and consumer behaviour variables, cluster analysis was performed. The clusters were then profiled using ANOVA, Kruskal-Wallis, and Chi-squared techniques, using those variables not included in the initial analysis. The result of these processes was the identification of five clusters—or segments—that differed significantly on a range of variables. A profile of each follows.

'Solitary sceptics' comprise 5% of the market. This group are the least healthy, and prefer solitude to socialising. Their scepticism is reflected in negative attitudes towards marketing and consumerism, their lack of market maven tendencies, and their aversion to credit. They are the most materialistic and the most nostalgic of all the segments identified.

'Bargain hunting belongers' comprise 38% of the market, and is the oldest group with an average chronological age of 70, but perceive themselves to be in their early 60s, perhaps because they feel healthier than the solitary sceptics. Unlike solitary sceptics, these consumers are not particularly nostalgic, they do place great importance on a sense of belonging, and they see their friends more frequently than any other segment. This group has relatively positive attitudes towards marketing and consumerism, enjoy talking about shopping, and likes a bargain.

'Self-assured sociables' comprise 6% of the market. They are on average 59 years of age, but feel only 48. They are healthy, energetic, and would much rather go out with others than stay at home watching TV. They are self-assured because they value a sense of accomplishment and have high levels of self-esteem. As consumers, they are not particularly venturesome, are not inclined to talk about shopping, and although they are highly price conscious, they hate the idea of senior discounts.

'Positive pioneers' comprise 30% of the market, and are the youngest segment in terms of both chronological age (average 56 years) and cognitive age (average 46 years). The segment is relatively affluent, despite having the fewest empty nests. Positive pioneers enjoy energetic activities, and take the most vacations abroad. As their name suggests, they are by far the most venturesome segment, have the greatest market maven tendencies, the most positive attitudes towards marketing and consumerism, have relatively high levels of materialism and are not particularly price conscious. They are low consumers of radio, only average consumers of TV and newspapers, but show relatively high levels of magazine readership and Internet usage.

'Cautious comfortables' comprise 21% of the market, and again are a young group with an average chronological age of 58 and a cognitive age of 48. By far the most affluent segment, with the majority being empty nesters, it is also the healthiest, the most active and energetic and takes more vacations (domestic and foreign combined) than any other segment. Cautious comfortables are diametrically opposed to positive pioneers in that they are the least venturesome, and display by far the fewest market maven tendencies of all the segments. Although they are unsure about senior discounts, they have low levels of price consciousness and highly positive attitudes towards credit.

The segmentation model presented here proves that the older consumer market in the UK is not homogenous, and it has a number of advantages over existing models. First, it is more comprehensive than most of the earlier models, using more measures of chronological and cognitive age, biophysical, psychological and social aging, psychographics and consumer behaviour. Second, the model presented here is not limited to a specific product or product category, a major disadvantage of other available models. Finally, the model meets the criteria for effective segmentation in that the resulting segments are measurable, accessible, substantial and differentiable.

Given this, the model provides organisations wishing to target older consumers a starting point for a range of marketing decisions. Product policy, for example, should be informed by differences between segments in terms of cognitive age, marital status, health and fitness, and income. Pricing policy should take into account not only levels of income, but also price consciousness, and attitudes towards credit and senior discounts. Finally, targeting, positioning and advertising strategies can be improved by employing the wide range of information regarding cognitive age, values, attitudes and psychographic details provided for each segment.

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Demographics in Sales Promotion Proneness: A Socio-Cultural Approach

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ABSTRACT

We investigate the impact of demographics (i.e., income, education, and gender) on promotion proneness and provide socio-cultural explanations why certain demographic groups are more promotion prone. Shopping is a domain where consumers accumulate their expertise and skills. To be deal prone requires not only the motivation for monetary savings but also the legitimate possession of human capital in shopping including cognitive abilities, information, and shopping experience and skills. The positive effects of education and income on the use of coupons and rebates are discussed along with the influence of gender and psychographics such as shopping enjoyment and psychological gender congruency.

INTRODUCTION

Modern America has been characterized as a consumption-oriented culture. As consumption became a focal point of American life, retailing became a critical part of the culture as well as the economy. One distinctive characteristics of the U.S. retail market is that it is extremely price promotion driven. NCH Marketing reported that in 2002, approximately 248 billion coupons were distributed and consumers redeemed 3.8 billion of these, saving more than \$3 billion (as cited in Park and Gómez 2004). Electronic methods have become popular, and channels of distribution have been diversified to include magazines, direct mails, targeted frequent shopper mails, frequent shopper cards, and online coupons as well as traditional free-standing distribution and newspaper inserts. Rebates are becoming popular among manufacturers because of the low redemption rate—only 5–10 percent—and the direct contact with consumers (“Coupons and Rebates” n.d.). On the consumers’ side, the current retail environment requires strategic decisions to maximize savings out of an attractive range of diverse sales promotions.

In response to this kind of retail market, there has been a tremendous amount of research on price promotions. Consumer behavior towards promotional deals is explained in terms of cost and benefit (Henderson 1994). Economics-based research has dealt with such benefits as monetary savings, increased quality, and the convenience of reduced search costs and factors related to the opportunity cost of time (e.g., Blattberg et al. 1978; Narasimhan 1984; Urbany et al. 1996). Psychological approaches have covered emotional incentives such as self-expression as a smart shopper, stimulation, entertainment, and social disincentives (Ashworth, Darke, and Schaller 2005; also see Chandon, Wansink, and Laurent 2000).

While economic approaches and psychological constructs are typically studied topics, socio-cultural approaches have been lacking in promotion research. Demographic characteristics including income, education, family status, gender have been researched mainly for profiling purposes. The underlying reason that a certain group of people are more promotion prone than others has not been studied. Furthermore, some general assumptions—“females are more promotion prone” or “low-income families use coupons more”—have never been empirically, consistently supported (inconsistent empirical findings are discussed in the next section.)

The purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to empirically test the impact of demographics (i.e., income, education, and gender) on promotion proneness (i.e., coupons and rebates) and (2) to provide socio-cultural explanations why certain demographic groups are

more promotion prone. The concepts of human capital and gender differences are employed to provide socio-cultural accounts of the general promotion prone behavior of American people, as part of their consumption activities, not specifically for particular product lines or categories.

We used large-scale consumer survey data from the 2003 DDB Lifestyle Survey to test the influence of demographics, which, we believe, increases the generalizability of our findings, compared to the studies using small scale consumer panel or survey data and modeling research to estimate promotion responsiveness for specific product categories.

HOMO ECONOMICUS OR THE CONSUMPTION CULTURE ELITE?

Findings in the literature have been inconsistent regarding who is more promotion prone: *homo economicus* or the consumption culture elite. Some researchers have reported that lower income/education families are more promotion prone, while some have argued that promotion prone consumers exist evenly in all income groups (Blattberg and Neslin 1990 for review; Montaldo 2006). According to the tradition of neo-classical economics, human beings behave to maximize their utilities. Economic man decides whether or not he uses a coupon and a rebate based on the monetary saving expected and the redemption costs (i.e., time and effort). Economic man will use the coupon or rebate only when the financial incentive of doing so exceeds the opportunity cost of its redemption. Redeeming coupons and rebates requires time and effort browsing newspapers and advertisements, clipping coupons, locating the particular brands promoted, and mailing proof of purchase for rebates. As the opportunity cost of coupon or rebate redemption is likely to be lower for lower income/education people, they are thought to be more prone to use coupons and rebates than those with higher income/education. The concept of opportunity cost provides a reasonable account for the higher coupon and rebate redemption behavior of low income/education consumers. In fact, a number of studies have reported a negative relationship between coupon and rebate redemption and income and education (e.g., Jolson, 1987; Moody 1987 cited in Blattberg and Neslin 1990). The familiarity of retail stores, wages per hour, free time, and the ability to organize time were also studied as surrogates for opportunity costs of coupon redemption. (Blattberg et al. 1978; Mazumdar and Papatla 1995; Narasimhan 1984 cited in Blattberg and Neslin 1990).

Empirical findings also contradict the opportunity cost-based explanation of coupon redemption behaviors. Teel et al. (1980), Blattberg et al. (1978), and Bawa and Shoemaker (1987) reported higher deal proneness by higher-income consumers. A few studies argued for an inverted U-shape effect, suggesting coupon proneness peaks at middle income (Nielsen 1985 and Narasimhan 1984 cited in Blattberg and Neslin 1990). Some studies even suggested that psychographics are much better discriminators than demographics (Rosen 1985 cited in Blattberg and Neslin 1990; Park and Gómez 2004).

In spite of a tremendous amount research done in the area of demographics and promotion proneness in past decades, there has been little effort to address these contradictory findings. Further, there have recently been dramatic changes in the retail industry, including more diverse retail channels (i.e., the Internet and cata-

logues) and a variety of deal formats and delivery methods (e.g., paper coupons, email coupons, online coupons, in-store coupons, and rebates). We propose in this study that the theory of human capital would provide possible explanations for the relationship between demographics and the use of coupons and rebates.

Gary Becker's theory of human capital allows for conceptualizing household consumption activities as another type of production. Human capital refers to people's knowledge, skills, health, or values that could yield useful outputs like any other financial or physical asset (Becker, 2002). Becker (2002) views education and job training as investments in human capital. Bourdieu's (1984) cultural capital is a similar concept to Becker's, emphasizing human competence and the effect of competence on consumption. Bourdieu (1984) maintained that the social origin that affects early socialization, formal education, and adult experience serve to form skills for specific fields of consumption. Both Bourdieu and Becker's theories posit that consumers seek an optimal level of satisfaction from the combination of their financial resources and their consumption skills (Gershuny 2000).

Human capital consisting of knowledge and skills is operationalized differently in different production activities. For instance, it is realized as employees' qualities such as dedication and motivation in human resource management (Boudreau and Ramstad 2005; Marrewijk and Timmers 2003) and as the owner's education, previous business experience, and technical skills for successful entrepreneurial ventures (Madsen, Neergaard, and Uthøi 2003). With regard to consumption, human capital refers to consumer knowledge (Ratchford, 2001). Ratchford (2001) argued that consumer choice of product, brand, or lifestyle is the most efficient one based on holdings of human capital formed by education, informal education, and consumption experiences associated with learning by doing. Studies on price search measured human capital by market knowledge, investment search, and perceived time management skills (Putrevu 1997; Urbany et al. 1996).

Efficient shopping requires human capital, including knowledge and the individual's ability to collect, process, and organize various information available in the market. In the heavily promotional retail environment, the goal of shopping is not only to acquire the right products. Consumers are driven to find the right products at "better" or "best" prices. To achieve shopping efficiency by paying lower prices requires the use of one's assets relevant to this consumption behavior. To be deal prone requires not only the motivation to save money but also consumption/shopping experiences and cognitive abilities. Price researchers have explored various research topics (e.g., remembering price, price expectation, forecast for future prices) assuming serious cognitive effort to collect and process price information. If using deals and discounts is a serious cognitive activity, then it is plausible to propose that one's level of human capital will influence promotion response behaviors. If one has a high level of human capital accumulated in his/her consumption, he or she may show greater use of sales promotions.

We propose that shopping is a domain where consumers accumulate their expertise and skills, and that deal proneness requires the legitimate possession of human capital in consumption. We measure human capital in consumption behaviors by consumers' education and price/promotion knowledge. Formal education is generally believed to improve one's cognitive capacity to seek out deals (e.g., coupons and rebates), the ability to organize, locate, and use them, and the ability to manage time, which consequently reduces the opportunity cost of promotion redemption. We believe that market knowledge, including price knowledge and exposure to sales promotion information, forms human capital that enhances consumption skills and practices. Market knowledge contributes to

reducing decision costs when shopping or deciding whether or not to participate in a sales promotion.

- H1: Promotion proneness will be greater when the level of human capital is higher.
- H1(a): Those with a higher level of education use coupons and rebates more.
- H1(b): Those with more price/promotion knowledge use coupons and rebates more.

Literature discusses the effect of income on deal proneness along the same line as the education effect. The underlying assumption is that income and education define one's social standing. Income as an index of class reflects a traditional Marxist notion. Other sociologists including Weber and Warner make social stratification multi-factored, including social honor or network (Coleman 1983; Giddens 1989). Identification of social status is now believed to be influenced by educational credentials, occupation, family history, social skills, status aspirations, cultural level, community participation, and more (Coleman 1983), because all of these factors have effects on social life. In this study, we propose an opposite direction for the effect of income from that of education (H1). We suggest that high education represents a cognitive resource to store knowledge as human capital, while high income reflects the high opportunity cost of the use of sales promotions. As reviewed earlier, a number of past researchers have argued for a negative effect of income on deal proneness from the perspective of the opportunity cost of time. We hypothesize that those with a higher income are less prone to seek out sales promotions, as the opportunity cost of time spent to respond to or redeem promotions increases when income rises. Moreover, upper-class people are generally known to value quality merchandise over low price (Coleman 1983), so consumers with a high income, those who have fewer economic constraints, will not be drawn to the sales promotion that has the financial or emotional appeal of "paying less."

- H2: Those with higher income use coupons and rebates less.

DO WOMEN LOVE PROMOTIONS?

Numerous studies have suggested that women are more promotion prone (e.g., Harmon and Hill 2003; Mazumdar and Papatla 1995). However, little research has provided explanations for this behavior. Historically, the separation of consumption from production is rooted in the Cartesian dichotomy distinguishing play from work and the private from the public in Western tradition (Firat and Dholakia 1998). Similarly, gender as a socially and symbolically constructed identity was constructed based on the meanings that were generated from the roles attributed to public and private domains, assigning female to the consumer role and male to that of the producer (Firat and Dholakia 1998). Although the roles of men and women have changed and gender coding is now less clear, the gender ideology associating the attributes of the ideal consumer with feminine traits underlies society and literature. Since Veblen (1899) accounted for the role of women in conspicuous consumption, women have been still prominent in the area of everyday consumption such as clothing and furnishing (Collins 1992).

Studies have shown that women overall use coupons more than men (Harman and Hill 2003; Mazumdar and Papatla 1995). This is partly because household purchases have traditionally been the role of women, but we argue that it is also because women are more socialized to shop and accordingly develop more experience and thus more human capital in consumption. Regardless of their personal interests or abilities, women tend to develop expertise as

good shoppers compared to their male counterparts. The difference in consumption between genders is also affected by the identity of gender with product use, for example associating attendance in performing arts events with female identity (Caldwell and Woodside 2003; Gainer 1993). We propose that different forms of consumer-oriented sales promotions are associated with different gender identities, which lead to differences in participation: price-off coupons would be identified as more female than male, because coupons have been used to promote products with female associations such as groceries. We hypothesize that manufacturer's rebates would be more gender neutral. Rebates do not appear to take on any gender identity because they are often used for sales promotion of non-grocery products. (Harman and Hill 2003).

H3(a): Women use coupons more than men.

H3(b): There is no difference in the use of rebates between women and men.

We propose that the gender effect on deal proneness could be moderated by psychological gender identity. Women who have more congruency to their gender (i.e., women who like to be perceived as feminine) might be more prone to promotions with female identity such as coupons. On the other hand, for men, those with more congruency (i.e., men who like to be perceived as masculine) would be less prone to promotions with female identity (e.g., coupons). However, we do not expect gender congruency to affect for the use of rebates, since rebates may be considered gender-neutral, as hypothesized in H3(b).

H4(a): Gender congruency will moderate the relationship between gender and coupon use: congruency in women is positively related to coupon use, while congruency in men is negatively related.

H4(b): Gender congruency will not influence the use of rebates for either men or women.

We propose that the effect of human capital would be less manifest in men than in women. For men, the effect of human capital will decrease for a type of promotion that suggests a female identity. The association between coupons and female identity is likely to inhibit men from developing their expertise in the consumption using coupons. However, we do not expect such an interaction effect for rebates, which are perceived to have a gender-neutral identity.

H5(a): The effect of human capital (education and price/promotion knowledge) on coupon use will be less for men than for women.

H5(b): The effect of human capital (education and price/promotion knowledge) on rebate use will not be different between men and women.

We also propose a moderating effect of shopping enjoyment on the gender-coupon use relation. Optimizing the use of personal resources, human beings are selective in developing their expertise. Those who enjoy shopping would locate their cognitive resources as well as other resources such as time in that domain. A significant number of studies support the role of shopping enjoyment as a predictor of shopping behavior such as price search (Putrevu and Rachford 1997; Urbany et al. 1996). These days, shopping is not a domain exclusive to women any more. We argue that shopping enjoyment could be a way to lower the socio-psychological guard that has kept men from being responsive to coupon promotions due to the female gender identity association. However, we do not

expect such a moderating effect for rebates due to the gender-neutral identity associated. Therefore, we hypothesize

H6(a): The positive effect of shopping enjoyment on coupon use will be manifest for men compared to women.

H6(b): The effect of shopping enjoyment on rebate use will not be different between men and women.

METHOD

Data

To test the hypotheses proposed in this study, the 2003 Lifestyle Survey database conducted by DDB, an international marketing communication firm, was used. The survey was sent to adult male and female members of the Market Facts' Consumer Mail Panel. The members were chosen using an annual standing-panel quota sample similar to the U.S. adult population in terms of age, gender, income, geography, and other demographics. Of 5000 questionnaires, usable responses were received from 1440 males (48%) and 1581 females (52%) (response rate of 60.4%). The data set included a wide range of questions encompassing attitudes, interests, opinions, activities, shopping channels, and media use. In the past, numerous researchers in their respective fields of advertising (Shrum, McCarty, and Lowrey 1995), consumer research (Lastovicka et al. 1999), communication (Holbert, Shah, and Kwak 2004), health (Bergman 2003), and psychology (Shah, Friedman, and Kruglanski 2002) have repeatedly used the DDB Lifestyle Survey data.

Measurement

Dependent Variables. Dependent variables include the use of coupons and manufacturer's rebates. Respondents were asked to indicate how often they "used a 'price-off' coupon" and "sent in for a manufacturer's rebate" during the past 12 months. Responses were ranged on a 7-point scale: 1. None in past year; 2. 2-4 times; 3. 5-8 times; 4. 9-11 times; 5. 12-24 times; 6. 25-51 times; 7. 52+ times.

Independent Variables. Independent variables include education, price/promotion knowledge, income, gender, gender congruency, and shopping enjoyment. The data set includes self-reported information on education, income, and gender. Education was classified into two categories: college degree or above versus less than college degree. For income, those who had annual household incomes of less than \$40,000 were classified as the low-income group¹ and those with over \$40,000 as the high-income group. The U.S. Census reported the median household income in 2003 as \$43,318 (U.S. Census 2003).

Price/promotion knowledge was measured by four items. Responses on the following two items, "I always check prices even on small items" and "I shop a lot for specials" were assessed on a six-point scale from "I definitely disagree" to "I definitely agree." Another two items asking whether they read newspaper Sunday magazines and newspaper retailer inserts were used to measure price/promotion knowledge. The global score for price/promotion knowledge was calculated by summing the standardized scores of responses to the four questions, which reflects the amount of price/promotion knowledge obtained from shopping experiences and promotion media.

Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which the words "masculine" for male respondents and "feminine" for female

¹Household income was measured by categories. The 2003 U.S. household median income fell in the range from \$40,000 to \$49,999.

respondents describe the person they would ideally like to be. Their responses ranged from 1 "Definitely does not describe ideal self" to 6 "Definitely does describe ideal self." This item measures one's motivational level to display the traits of biological sex. Respondents were grouped into either a high or low level of gender congruency by mean split.

Two items were summed to measure the consumer's degree of shopping enjoyment: "I view shopping as a form of entertainment" and "Shopping is no fun anymore,"² which were anchored at 6 points from "I definitely disagree" to "I definitely agree." Responses to the two items were summed. Respondents were grouped into high versus low by a mean score. The correlation of the two items was .303.

RESULTS

A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted to test the hypotheses proposed. Independent variables and interaction terms tested in the analysis were education, price/promotion knowledge, income,³ gender, shopping enjoyment, gender x gender congruity, gender x education, gender x price/promotion knowledge, and gender x shopping enjoyment. The effects of these variables were tested on the two dependent variables, the use of coupons and use of rebates.

The analysis reveals significant multivariate effects of education, price/promotion knowledge, income, gender, shopping enjoyment, and gender x shopping enjoyment [$F(2, 2373)=7.804, p=.000$; $F(2, 2373)=85.121, p=.000$; $F(2, 2373)=38.889, p=.000$; $F(2, 2373)=34.742, p=.000$; $F(2, 2373)=14.966, p=.000$; $F(2, 2373)=6.029, p=.002$, respectively], but no significant effects of gender x gender congruency, gender x education, and gender x price/promotion knowledge. We further examined univariate results for significant effects on each dependent variable, the use of coupons and rebates.

H1(a) and H1(b) are supported, which indicates the positive effect of human capital on promotion proneness. Those with a higher level of education appear to use coupons [$F(1, 2374)=5.837, p=.016$] and rebates more [$F(1, 2374)=13.634, p=.000$]. Those who are high on price/promotion knowledge show greater use of coupons and rebates than those who are low on knowledge [$F(1, 2374)=146.388, p=.000$; $F(1, 2374)=66.991, p=.000$, respectively].

H2 posits a negative income effect on the use of coupons and rebates, which is not supported. The univariate result rather suggests a positive income effect. Surprisingly, those with higher incomes appear to use coupons and rebates more [$F(1, 2374)=28.822, p=.000$; $F(1, 2431)=68.125, p=.000$, respectively].

The gender effect reveals interesting results. Women use coupons more [$F(1, 2431)=48.038, p=.000$], while men show greater use of rebates [$F(1, 2374)=5.900, p=.015$]. Thus, only H3(a) is supported.

There is marginal support for H4(a), such that gender congruency is positively related to coupon use for women, while gender congruency is negatively related for men [$F(1, 2374)=3.093, p=.079$]. The use of coupons appears to increase as psychological female identity increases and male identity decreases. There is supporting evidence for H4(b) such that gender congruency does not appear to influence the use of rebates regardless of gender. There is no significant difference in effects of human capital (i.e., education

and price/promotion knowledge) by gender; H5(a) is not supported, and H5(b) is supported

H6(a) proposing a moderating effect by shopping enjoyment on the gender-coupon use relation is supported. As depicted in Figure 1, higher shopping enjoyment appears to lead to greater coupon use for men [$F(1, 2374)=11.566, p=.001$]. However, women's coupon use does not appear to be influenced by their degree of shopping enjoyment. A marginally significant interaction effect by gender on the use of rebates emerged. That is, the positive effect of shopping enjoyment appears to be more manifest for men compared to women (Figure 2) [$F(1, 2374)=2.754, p=.097$].

DISCUSSION

This study examined the effect of demographics (i.e., education, income, and gender) on promotion proneness. The effects of demographics were further investigated in relation to psychographic traits such as enjoyment of shopping and gender congruency. The effects of demographics were examined in terms of what benefits or costs those represent for shoppers to gain monetary savings from sales promotions. We employed the concept of human capital to explain deal proneness. Ratchford (2001) argued that the model of human capital could provide unique insights into the role of consumer knowledge, skills, and expertise in explaining various consumer behaviors (e.g., brand loyalty and lifestyles). Consumers strategically maximize consumption efficiency using their economic and human capital. Shopping for most household goods and personal goods such as clothing or food is a repetitive task. Increasing human capital is economical, because unlike economic capital, human capital is accumulated, not used up, through purchasing activities. Thus the benefits of sales promotions increase as costs decrease by accumulation of human capital. We consider opportunity cost to be a long-term effect of participation in repetitive shopping tasks.

The human capital of consumption is developed through informal training of consumption skills and updates in market knowledge in addition to investment in formal education. Previous studies of sales promotion simply treated education as the ability to organize time or reported a positive correlation without sufficient explanation (Mazumdar and Papatla 1995; Narasimhan 1984). We interpret the observed influence of education along with price/promotion knowledge as the effect of consumer human capital. In consumption, human capital is information and skills (assets) that consumers can use when they choose products or brands. Becker's theory (2002) emphasizes investment in education to form human capital. Those with higher education have a better cognitive ability to process and organize information and accordingly develop more human capital for consumption activities. We also interpret the positive effect of price/promotion knowledge as that of human capital in consumption which requires continuous updates of market information.

As a post hoc test, we ran the same MANOVA model without the income variable. Instead, income was entered as a covariate to test whether the human capital effect would remain significant after the income effect was controlled. This post hoc analysis yielded nearly identical results in terms of significance of the main and interaction factors tested. This result confirms the strong effect of human capital on proneness to promotions. The insignificant gender and human capital interaction effect also suggests a consistent positive role of human capital in promotion prone behaviors across gender.

Human capital in consumption cannot be obtained in a day. It is formed through repeated shopping experiences. In contrast to the assumption that high-class people use coupons less because of their high opportunity cost, consumers with high income are more prone to respond to sales promotions, because they have more opportunities

²Responses to this item were reverse coded in calculating the sum scores.

³Multicollinearity diagnostics were run for education and income. Tolerance, Variance Inflation Factor, and Condition Indices suggest no evidence of multicollinearity problems (Garson 2006).

FIGURE 1

The interaction effect by shopping enjoyment on the gender–coupon use relation

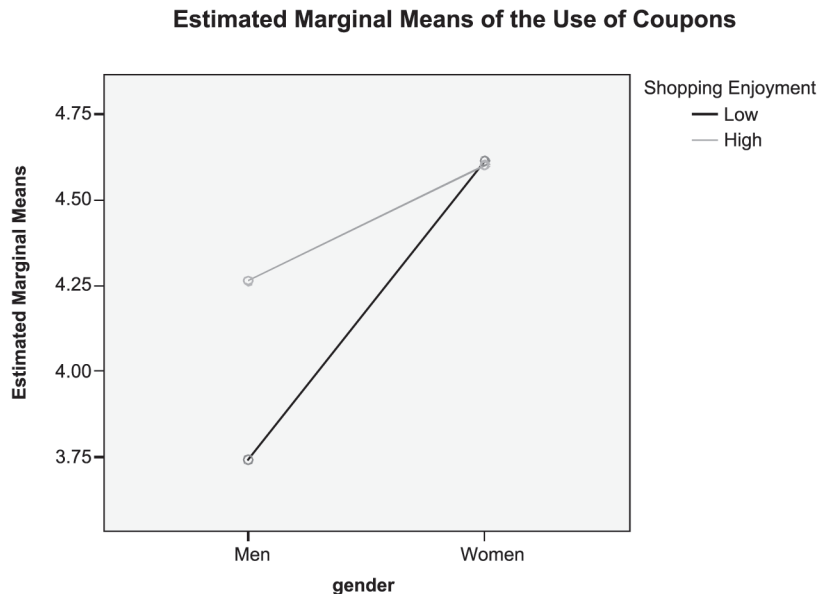
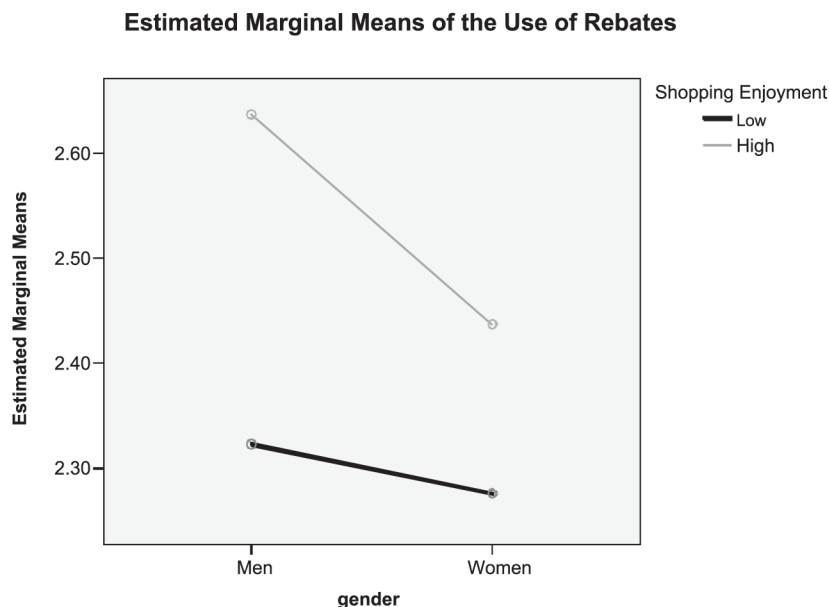


FIGURE 2

The interaction effect by shopping enjoyment on the gender–rebate use relation



for various retail experiences through which they accumulate consumption skills and information on products, brands, and promotions.

Another contributing factor to the positive effect of human capital and income, contrary to past research findings, reflects various changes brought to the retail industry and environment. Since coupons were first introduced in 1895 by C. S. Post, the producer of ready-to-eat cereals (Blattberg and Neslin 1990), coupons were distributed mainly through newspapers until a couple of decades ago. However, today those are provided in various formats (e.g., clipping coupons/rebates, stand-alone inserts, and

email coupons/rebates) through a number of distribution vehicles (e.g., in-store, print media, mass media, coupon books, and coupon/rebate Internet sites). Furthermore, due to the market power shift to retailers from manufacturers, the U.S. retail market has become extremely sales promotion-driven (Belch and Belch 2004). Because of these changes in the retail market, shopping is not a simple chore as it used to be. Maximizing consumption efficiency through various sales promotions requires market knowledge and expertise, which is a form of human capital that is accumulated over time.

Gender difference was significant in deal proneness. Women use coupons more than men do. For rebates, we hypothesized no

gender identity association. Surprisingly, men showed higher use of rebates than women. Because coupons are likely to have female identity, women use coupons more than men do. It would be plausible to interpret this result as an association of rebates with male identity. However, hypothesis testing did not find any significant effect of male gender congruency on the use of rebates. Current literature provides few explanations for men's greater use of rebates. Mazumdar and Papatla (1995) reported men are more price elastic and affected by shelf prices in stores (rather than coupons), and weigh more on acquisition value than transaction value. The perception of acquisition value may drive the use of rebates, as the redemption does not occur at the moment of purchase, unlike coupons. Therefore, men's greater use of rebates may not be the result of masculine identity associated with rebates; rather it could be attributed to their greater perception of acquisition value from rebates. However, further investigation on the gender effect on the use of rebates is suggested.

There was an interaction between enjoyment of shopping and gender. Women consistently showed high use of coupons and low use of rebates regardless of the level of shopping enjoyment. However, for men, those who enjoyed shopping more were more prone to promotions, that is, used more coupons and rebates. The effect of shopping enjoyment appears to be more prominent for men. Men might develop a tendency to respond to promotion deals, as they have emotional involvement in shopping, while women's deal prone behaviors are more consistent regardless of their enjoyment of shopping. This result could be attributed to the traditional gender role that forces women to engage in shopping related activities such as participating in promotions.

We found partial evidence for the gender congruency effect for coupons. As explained in the measurement section, gender congruency was measured by female and male traits. Another post hoc analysis revealed a significant positive correlation of shopping enjoyment to female traits. Therefore, enjoyment of shopping may be associated with female identity. The socio-cultural meaning of shopping should be further explored in relation to psychological gender traits.

A limitation of our study is the use of secondary data, which restricts the development of ideal measures, for example, for price knowledge. However, using secondary data was a way to test demographics, which was one of the main purposes of our study. The goal could not be achieved otherwise. Notwithstanding the limitation, we believe the nature of the data that were collected from an over 3000-participant sample representative of the U.S. population provides external validity for our findings.

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Information Search and Consideration Set Formation in a Web-Based Environment

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ABSTRACT

The research reported here attempts to understand information search and consideration set formation in a web-based choice environment. A conceptual model is used to propose hypotheses that link information search and consideration set formation with antecedent factors that are typical of online settings. A study that simulates information search and consideration set formation in a web-based choice environment is conducted to test the hypotheses. The empirical findings offer qualified support for the conceptual model. The implications of the model for understanding how consumers make choice decisions in an electronic environment are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

A recent U. S. Census Bureau report shows that e-commerce sales are growing at 28 percent as compared to 9 percent for sales through off-line retail channels <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/ecom.html>. The rapid growth of web-based stores has created a need to understand how people search for and evaluate products while shopping online. Online settings offer consumers immense choice and great convenience, but finding products that match needs can sometimes be a *difficult* task. Consequently, most web-based decision environments now make a “smart agent” or “recommendation agent” available to facilitate the decision-making process.

Electronic decision aids can assist in a variety of decision making tasks that may be automated. For instance, an electronic decision can help people search and evaluate products by screening and/or organizing information about available alternatives. Specifically, two important functions that can be performed by such an aid are information filtration (i.e., sorting) and integration. Examples of these types of aids may be found at <http://www.amazon.com> and <http://www.expedia.com>. They enable consumers to use a preferred alternative screening strategy (e.g., select flights based on “lowest price,” or books based on “publication date” and “title words”).

Individuals may be able to screen alternatives and rapidly identify the most attractive options in an online setting. But, they may also “over-screen” alternatives (i.e., use too many selection criteria), leading to the premature elimination of attractive choices or (at the extreme) the recommendation of a null choice set (e.g., the “no matches found” message). The number of alternatives in the relational database linked to the electronic decision aid may influence the extent to which consumers are able to find alternatives that match needs. Likewise, the amount of time available may determine whether consumers are able to re-set selection criteria and re-screen alternatives to match needs. When confronted with too few alternatives and/or too much time, consumers may adopt less efficient calibration strategies by setting wider or lower attribute cut-off levels, thereby diminishing the usefulness of an online environment. Consequently, it is important to understand how two important task environment factors (i.e., number of alternatives and time available) influence information search and consideration set formation in a web-based choice environment.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL DEVELOPMENT

The proposed model of information search and consideration set formation in a web-based environment, like its traditional counterpart, assumes a two-stage decision process. During the first

stage, alternatives are searched (i.e., screened and examined) with the use of an electronic decision aid to form a consideration set. In the second stage (which is not considered here), alternatives in the consideration set are evaluated in more depth through available online information and/or through retail visits. There are several (at least seven) important influences on information search and consideration set formation in a web-based environment. These are first presented and discussed individually and then linked together in the proposed model.

First, search costs are assumed to be lower in a web-based environment. Yet, the evidence on whether consumers exploit the lower search cost to make better quality decisions is mixed. While some studies provide (limited) evidence that search is increased in web-based environments (Lynch and Ariely 2000), the dominant finding is that consumers do not search more in these settings (Haubl and Trifts 2000; Johnson et al. 2004). The divergence in findings suggests that consumers possibly encounter new (i.e., unexpected) search costs that influence the overall cost of search. One such cost in a web-based environment is the cognitive cost of using the available electronic decision aid. This cost can be viewed as being akin to the cost of controlling the information flow (Ariely 2000) or the cost of planning (Benbasat and Todd 1996).

Second, more use of digital attributes can be expected in a web-based environment, because search costs for these attributes are lower (Lal and Sarvary 1999). The distinction between digital versus non-digital information is useful for understanding search and evaluation in an online store, because it is conceptually similar to the distinction between price and quality information. Previous research has found that electronic shopping can lower the cost of acquiring quality information and thus *decrease* price sensitivity (Lynch and Ariely 2000). But, when a “smart agent” is made available price sensitivity may *increase* even though the cost of acquiring quality information may still be lowered (Diehl, Kornish and Lynch 2003). The effect can be attributed to the information filtering (i.e., sorting) capability of the electronic decision aid. Extrapolating these findings suggests that the *digital sensitivity* (which may be defined in a manner analogous to price sensitivity) of consumers is likely to be heightened in a web-based environment where an electronic decision aid is available. Consequently, the use of digital attribute information is likely to be enhanced.

Third, more preference construction is known to occur in a web-based environment. Consumers are more likely to discover new alternatives and/or attributes (Bettman, Luce and Payne 1998) as they navigate through the product assortment in an online setting. The available electronic decision aid makes it easier for consumers to control the display of information (West et al 1999) and also restructure information on available alternatives (Coupey 1994). Consequently, stimulus-based influences on preference construction (e.g., number of available alternatives, time available, etc.) are likely to be enhanced (Lynch and Srull 1982). Previous research has found that the mere inclusion of an attribute in a web environment makes it more prominent during product evaluation (Haubl and Murray 2003).

Fourth, the search process in the web environment can be expected to be iterative (Payne, Howes and Reader 2001). Research using the human-computer interaction (HCI) paradigm suggests that the search process in an electronic environment interactively combines search planning with action. Another phenomenon that suggests that search in electronic environments is more iterative is

that of “information foraging” (Pirolli and Card 1999) in which individuals move from one information resource (or “patch”) to the next depending on a cost-benefit rule. A related idea of how individuals examine information in a web environment is that of “wayfinding” (Hodkison, Kiel and McColl-Kennedy 2000) where the search process alternates between examining inter-site and intra-site information.

Fifth, more use of elimination-type screening strategies (e.g., where selection criteria are exclusionary) for evaluating alternatives can be expected in a web-based environment, because they are easier to use in an online setting. Additive-type screening strategies (e.g., where selection criteria are inclusionary and exclusionary) require making trade-offs between attributes, which is more difficult in a web-based environment. While elimination-type strategies can help rapidly narrow the set of available alternatives, they are relatively rigid (i.e., inflexible) in their application which could lead to the premature elimination of otherwise attractive alternatives (Widing and Talarzyk 1993). A greater use of elimination-type strategies may also be observed because they are more congruent with the information format in a web-based environment (Payne, Bettman and Johnson 1993).

Sixth, more browsing behavior can be expected in a web-based environment, because of the increased significance of browsing behaviors (in comparison to directed-search behaviors) in electronic environments (Marchionini 1995; Rowley 2000). Likewise, more exploratory behavior may also be observed as consumers are distracted by the visual salience of attribute information (Jarvenpaa 1990). Some researchers have proposed that the psychological state of “flow” may be important in an online setting (Hoffman and Novak 1996). The time-distortion effects commonly associated with the phenomenon can be expected to lead to more browsing behavior. Further, a greater tendency toward exploration and novelty seeking has been found to result from the “atmospherics” of an online store (Menon and Kahn 2002).

Seventh, the electronic screening of information has been identified as the most important development in online shopping (Alba et al 1997). The typical web-based environment includes some type of electronic decision aid (Haubl and Murray 2003; Iacobucci, Arabie, and Bodapati 2000). An electronic decision aid can strongly influence search and evaluation in a web-based store. For example, an electronic decision aid can be used to reduce search costs or improve the quality of the consideration set or do both. Also, consumers seem to be willing to trust the product recommendations offered by an electronic decision aid (Haubl and Murray 2003), particularly when it only acts as a “clerk” (West et al 1999).

As mentioned earlier, whether or not consumers are able to screen alternatives in an electronic environment to match needs may depend on two important task environment factors (e.g., number of alternatives and time available). These factors have been studied in off-line decision environments as potential causes of information overload. The available electronic decision aid makes information overload less of a concern in online settings. In fact, to the contrary, information *underload* may be a greater concern, because of the *need* to re-set selection criteria and re-screen alternatives if few alternatives are available and/or the *opportunity* to do the same if there is too much time. Thus, two task environment factors that are known to influence search and evaluation in off-line settings may also do so in a web-based environment, but with very different consequences. In order to predict these effects we incorporate the two task environment factors and the seven influences on search and evaluation discussed above into a conceptual model of information search and consideration set formation for a web-based environment (see Figure 1).

HYPOTHESES

Embedded within the conceptual model are several hypotheses that link information search and consideration set formation to antecedent factors that are typical in online settings and the two task environment factors mentioned above. These hypotheses are presented next.

Information Search

Information search in an online setting is more iterative is because it combines planning with action (Payne, Howes and Reader 2001). The use of an electronic decision aid results in a greater emphasis on the initial (i.e., screening) phase and a lesser emphasis on the subsequent (i.e., examination) phase of search. The initial phase involves screening (and re-screening) choice alternatives by performing *search iterations* to identify alternatives that match preferences. Once identified, alternatives may subsequently be *examined* (i.e., scrutinized) for more detailed information.

Number of Search Iterations. In the web environment, consumers can be expected to conduct more iterative search (Payne, Howes and Reader 2001). Hence, they are likely to perform multiple search iterations as they seek to identify alternatives for inclusion in the consideration set. Lynch and Ariely (2000) found evidence of more (insert term) search, which is similar to iterative search. Chu and Spires (2000) found evidence of broader (i.e., less selective) information search when a DSS was used. As the number of alternatives increases, the number of search iterations is likely to decrease in the web environment due to the reduced likelihood of criteria over-specification (Widing and Talarzyk 1993) and less “information foraging” (Pirolli and Card 1999). However, as the time available increases more search iterations can be expected due to browsing (Marchionini 1995), greater likelihood of “flow” (Hoffman and Novak 1996), and the increase possibility of being distracted by the visual salience of information (Jarvenpaa 1990).

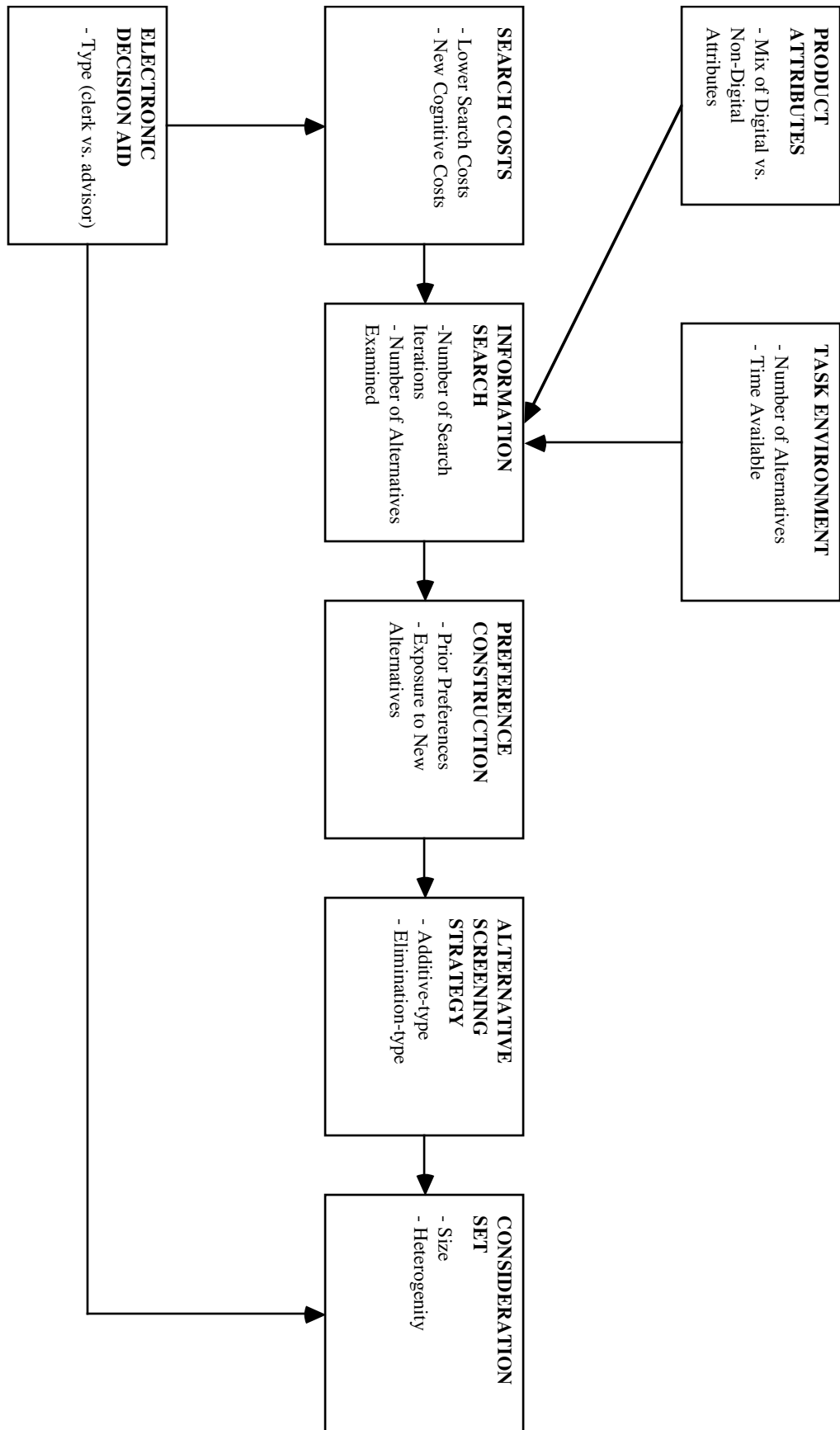
H1: There will be fewer search iterations in a web-based environment as the number of alternatives increases.

H2: There will be more search iterations in a web-based environment as time available increases.

Number of Alternatives Examined. A consequence of more search iterations in the web environment is that fewer alternatives may actually be examined (i.e., scrutinized) for information. The web environment offers a lower search cost, but this feature offers little benefit in terms of the cost of inspecting every screened alternative. Haubl and Trifts (2000) found evidence of fewer alternatives being examined for information. Also, consumers are likely to trust the electronic decision aid when it is only acting as a “clerk” (Haubl and Murray 2003), and may feel little need for examining every screened alternative for further information. As the number of alternatives increases, fewer alternatives are likely to be examined for information because of the greater likelihood of screened alternatives matching needs (Widing and Talarzyk 1993) and the reduced need to de-construct preferences or restructure information (Bettman, Luce and Payne 1998; Coupey 1994). But, as time available increases, more alternatives are likely to be examined for information due to exploratory and novelty seeking behavior (Menon and Kahn 2002) and browsing of screened alternatives (Rowley 2000).

H3: There will be fewer alternatives examined for information in a web-based environment as the number of alternatives increases.

FIGURE 1
 PROPOSED MODEL OF INFORMATION SEARCH AND CONSIDERATION SET FORMATION IN A WEB-BASED ENVIRONMENT



H4: There will be more alternatives examined for information in a web-based environment as time available increases.

Consideration Sets

Consideration Set Size. In the web environment, consumers are likely to use more attributes to screen available alternatives while forming a consideration set. The electronic decision aid makes it easy to include even unimportant attributes during the screening process (Todd and Benbasat 1994). Also, consumers are likely to use elimination-type screening strategies due to information format and processing style congruence (Bettman and Kakkar 1977). These two influences are likely to lead to smaller consideration sets compared to off-line decision environments. Haubl and Trifts (2000) found evidence that consumers develop smaller consideration sets in online settings. However, as the number of alternatives increases, consideration set size will increase because of the increased likelihood of more alternatives matching needs and the diminished need to re-calibrate the electronic decision aid and re-screen alternatives (Payne, Howes and Reader 2001). But, as time available increases, consideration set size will decrease due to more information foraging (Pirolli and Card 1999) and the greater use of elimination-type screening strategies (Payne, Bettman and Johnson 1988).

H5: The size of the consideration set in a web-based environment will increase as the number of alternatives increases.

H6: The size of the consideration set in a web-based environment will decrease as time available increases.

Consideration Set Heterogeneity. In the web environment, the tendency toward more browsing (Marchionini 1995) and iterative search will result in heterogeneous consideration sets. Also, changing selection criteria as consumers re-calibrate the electronic decision aid will also result in consideration set heterogeneity. As the number of alternatives increases, consideration set heterogeneity will increase because of more dissimilar alternatives being included in the consideration set (Roberts and Lattin 1991). But, as the time available increases, consideration set heterogeneity size will decrease due to the use of additional selection criteria resulting in more similar alternatives being included in the consideration set.

H7: The heterogeneity of the consideration set in a web-based environment will increase as the number of alternatives increases.

H8: The heterogeneity of the consideration set in a web-based environment will decrease as time available increases.

METHOD

Study Design

A study that simulated consumer decision-making in a web-based environment was conducted to test the hypotheses. The scenario consisted of undergraduate students choosing an apartment to rent near a hypothetical university. The web environment was characterized by the availability of an electronic decision aid that could be used to search a relational database of available apartments. Apartments were profiled using photographs and written descriptions.

The study employed a 2 number of alternatives (many, few) x 2 time available (more, less) x 2 web environment (web, web-auto) design. The first two factors are the two task environment influ-

ences of interest in the study. The two web environment conditions were collapsed because the distinction between them related to particular features of the electronic decision aid used, which were not pertinent to the study purpose. Prior to pooling the data on the third factor, homogeneity tests revealed no significant difference between the two web environment conditions.

Stimulus Development

Selection of Product Category. The selection of (hypothetical) rental apartments as the product category was based on a number of considerations. First, the product category is familiar to student subjects. Second, alternatives in the product category can be objectively evaluated. Third, attribute importance normally differs across individuals leading to preference heterogeneity. Several experimental studies of decision behavior have used rental apartments as a product category (Payne 1982; Todd and Benbasat 1992).

Task. Subjects were instructed to role-play a student transferring to another university who needed to find an apartment. They were asked to develop a list of apartments that they would like to visit for further consideration on arrival at the new campus. The purpose of the task was to search for apartments and form a consideration set. Profiles for apartments were constructed using a fractional factorial design based on attributes such as rent, location, number of bedrooms, and the number and type of amenities. Each profile described the apartment on twenty attributes. Unrealistic and dominated alternatives were eliminated.

Task Environment. The web environment was simulated by converting the apartment profiles into web displays. An electronic decision aid and relational database of apartment profiles similar to those at apartment search sites (e.g., <http://www.apartments.com>) was developed. A "search page" provided the interface between the electronic decision aid and the relational database. Subjects used this page to query the database about apartments that met their selection criteria. A screen indicated whether matching apartments had been found (or not). If matches were found, a screen displayed a list of matching apartments, with each listing being hyper-linked to the corresponding apartment profile. Hyper-links gave the subject the ability to: 1) return to the list of matching apartments, 2) return to the search page, or 3) add the apartment to their list of selected apartments.

Experimental Conditions. The number of alternatives available was set at 30 in the "few" alternatives condition and at 99 for the "many" alternatives condition based on guidelines provided in previous research (Widing and Talarzyk 1993). A pre-test indicated that subjects were able to complete the task in both conditions. In a second pre-test, subjects completed the experimental task with a certain number of alternatives (many or few) with no time constraint. The time pressure conditions were then created by multiplying the median time for task completion in each manipulation by 0.90 for the "low" and by 0.70 for the "high" time pressure condition based on guidelines provided in earlier studies (Ben-Zur and Breznitz 1981; Payne Bettman and Johnson 1988).

Experimental Procedure

One hundred and twenty undergraduate students participated in the study. Subjects were randomly assigned to the experimental conditions with approximately 15 subjects per cell. Each experimental session involved a single participant. The incentives for participation included extra course credit and a chance to win a \$100 lottery. Subjects first undertook a training task to familiarize themselves with the navigational features of the web environment. Then, for the main task, subjects used the electronic decision aid to create a "shopping cart" consisting of "apartments that they would

TABLE 1
CORRELATIONS AMONG VARIABLES

	Number of Search Iterations	Number of Alternatives Examined	Consideration Set Size	Consideration Set Homogeneity
Number of Search Iterations	—			
Number of Alternatives Examined	-.44**			
Consideration Set size	-.33**	.59**	—	
Consideration Set Homogeneity	-.04	.17*	-.02	—

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

seriously consider.” Subjects were told that they could modify the “shopping cart” during the session, but were not told how many apartments were available or how many apartments they should select.

Dependent Variables

Number of Search Iterations. The web server tracked the number of queries elicited from the relational database. The number of search iterations was calculated by counting the number of queries in the log file of the web server.

Number of Alternatives Examined. The number of alternatives examined (i.e., inspected) was determined by an inspection of the log file of the web server.

Consideration Set Size. Consideration set size was determined by tallying the number of different alternatives placed in the “shopping cart.”

Heterogeneity of the Consideration Set. The heterogeneity of the consideration set (HCS) was measured by calculating the average weighted Euclidean distance between all pairs of alternatives included in the consideration set. The weights were based on self-reported attribute importance ratings collected before the experiment. Prior to estimation, the attribute importance weights were standardized to avoid over-weighting.

RESULTS

Manipulation Checks and Reliability Assessments

A GLM-ANOVA model, with the perceived number of alternatives as the dependent variable and the number of alternatives present (many vs. few), time pressure (low vs. high), and environment (web vs. web-auto), as the independent variables was used to assess the manipulation. As expected, a significant main effect for

the number of alternatives manipulation (many vs. few) was found [$F(1,112)=4.72, p<.05$]. More alternatives were perceived to be present by subjects in the many alternatives condition ($\bar{x}=6.6$) than in the few alternatives condition ($\bar{x}=5.9$). Further, there was a marginally significant main effect for the time pressure (low vs. high) manipulation [$F(1,112)=3.42, p<.10$]. More alternatives were perceived to be present in the more time available condition ($\bar{x}=6.0$) than in the less time available condition ($\bar{x}=6.6$). Therefore, the manipulations were assessed to be successful. Table 1 provides the pair-wise correlations among the dependent variables. Table 2 provides descriptive statistics for the dependent variables.

Individual Hypotheses Results

Number of Search Iterations. H1 posits that there will be fewer search iterations environment as the number of alternatives increases. The main effect for number of alternatives was marginally significant [$F(1, 112)=2.76, p<.10$]. Inspection of the marginal means shows that the number of search iterations was lower in the many alternatives condition ($\bar{x}=7.3$) than in the few alternatives condition ($\bar{x}=8.5$). Thus, H1 is weakly supported. H2 posits that there will be more iterations as time available increases. The main effect for time available was significant [$F(1, 112)=4.93, p<.05$]. Inspection of the marginal means shows that the number of search iterations was significantly higher ($t=-2.22, p<.05$) in the more time available condition ($\bar{x}=8.9$) than in the less time available condition ($\bar{x}=7.3$). Thus, H2 is supported. The number of alternatives x time available interaction was not significant.

Number of Alternatives Examined. H3 posits that fewer alternatives will be examined for information as the number of alternatives increases. The main effect for number of alternatives was not significant [$F(1,105)=2.70, ns$]. Inspection of the marginal means shows that more alternatives were examined for information in the

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: MEANS AND STD. DEVIATIONS

	Web Based Decision Environment			
	Few Alternatives Available		Many Alternatives Available	
	Less Time Available	More Time Available	Less Time Available	More Time Available
Number of Search Iterations	7.81 (2.87)	9.25 (3.89)	6.87 (2.32)	8.27 (2.87)
Number of Alternatives Examined	7.60 (3.52)	8.50 (3.60)	8.20 (2.88)	10.56 (5.75)
Consideration Set size	4.63 (1.65)	3.79 (1.23)	4.80 (1.40)	4.73 (1.71)
Consideration Set Homogeneity	21.84 (9.25)	21.75 (10.71)	21.48 (11.06)	21.38 (11.41)

Note: Entries are cell means with standard deviations shown in parentheses.

many alternatives condition ($\bar{x}=9.3$) than in few alternatives condition ($\bar{x}=8.0$). Thus, H3 is not supported. H4 posits that as time available increases, the number of alternatives examined for information will increase. The main effect for time available was significant [$F(1,105)=4.67, p<.05$]. In the contrast comparisons, the number of alternatives examined increased in the expected direction as time available increased ($t=-2.16, p<.05$). Thus, H4 is supported. The time available x number of alternatives interaction was not significant.

Consideration Set Size. H5 posits that the consideration set size will increase as the number of alternatives increases. The main effect for number of alternatives was significant [$F(1,112)=3.63, p<.05$]. Inspection of the marginal means shows that the size of the consideration set was larger in the many alternatives condition ($\bar{x}=4.8$) than in the few alternatives condition ($\bar{x}=4.2$). Thus, H5 is supported. H6 posits that as time available increases, consideration set size will decrease. The main effect for time available was marginally significant [$F(1,112)=2.75, p<.10$]. In the contrast comparisons, the size of the consideration set decreased in the expected direction as time available increased ($t=-2.16, p<.05$). Thus, H6 is weakly supported. The time available x number of alternatives interaction was not significant.

Heterogeneity of the Consideration Set. H7 posits that the alternatives in the consideration set will be more heterogeneous as the number of alternatives increases. The main effect for number of alternatives was not significant [$F(1,112)=0.04, ns$]. Inspection of the marginal means shows that there was little change in consideration set heterogeneity between the few alternatives available ($\bar{x}=21.8$) and the more alternatives available ($\bar{x}=21.4$) conditions,

with higher values indicating more heterogeneous consideration sets. Thus, H7 is not supported. H8 posits that as time available increases, heterogeneity of the consideration set will decrease. The main effect for time available was not significant [$F(1,112)=0.01, ns$]. Inspection of the marginal means shows that there was no change in consideration set heterogeneity between the less time available ($\bar{x}=21.6$) and the more time available ($\bar{x}=21.6$) conditions. Thus, H8 is not supported.

DISCUSSION

Overall, the results provide some support for the hypothesized relationships, with five of the eight hypotheses receiving partial or full support. The findings relating to search when many alternatives are available show that while consumers conduct fewer search iterations (weak support for H1), they do not actually examine fewer alternatives for information (lack of support for H3). In contrast, the findings relating to search when more time is available show that the number of search iterations conducted increases (support for H2) but so does the number of alternatives examined (support for H4). Thus, an increase in the time available has the predicted effect on search, while an increase in the number of alternatives does not. The empirical results relating to consideration set formation show that consumers form larger consideration sets when many alternatives are available (support for H5), but form smaller considerations sets when more time is available (support for H6) as predicted. The heterogeneity of the consideration set remains unaffected when either more alternatives or more time is available (lack of support for H7 and H8).

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Overall, the empirical findings offer qualified support for the conceptual framework. While not all hypothesized relationships were significant, the main prediction of the model that the two task environment factors have an important influence on information search and consideration set formation seems to be upheld. When more alternatives are available, consumers conduct fewer search iterations but yet develop larger smaller consideration sets. When more time is available, they conduct more search iterations, examine more alternatives, but form smaller consideration sets. The two task environment factors seem to have independent effects on search and alternative evaluation in a web-based environment. In contrast, the two task environment factors are known to have an interactive effect in off-line settings, because more alternatives and less time are associated with task complexity. Further, when more alternatives are available consumers seem engage in risk-averse behavior, because such is implied by larger consideration sets (Roberts and Lattin 1993). But when more time is available, consumers engage in risk-taking behavior, because they form smaller consideration sets. Thus, as predicted by conceptual model, the two task environment factors seem to have the opposite effect in online settings compared to their influence in off-line decision environments.

An interesting pattern of inter-relationships can be observed among measures normally associated with decision quality and the two task environment variables. Decision quality seems to *improve* in a web-based environment as more alternatives are available and there is less time. A possible reason for such an effect is information *underload* in a web-based environment. In other words, when there are few alternatives available and there plenty of time, the task becomes "difficult."

An important implication that emerges from the study results is that electronic decision aids in web environments may impose new search costs on consumers that offset the overall lower search cost offered by these environments. These costs could have a detrimental effect for relatively straightforward choice tasks. As the task becomes more difficult, the unfavorable influence of new search costs can be expected to decline, thereby allowing the favorable influence of the overall lower search cost to have a greater impact on the decision process. Decision aids are often closely tied to the environments in which they are used because they are frequently "designed" for those environments. It seems that decision aids suitable for a particular environment may be ineffective in other environments (Olson and Widing 2002). Thus, marketers may need to build in more "flexibility" into their electronic decision aids so that they perform well at varying levels of task complexity. Anecdotal reports in the business press suggest that there is a movement toward the development of flexible electronic decision aids (Maes 1999; Perez 2002; Reda 2002).

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Selective Versus Comprehensive Processors: Gender Differences in Web Consumer Behavior

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The Internet is rapidly becoming an important platform for diffusing product information and purchasing products. However, little is known about how Web atmospherics impact consumers' web browsing behavior. In addition, we do not have any knowledge about whether the same Web atmospherics influence males and females in a different way. To address these research gaps, this study proposes a model of information seeking in an online retailing environment. The moderating effects of gender are examined to see how and why males and females are impacted by different elements of a Web environment.

According to Meyers-Levy's *selectivity model* (Meyers-Levy and Maheswaran 1991), males are selective information processors, acquire information heuristically, and tend to miss subtle cues, whereas females engage in effortful, comprehensive, and itemized analysis of all available information. Gender differences in information processing are also attributed to their difference in cranial hemispheric activity (Meyers-Levy 1994). Specifically, males are right-hemisphere-dependent, excelling at nonverbal processing, visual acuity, and visual spatial processing, whereas females are left-hemisphere-dependent, excelling verbal processing, attentiveness to detail, and superior reading skills.

Based on an extensive literature search, we developed an Experience-Atmospherics-Behavior model of Internet consumer behavior. This proposed model incorporates consumer experience and atmospherics cues (quality of the information) on online behavioral variables. The quality of the information was operationalized as site structure, informativeness, and effectiveness of information content. Entertainment was also included to reflect the hedonic function of a website. Online behavior included site attitude, site involvement, exploratory behavior and pre-purchase intentions.

The hypotheses are partly based on the propositions of the selectivity model and on findings in internet and communication research: Since women are characterized as comprehensive processors of information, they will exhibit a more complex search process than men. Consequently, during the visit the effect of: (a) entertainment on exploratory behavior should be more important on men than on women; (b) challenges on exploratory behavior should be more important on women than on men; (c) challenges on pre-purchase intentions should be more important on women than on men; (d) structure of the web site on attitudes toward the site should be more important on men than on women; (e) informativeness on exploratory behavior should be more important on women than on men; (f) effectiveness of information content on exploratory behavior should be more important on men than on women.

The proposed model was tested with a convenience sample of real consumers who responded to a questionnaire after navigating through an existing pharmaceutical web site. Using exploratory and confirmatory analyses, the ten-factor structure was confirmed, and convergent and discriminant validity were verified. Prior to full invariance tests, two baseline structural models were tested, one for males (N=116) and the other for females (N=145). For both, all measurement model paths were significant and 11 out of 14 causal paths were significant and in the hypothesized direction for both

males and females, and the standardized results of these models were very good. To test our hypotheses, a multiple-group analysis using EQS tested the equality of both measurement and structural paths across purchasing modes, by imposing equality constraints on parameters of the male and the female models, and a number of paths were found to differ between the two groups.

The first finding relates to the differences in the number of significant paths for males and female respondents, indicating that the female model reflects a more complex information search process than the male model. Second, females seem to use skills and challenge to impact exploratory behavior, while males only use challenges to impact site attitudes and pre-purchase intentions. Third, a similar interpretation holds for the impact of effectiveness of information content impacting site involvement only for females, as well as the impact of effectiveness of information content and exploratory behavior impacting site involvement, also significant only for females. Fourth, there is no gender difference in the impact of entertainment on site involvement and attitudes. However, females should like highly-entertaining sites that impact positively their exploratory behavior, meaning they browse and scroll more in order to get more enjoyment. This is not surprising as entertainment is a peripheral cue and both males and females are assumed to process it heuristically. Fifth, effectiveness of information content had effects only on the males' exploratory behavior, while this variable has more complex effects on females by having also a link with site involvement. They collect more information about the product they search for.

Finally, site attitudes are impacted by structure only for males. This is the only central cue to affect attitudes toward the website. This short path, the use of this variable and the negative path between informativeness and exploratory behavior indicate less than comprehensive processors. On the other hand, females use more central cues and a longer process to develop site attitudes through the mediation of site involvement and exploratory behavior. In conclusion, the hypotheses partially based on the selectivity model are supported and our findings provide new original insights into gender differences in online information processing.

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Forced vs. Voluntary Exposure Web Ads: Immediate and Long-Term Impact of Ad Avoidance on Communication Outcomes

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Generating long-term memory for an ad and the advertised brand are key advertising objectives since most choice and purchase decisions are made after a temporal delay from ad exposure. However, in natural media consumption environments, ad avoidance is a norm rather than an exception. This issue is especially relevant in the Web medium as advertisers grapple with banner blindness and declining clickthrough rates and use increasingly intrusive and large ad formats. Little is known if increasing ad sizes and using forced exposure ad formats can improve communication outcomes and if these gains generated immediately after ad exposure persist over time.

We investigate the role of advertisement size (large vs. small) and ad exposure format (forced vs. voluntary) on immediate and delayed brand recall, ad recognition and brand attitude in web-based media. Drawing upon prior research in advertising, consumer behavior, marketing and psychology we propose that ad exposure format induces consumers to cognitively or physically avoid ads. Voluntary exposure ad formats like banners and text ads are more likely to be cognitively avoided since it is an automatic, subconscious process that occurs in parallel with the browsing activity and does not require any behavioral action by the consumer. Forced exposure formats that interrupt browsing activity and demand immediate response are more likely to be physically avoided by closing them.

Cognitively avoided ads are preattentively processed, consumers have implicit memory for the ad but not explicit memory for the brand. Physically avoided ads generate explicit memory for the ad and brand through heightened attention and hence immediate recall and recognition measures are likely to be higher for forced exposure rather than voluntary exposure ads. Further immediately after ad exposure the strength of (implicit or explicit) memory traces will be higher for large ad stimuli compared to smaller stimuli. However in delayed conditions explicit memory for forced exposure ads will decay rapidly however implicit memory can endure over time for the same level of ad exposure. Hence delayed brand recall and ad recognition measures will lower for forced exposure and large ads compared to voluntary exposure and small ads.

Trafleton's memory model suggests that the interruption of browsing activity by large forced exposure ads leads to negative brand attitudes immediately after ad exposure compared to voluntary exposure ads. However after a delay, the ad context will be forgotten while familiarity based sleeper effect will contribute to higher brand attitude for forced exposure ads in delayed condition. Further, brand attitudes are not expected to differ across small forced and voluntary exposure ads.

The experimental design for our experiment had two between-subjects factors (two ad exposure conditions; banner ad (voluntary exposure) vs. pop-up ad (forced exposure) and two ad size conditions; large vs. small) and one within-subjects factor (time of measurement – immediate vs. delayed). One hundred sixty three undergraduate students participated in the study to evaluate a student newspaper site and provided measures in three stages.

Mixed model ANCOVA results indicate that forced exposure ads generate higher immediate recognition and recall of the advertised brand but lower brand recall in delayed conditions. Gains in

recognition from using forced exposure ad format accrue when ad sizes are small, i.e. recognition scores for small banner ads significantly decayed over time, but not for small pop-up ads. Hence small pop-ups perform better both immediately after ad exposure and over time. There were no significant differences for large ad sizes for recall and recognition measures.

Brand attitude for banner ad was significantly higher than pop-up ads in immediate and delayed conditions. The significant two-way interaction of ad format and time under large ad size condition indicates that the negative impact of large pop-up ad use on brand attitude does not decay with time. In the small ad size condition, brand attitude for small banner ad was significantly higher than small pop-up ad immediately after ad exposure but not in delayed conditions.

Our results indicate that online advertisers face a formidable challenge in generating memory (especially recall) for their brand even when using intrusive ad formats. Recall scores are significantly lower than recognition scores indicating that few ads are centrally processed. However most ads are preattentively processed and endure over time, so recognition measures and use of large size ads with similar features will generate higher returns over time. We suggest practical implications for advertisers in selection ad execution features in optimizing immediate and long-term communication outcomes.

“Is it Really Complicated?” Motivational Differences in the Effects of Structural and Outcome Complexity on Consumers’ Web site and Brand Evaluations

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

As marketers spend significantly to enhance the aesthetics and sophistication of consumer experiences, they are increasing the complexity of interactive consumption environments. However, little is known about how consumers react to such complexity, in terms of their evaluations. In this research, we examine two specific types of complexity: 1) *Structural Complexity*, defined as the number of distinct cues (e.g., information categories, length of text, audio, video, animation) at the web site that the consumer has to process, and 2) *Outcome Complexity*, defined as the abstractness of icons and symbols that the consumer uses to navigate the web site (e.g., ambiguous icons at a web site that does not allow the consumer to form clear outcome predictions). While these types of complexity maybe more memorable, communicate more information and are likely to engage consumers, they often make the web site difficult to navigate and use. In this research, we investigate if complexity in the form of multiple cues and abstract icons will lead to positive or negative outcomes at a web site.

Extant research on complexity advocates two divergent views of complexity. Research on stimulus complexity (Berlyne 1960) suggests that (moderately) complex environments will evoke the most favorable evaluations since it creates a stimulating environment. On the other hand, according to cognitive load theory (Sweller 1988), complexity can be perceived as superfluous and inefficient, leading to unfavorable evaluations. This paper attempts to address this conflict by focusing on individual motives. There is research to suggest that motives such as goal directed (focused on the end goal) and experiential (focused on the experience) persuade individuals to adopt separate mechanisms that guide evaluations (Hoffman and Novak 1996), implying that individuals belonging to these two different motive groups will have varying outcomes to complexity in an online environment.

We posit that distinct consumer motives (goal directed vs. experiential) will interact with the level (low, moderate, high) and type (structural, outcome) of complexity to determine consumer evaluations of the web site and brand. It is proposed that the congruence between the complexity level and needs of specific motives will drive the favorable evaluations toward a web site. Experiential consumers who are looking for an engaging experience will find the moderate complexity web site stimulating and challenging, triggering favorable evaluations; while the goal directed consumers who are seeking efficiency will find the low complexity web site ideal for pursuing their goal in a linear manner. In addition, we predict that due to the conceptual nature of the end goal (seeking specific information), individuals in a goal directed motive display higher sensitivity for low outcome complexity. On the other hand, individuals with an experiential motive are stimulus driven, and more focused on the elements of the stimulus that make the process of browsing engaging and stimulating, displaying higher sensitivity for moderate structural complexity.

These predictions are tested across two studies. Study 1, across 48 web sites designed as a 3 (Low, Moderate or High Structural Complexity) X 2 (Goal directed or Experiential Motive) demonstrates that the match or mismatch between consumer motives and complexity levels leads goal directed and experiential consumers to vary in their evaluations of complexity, but only at moderate and low levels. In Study 2, a second type of complexity, outcome

complexity was introduced to examine the interplay between the two complexities, structural and outcome in influencing consumer reactions. Study 2, designed as 2 (Low Structural or Moderate Structural Complexity) X 2 (Low Outcome or Moderate Complexity) X 2 (Goal directed or Experiential Motive) confirms the findings of Study 1 by illustrating that goal directed individuals display a higher preference for the low complexity level (low structural-low outcome) than experiential individuals. Conversely, the experiential individuals display a higher preference for the moderate complexity level (moderate structural-moderate outcome) than goal directed individuals. In addition, the results indicate that goal directed individuals are sensitive to changes in outcome complexity but not sensitive to changes in structural complexity, while experiential individuals are sensitive to changes in structural complexity but not sensitive to changes in outcome complexity.

If corroborated, this research has theoretical and practical relevance. In particular, these insights contribute to complexity literature by explaining that motivation is a key moderator of consumer reactions to complexity, and may help reconcile conflicting findings on complexity reported previously. From a practical standpoint, the framework suggests that marketers should tailor the complexity of the environment to align to the motives that consumers bring to the consumption task. For example, a marketer may choose to differentiate among consumers based on their motives, and direct them to environments of varying complexity.

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Mothers' Perceptions of their Control over their Children's Diets

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ABSTRACT

In an era of rising rates of childhood obesity it is increasingly important for parents to ensure their children consume healthy diets. Given current trends in childhood obesity, it would appear that many parents are failing to engage in effective feeding practices. As mothers remain the major influence on family eating patterns (World Health Organisation (WHO) 2000), the extent to which they consider themselves to be in control their children's diets is important as it indicates where possible solutions to childhood obesity may lie. This paper explores the factors that mothers feel diminish their control over their children's diets to provide insight into why obesity is a growing problem in countries such as Australia despite the ready availability of low-energy nutritious foods and the good intentions of parents.

BACKGROUND

There is a growing awareness of the need to prevent and treat obesity because of its serious health implications which include heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, gallbladder disease, some forms of cancer, and psychological conditions (WHO 2000, 2004). Obesity is now so prevalent in Western society that it has been labelled an epidemic (Spiegel and Alving 2005).

Targeting childhood obesity has been proposed as the most effective way to prevent adult obesity due to the tendency for overweight children to become obese adults, the higher rates of long term weight loss maintenance among children, and the difficulties involved in changing behaviours later in life (Bouchard 1996; Sothorn and Gordon 2003). The prevention and treatment of childhood obesity is also necessary due to the increasing prevalence of obesity-related illnesses among children such as Type 2 Diabetes, sleep apnoea, orthopaedic complications, and weight-related depression (Dietz 1998; WHO 2000). In Western Australia, the context of this study, 23% of boys and 30% of girls were overweight or obese in 2003, an increase from 9% and 10% respectively in 1985 (Glasson et al. 2004; Hands et al. 2004). There is an urgent need for multi-disciplinary research to develop possible solutions to this rapid rise in childhood obesity (McGinnis 2006; Spiegel and Alving 2005).

The health literature highlights the role of parents in managing their children's diets and body weight (American Dietetic Association (ADA) 2004; O'Dea 2003). Parents' influence over their children's diets is postulated to occur through three food-related roles: food providers, models of food consumption, and controllers of the eating environment. In their role as food providers, parents control which food products are kept in the home and in what quantities they are made available to children (Birch and Fisher 1998). The role of modelling food consumption is important because children mimic the eating behaviours of those with whom they share meals (Birch and Fisher 1998). The role of controlling the meal environment relates to how parents use mealtimes as opportunities to educate children about nutrition and promote the consumption of a wide range of healthy foods (Gable and Lutz 2001). Such behaviours can make long-term differences to children's food choices (ADA 2004).

Despite the potential of parents to control their children's food consumption behaviours and guide their future food choices, there is ample evidence that children's diets are suboptimal. Many Australian children's diets are deficient in specific vitamins and

minerals such as calcium, zinc, and vitamin A (McLennan and Podger 1998). In addition, consumption of fruits and vegetables remains well below target levels despite these foods being readily available in almost all areas. A Western Australian survey found that 45% of the children sampled had not consumed any fruit on the previous day and 30% had not eaten any vegetables (Hands et al. 2004). The study also found that the consumption of vegetables among children is actually decreasing (Glasson et al. 2004). Combined with the rapidly increasing childhood obesity rates, these figures demonstrate that many parents are not adequately managing their children's diets.

There are several possible causes for parental failure to achieve control over children's diets. These include an insufficient knowledge of nutrition, a lack of motivation to ensure children eat well, and an inability to control children's food consumption behaviours. This study focuses on the latter possibility. Although obesity models in the nutrition literature emphasise the role of parents in determining their children's body weight outcomes through genetic inheritability and child feeding practices, numerous other environmental variables are also understood to play a role. These variables include cultural, social, marketing, and economic factors (Birch and Fisher 1998; McGinnis 2006; Spiegel and Alving 2005). Unfortunately, there has been almost no investigation of the relative influence of each of these factors (Hastings et al. 2003). Understanding the environmental forces against which parents must work to manage their children's diets is important for developing consumer education programs and public policies aimed at reducing obesity and vitamin deficiency among children.

METHOD

As mothers tend to be at the coalface of child feeding on a daily basis (WHO 2000), this investigation focused on mothers' attitudes to nutrition and child feeding. It was a grounded study in that particular issues were not foreshadowed prior to data collection. Two focus groups and 12 depth interviews were conducted with 20 mothers of young children. Middle class mothers were selected because of their accessibility and their ability to articulate the complex issues surrounding child feeding practices. Mothers were recruited to achieve representation of single and two-parent families, working and non-working mothers, and a spread of child gender and age (one to 12 years). Interviewee age ranged from 30 to 44. The mothers were sourced from two schools within the same geographic area—one a government school and the other a Catholic school. Personal contacts within the schools were initially contacted and a snowball method was then used to facilitate further recruitment.

The focus groups were kept intentionally small (four or five members per group) to facilitate detailed contributions from all participants. An interview guide was used to ensure coverage of specific issues (e.g., attitudes to particular food categories, current and ideal food choices, and experiences when grocery shopping), but interviewees were given considerable latitude to introduce other topics. The interviews ranged in length from 40 minutes to 1.5 hours, with the focus groups tending to run longer than the individual interviews. The interview transcripts were imported into NVivo 2.0 for coding and analysis. Data were coded to 87 nodes and node intersections were performed to facilitate closer examination of the data. Iterative sweeps between the nodes, node intersections,

and the full transcripts enabled the primary themes to emerge. One of the most apparent themes was mothers' feelings of regular loss of control of their children's eating behaviours. The findings relating to this theme are outlined below.

FINDINGS

In line with recent research in the US that found that mothers want to provide their children with a healthy diet (Sherry et al. 2004), all the mothers interviewed expressed a high degree of interest and involvement in their children's diets. They seemed aware of the importance of good nutrition to children's growth and development and were obviously keen to be good mothers in terms of their feeding practices. While there were occasional variances in stated beliefs about the types of foods that are healthy for children to consume, overall there was strong convergence on this issue. Most interviewees described at length how they make consistent attempts to provide healthy meals and snacks that their children will enjoy. Despite these efforts, however, they perceived that numerous factors interfere with their ability to achieve this goal. These factors include the behaviours of other caregivers, the stresses involved in managing family life, and the wearing effects of pestering. Each of these tensions is discussed below.

When I'm Not Around

The interviewees mentioned a range of other caregivers whom they felt at times undermined their ability to control the quality of their children's diets. Fathers were perceived to be the worst offenders, followed by members of the extended family, teachers, coaches, and even medical practitioners. School canteens were also often viewed as a source of nutritional contradiction in terms of the foods offered to children.

Husbands. The interviewees typically described themselves as the food gatekeepers in the home. Whether they were full-time homemakers or working mothers, they saw an important part of their parenting role being food decisions and food education. Their husbands, by comparison, were not generally viewed as being skilled or motivated in this area. According to the interviewees, the role of father is viewed by husbands to include the authorisation of exceptions to household food rules and the provision of 'treat' foods. While some mothers were amused by this difference in approach to child feeding, others found it confronting and frustrating:

He does like to indulge them far more than I do in treats and sweets, and often you feel kind of a party pooper in a way, you know, raining on everyone's parade. That's the way of Mums isn't it? You're always the bad guy... Their father sees me as being a bit too militant in my policing of what goes into them. I don't see it as policing at all-it's parenting. I'll turn it around until I end up feeling guilty about it.

Some of the mothers attributed the differences in parenting styles between mothers and fathers to different knowledge levels. They felt that mothers are more likely to consider the nutrient profile of the meal being offered while fathers take a more global view of eating that prioritises hunger satisfaction and energy consumption: "*They haven't actually balanced anything, but they've fed them.*"

Extended Family. Grandparents, uncles, and aunts were also often accused of sabotaging mothers' efforts to control the quality of their children's diets. While this sometimes resulted in anger and resentment, the interviewees almost always portrayed the offender as well-intentioned. Most commonly, the family members were

understood to be trying to please their children and create an emotional bond:

My sister-in-law takes her there (McDonalds) because they think I am mean because I don't take her... They think it's something she would like.

I know it is something that allows him (grandfather) to have that special bond, that special time where he's the greatest, just for that small moment in time when Mum's not here and it's just us.

This tendency to empathise with the offender often resulted in the behaviours going unchallenged. The interviewees understood that going to fast food restaurants is an inexpensive and convenient way for family members to entertain young children and provide an outing that will be considered special and exciting. They were grateful for their family members' desire to spend time with their children which made it difficult for them to criticise their choices.

Dependence on extended family members can be particularly difficult for single mothers who have few childcare alternatives. One interviewee was a single mother with three young children. She described how juggling the competing demands on her time and attention is made all the more difficult by the need to monitor the feeding practices of other caregivers and manage the outcomes when her requests are ignored:

You can try and put your points of view across, but to have that maintained and supported by other caregivers within the family unit has been a problem for me-a very big problem over the years. There is a conflict of beliefs, and so where they're indulged in something which I don't allow, they're always questioning me as to why their father or their grandfather has said yes.

Some interviewees discussed how the indulgences provided by well-meaning others had multiple implications for mothers. These included the more intensive parenting required as a result of the behavioural changes in their children after consuming foods high in sugar and additives and the heightened pestering for treat foods that could persist for an extended period after exposure. There is very little recognition in the literature that members of the extended family can constitute barriers to mothers implementing effective dietary control (see Bruss, Morris, and Dannison 2003 for an exception).

Teachers and Coaches. While the interviewees could excuse to some extent their family members' dietary indiscretions with their children, they were much less forgiving of the same behaviours when enacted by teachers. Given their position of authority and presumed knowledge, teachers were expected to uphold healthy eating practices. The interviewees expressed confusion as to why teachers would provide their children with unhealthy foods and frustration at their inability to intervene. This inability stemmed from not being present at the time and a reluctance to deprive their children of special treats being enjoyed by their peers:

This is one thing that annoys me about the school-they get so many sugary treats. My son loves his teacher, but he would get like a whole block of chocolate each week. My son would come out with a block of chocolate this big and the teacher would say to me, "Oh, is it okay if I give him a block of chocolate?" But I'm not going to say, "No, my child should be the only one in the class who doesn't have one."

Some mothers also described it as incomprehensible that sports coaches would disseminate vouchers for fast food restaurants as a reward for participation or success in sporting events. Concern was expressed that this is sending the wrong message to children who are likely to respect and admire their coaches and interpret the vouchers as an endorsement of the food products being awarded. Once again, mothers are put in a difficult position as to reject the voucher would disappoint their child. As one mother noted, "Where do you draw the line?"

School Canteens. It was generally agreed that the school environment should be supportive of healthy eating principles and that this should be reflected in the canteen menu:

I think it's a shame that they don't have a few more healthy options on the canteen menu. Like nice pumpkin or tomato soup-we used to have that at school.

The influence of the school canteen on children's nutrition was understood to be complex. Not only do canteens signal to children the foods that are appropriate for them to consume, they also provide the nourishment that children need to meet their academic potential. In addition, canteens were understood to be a potential source of peer pressure:

Having my son start school this year I'm appalled to see what they sell in the canteen-just sausage rolls, pies, junkie sort of stuff that I would just never serve them at home. So it makes me sad because there are going to be kids that go to school who buy their lunch every day and my son will come home from school, because of peer group pressure, saying he wants to buy his lunch too...I just think it's appalling. You can't expect children to learn well in class if they've got that kind of rubbish in them.

Medical Practitioners. The most surprising "others" identified by mothers as being unsupportive of healthy eating practices were medical practitioners. Doctors, dentists, and nurses were discussed as sending children inappropriate messages about nutrition. The interviewees noted that medical practitioners are increasingly bestowing "bravery award" food vouchers from fast food restaurants to reward children for good behaviour during a procedure.

When my son had his stitches taken out, he got a certificate from McDonald's for a free burger and fries. It's issued through the doctor's surgery!...Just think about the signals. They are so little and they pick up symbolism everywhere and the doctor is saying that McDonald's is good for them.

Such actions by health care workers have implications for mothers who are attempting to control their children's diets and favourably influence their food beliefs. As parents are not consulted prior to the child being given the voucher, they are in a difficult position if they require their child to refuse the reward. They face the prospect of disappointing a child who may have just had a frightening or painful experience and also possibly alienating a health care provider on whom they may need to rely in the future.

I'm Not Coping

Most of the mothers acknowledged that their children's diets were not as good as they would like them to be because of the stresses of managing family life. They talked about the numerous educational, sporting, work, and social commitments that can result in a reliance on fast foods and take away meals to cope. Even those

mothers philosophically opposed to the large fast food chains reported succumbing when life gets too hard:

The whole concept of this super corporation-I have real problems with that. But of course all of my militaristic views and ideologies are out the window when I have three children saying: "Mummy, I'm hungry" and I don't have the time to cook, or the energy, or it's the weekend.

In such circumstances, unhealthy foods take on the mantle of a necessary evil. They are time-saving and kid-satisfying, and thus provide real benefits to beleaguered mothers. Unfortunately, these benefits can be accompanied by a sense of guilt over their children's health and their own adequacy as mothers. It has been noted that this reliance on unhealthy foods is becoming more common as larger numbers of women enter paid employment and look to convenience foods to help them cope (WHO 2000).

Pester Power

Many of the mothers talked about the power of their children to pester them into buying foods they consider to be unhealthy. They understood pestering behaviours to be a symptom of a learning stage during which parents need to hold their ground to set behavioural parameters and teach children appropriate ways of eating. Most interviewees gave the impression that their usual response to pestering is to say no, although most acknowledged that they do give in at times to keep the peace. This reported behaviour of refusing most requests is at odds with previous observational research in the US that showed acquiescence to be the more typical reaction (Burr and Burr 1977; Isler, Popper, and Ward 1987; Taras et al. 2000). The difference in outcomes between these previous studies and the present study may be the result of self-report versus observational data collection methods and/or cultural disparities.

While pestering children were described as irritating and frustrating, most mothers looked beyond their child to forces further down the pester chain that encourage their children to repeatedly request unhealthy foods. Often referred to generically by the interviewees as 'marketing', these forces included television, advertising, sales promotion, premiums, and packaging. Peers were also raised as sources of pester power, although this was typically in the context of peers being exposed to the same marketing stimuli as their child.

Television and Advertising. Television was often equated with advertising by the interviewees because of the significant licensing of television characters in children's food marketing. The interviewees also seemed to associate television exposure with peer pressure as the influence of both forces tended to converge in accounts of how their children have become aware of new food products and subsequently engaged in pestering behaviours:

With my kids it's something they've seen on TV and perhaps someone has had it at school and they're very excited about it, so that's perhaps why they ask. But I don't know why they ask, perhaps they're just thinking "One day she will. Get her at a weak moment. One day she'll say yes."

There was often a sense of surprise among the interviewees that their children had been exposed to advertising for such a wide range of unhealthy foods when they considered themselves to be vigilant in monitoring the television watched by their children.

My daughter doesn't watch children's shows. She's not allowed to watch TV in the mornings or the daytime. Not even a video. So she doesn't watch a lot...sometimes I'm amazed

that she's seen ads for things that I don't even know what they are. But I am around when she watches TV, so she must soak it up more than I do.

This lack of awareness among mothers of the extent to which their children are exposed to advertising has implications for their ability to control their children's diets. Exposure has been found to be related to requests for the products advertised and parental purchases of these products (Taras et al. 2000). In light of the interviewees' comments about the tendency for other people to provide their children with foods of which they disapprove, it seems likely that children's triggered desires for advertised products will be indulged to some degree by husbands and extended family members. Bandyopadhyay, Kindra, and Sharp (2001) have noted that where parents have difficulty filtering advertisements reaching their children, there is an important role for public policy makers to protect children's interests. If this sample of middle-class mothers had difficulty monitoring their children's exposure to advertisements for unhealthy foods, many other parents may experience a similar problem.

While in the marketing literature there is considerable debate and confusion over the power of advertising to affect children's food-related beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours (Kunkel 2005; Livingstone 2005; Young 2003), there was no doubt in the interviewees' minds that much of their children's pestering behaviours originate from advertising: "*A lot of their requests at the supermarket are most definitely driven by the ads.*" The extent to which advertising was perceived to influence children led some mothers to suggest that advertising to children is inappropriate as it reduces parental control:

I think what would be better is not to have the advertising on TV when kids are watching. That would probably be better because other things you can control-when or not you go out, where you go. Whereas sometimes you're sitting at the TV and they see that advertising, it gives them the idea and they can pester.

Sales Promotion, Packaging, and Premiums. Most of the mothers with younger children (approximately one to six years of age) bemoaned their regular trips to the supermarket as a form of torture. They identified sweets at the checkout, junk food in the aisles, licensed characters on packets, and products bearing premiums as major hurdles to overcome while shopping. The placement of snack foods at the checkout was considered by the interviewees to be a very deliberate strategy by store management to increase sales by making their lives miserable:

Talking about checkouts, that's a pain because they're very clever. They get you at a very weak spot there because the kids at that stage are tired and you want something to keep them quiet so you can get through your stuff. You tend to weaken a bit and you buy stuff at the checkout.

While it was acknowledged that some stores provide a "family" checkout aisle, it was noted that the waiting time at this aisle is usually longer because of the greater demand for the service than is being provided for by the store. As a result, the longer waiting time becomes just as great an inconvenience as the pestering that occurs at the other aisles.

According to the interviewees, the sheer amount of unhealthy food sold in stores means that requests can be endless and entire aisles can become no-go zones for weary mothers:

You name it, there's something in every aisle. Can we have chips, can we get lollies, can I have a treat, can I have a Kinder Surprise, can I have a Yowie? No, no, no, no.

The interviewees discussed at length the proliferation of licensed products that can be irresistible to children and therefore the source of heart-felt pleading. They were convinced that food manufacturers intentionally use cartoon characters and bright colours on packaging to capture children's attention and encourage them to request products from their hapless parents.

They seem to spot it a mile off, to be able to spot The Incredibles or whatever the latest thing is... They'll even take stuff that I know they're not going to eat because they've seen the picture on the front.

Grocery shopping with young children was often described as being similar in nature to psychological warfare. Mothers have to plan ahead to avoid product displays that are sure to incite excited and urgent pleas. They have to brave themselves for the onslaught of demands that need to be refused in such a way that the shopping trip can continue without excessive duress for all parties. Some mothers discussed how they organise baby sitting to avoid taking their children to the store. The picture painted was very different to Rust's (1993) interpretation of observations of mother and child grocery shopping. According to Rust, shopping with young children is a pleasant teaching and learning activity for parents and children. Perhaps his observational data were not able to show the level of internal discomfort experienced by the mothers observed.

The tendency for many producers of children's food products to use premiums to increase sales can be a further source of hardship for mothers. Premiums were associated in the mothers' minds with peer influence as once a child's friends had a particular premium it increased the pressure exerted by the child to buy the product. The fast food restaurant chains were noted as being particularly effective in their use of premiums, especially when the premiums are part of sets that become available gradually, thus necessitating multiple visits:

It really appeals to them, but that also makes them want to go back and they're nagging me to go back more than once a week because they want to get the next one. They're worried that they're going to change the promotion before we get back there... I noticed that they were trying to push us to come more often, there was something on the tele saying "Don't miss out", and the kids really wanted to go.

DISCUSSION

The findings from these interviews with well-educated and predominantly affluent mothers show that they perceive a range of external forces to interfere with their ability to exert an ideal level of control over their children's diets. Perceived control is an important element of consumer decision making as it has been related to the ability to perform tasks and tolerate frustration and the levels of self-confidence experienced when dealing with a particular product (Hui and Bateson 1987; O'Bearden, Hardesty, and Rose 2001). In addition, past research suggests that when individuals experience low levels of perceived control they form weaker intentions to enact the behaviour of interest (Kokkinaki 1999). In this case, mothers' perceptions of their lack of control over their children's diets could result in weaker intentions to monitor and manage their diets in the future. Mothers' perceptions of dietary control are thus important to understand and address.

The external forces that were perceived to be especially problematic included family members and other caregivers, the difficulties associated with managing family life, and the wearing effects of pestering. While each of these forces is acknowledged in different bodies of literature, it is rare for them to appear together in accounts of parental feeding practices. Understanding how these forces impede mothers' efforts to optimise their children's diets provides insight into how parents can be empowered to enhance health outcomes for their children. Specifically, the findings indicate that efforts could be made to: (1) develop family and community education programs to bring different carers' nutrition knowledge and behaviours more into line; (2) encourage the food industry to develop healthier convenience foods; and (3) introduce more stringent regulations to curtail the extent to which children are the targets of marketing activities.

Family and Community Education. Children look to their parents, teachers, and other caregivers for guidance on how to eat well and to support them in making appropriate decisions (O'Dea 2003). As noted by some marketing academics who oppose a more regulated advertising environment, parental influences on diet are strong and it is often the case that it is parents who are buying unhealthy foods for children in younger age brackets (Eagle et al. 2004). Educating parents and other carers about the ideal diet as defined by health authorities and providing them with the knowledge and skills they require to manage the effects of marketing activities and time deficits have the potential to make a positive difference to children's diets. In particular, a disconnect needs to be introduced between giving children a treat and feeding them unhealthy foods. Education programs could outline the various alternatives that are available that fulfil the same need to delight children. Community education needs to extend to the school environment to ensure school canteens are providing nutritious foods and actively demonstrating the ideal diet to parents and children (Glasson et al. 2004).

Healthier Convenience Foods. The growing reliance on convenience foods puts greater responsibility on the shoulders of food producers. In the WHO (2000) report titled *Obesity: Preventing and Managing the Global Epidemic*, the argument is made that the food industry has taken advantage of the tendency for fat to increase food palatability to enhance sales of processed foods. This is problematic as the highly processed nature of many foods prevents people from being able to determine energy density and regulate intake accordingly. As mothers increasingly rely on pre-prepared foods to assist them manage family meal times, there is a need for the food industry to develop and promote healthy convenience foods. The discipline of Consumer Behaviour can contribute much to this process by investigating the aspects of food preparation and consumption that determine the attractiveness of convenience foods to parents. The results can be used to develop and promote healthier food options.

Regulation. This is a contentious area as some believe self-regulation of the advertising industry is adequate for all audiences (e.g., Eagle et al. 2004), while others disagree on the basis that young children in particular are vulnerable to advertising because of their inability to differentiate between commercials and programming and their lack of awareness of the persuasive intent of advertising (e.g., McGinnis 2006). Numerous studies have demonstrated that the foods most heavily advertised on children's television are those that are high in fat, salt, and sugar (e.g., Zuppa, Morton, and Mehta 2003). Children are thus likely to receive competing messages about nutrition from the media and caregivers and as a result can be confused as to which is correct (Donkin et al. 1992).

The negative effects of advertising on children's diets are being increasingly appreciated (McGinnis 2006; WHO 2004), although direct causation is difficult to demonstrate and indirect effects are suspected to be substantial (Hastings et al. 2003; Livingstone 2005). As the evidence mounts it is hoped that governments will heed the concerns of parents and health agencies and act to protect children from marketing forces against which they have little immunity.

In conclusion, there is growing agreement that the childhood obesity problem needs a multi-sectoral solution that includes the efforts of governments, international agencies, the media, communities, the food industry, and consumers (McGinnis 2006; WHO 2000). Such efforts could improve parents' real and perceived control over their children's diets and thus empower them to improve their children's health outcomes. Parents continue to play a critical role in addressing childhood obesity, but the issues identified in this research demonstrate that they require assistance in the face of numerous adverse environmental forces.

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Relationships Can Disappear in a Puff of Smoke: A Test of TMT and Risk Perceptions on Smoking Behavior

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In old Hollywood movies, it is difficult to avoid a recurring scene in which the condemned man is granted a last wish, which more often than not turns out to be a “final cigarette”. Although we all know that cigarette smoking is “hazardous to your health”, when staring mortality in the face, who can blame the smoker when he/she takes a last long puff and exhales into eternity. When death is made salient, consumers react in ways designed to manage the terror brought about by that realization, which is the essence of Terror Management Theory (Goldenberg, et al. 2000). According to the theory, in reaction to the terror, the individual engages in psychological defenses which function as a means by which one can obtain and maintain a sense of self-esteem within their meaning system. In short, they behave in ways which enhance their self-esteem and reaffirm the vibrancy of their life. Hence, anti-smoking ads which make the risks of negative health effects prominent, may simply serve to motivate individuals, who derive their self-esteem from smoking, to continue smoking. This can and has been found to result in a boomerang or “Forbidden Fruit” effect by increasing smoking behavior, which is of course, at odds with the original intention of the advertisement. Clearly another approach is needed in an effort to convince smokers not to smoke.

We believe that Terror Management Theory, may hold the key to providing the theoretical rationale for the effectiveness of an anti-smoking campaign which makes salient “social disapproval” mortality as opposed to “physical” mortality, since young adults aged 18-24 years old may be of the opinion that the risks of health effects to smoking lie on a distant time horizon to which they are relatively immune. Indeed, a “social disapproval” mortality approach to an anti-smoking campaign may be found to be more effective in general, than emphasizing health effects for smokers of all ages, particularly if the optimism bias is widespread across demographic age groups.

In this research, we investigate the impact of mortality salience and smoking self-esteem on whether college-age smokers will comply with anti-smoking messages and the impact of those messages on health risk perceptions. For those who in part, derive their self esteem from smoking, feeling good about oneself is a crucial way for such individuals to feel secure and protected from anxiety and in the extreme, serves to insulate them from an awareness of the potentially negative health consequences of the behavior and their susceptibility to these consequences. However, the derivation of self esteem through smoking may make such individuals susceptible to a campaign highlighting when smoking can lead to negative social consequences. Hence, we predicted an interaction between mortality salience and smoking self esteem. In addition, we investigate the influence that mortality salience and smoking self esteem has on smokers’ perceptions of the health risks—both to themselves and to others around them.

To test the hypotheses, 137 college-age smokers participated in this study. The methodology followed the process used in TMT research (Pyszczynski, et al. 2004). Participants viewed two anti-smoking messages and then completed the smoking self-esteem scale. The two messages were focused either on health effects or on the social disapproval related to smoking. The PANAS-X scale was administered to determine if negative affect was confounding the results. This was followed by a distracter task unrelated to the research question and then the dependent measures of behavioral

intention to quit smoking and health risk measures were taken. The entire experiment was conducted in an online environment. The results show no significant effects of fear arousal or affect on the anti-smoking messages, thus providing support for mortality salience.

A set of 2x2 ANOVAs with planned contrasts was conducted to investigate the impact of self-esteem (high versus low smoking self-esteem) and mortality salience (health versus social mortality) on behavioral intent among college age smokers. Results revealed a main effect for mortality salience ($F_{1,133}=28.02, p<.0001$) and a marginal effect for Smoking Self Esteem ($F_{1,133}=3.58, p<.06$) as well as a significant interaction effect ($F_{1,133}=4.32, p<.04$).

A pair of 2x2 ANOVAs was run to determine the impact of self-esteem and mortality salience on risk perceptions among smokers both for themselves and others. The results of the ANOVA for the health risk measure, revealed a significant main effect for mortality salience ($F_{1,133}=11.27, p<.001$) for the risk perceptions linked to the smoker. That is, those individuals who viewed the social mortality message perceived the risk of smoking to their health as significantly higher than those who saw the health effects message ($M=5.4$ vs. $M=3.4$). We also investigated the risk perceptions of participants related to others in the form of second hand smoke in a 2x2 ANOVA format which again revealed a significant main effect for mortality salience ($F_{1,133}=16.71, p<.0001$). That is, those individuals who viewed the social mortality message perceived the risk of smoking to others in the form of second hand smoke as significantly higher than those who saw the health effects message ($M=4.60$ vs. $M=3.84, F_{1,133}=16.71, p<.0001$). There was no significant smoking self esteem main effect ($M=4.10$ v. $4.33, F_{1,133}=1.60, n.s.$).

Overall, we found that advocating social norms is more effective compared to advocating health effects messages for smoking behaviors. We also found that focusing on the interaction between self-esteem and different thematic approaches has an impact on whether smokers will consider reducing their smoking behavior. The implications of these findings are that attention should be paid to the manner in which anti-smoking messages are positioned to increase the probability of compliance with these types of messages. We also see that by using a health effects message, public policy and consumer behavior researchers are actually increasing the probability of noncompliance among college-age smokers. This research provides an extension of TMT research into the arena of using actual death-related visual images such as anti-smoking messages. In this study, actual PSAs were used to test the impact of mortality salient messages compared to esteem-enhancing messages as a means to communicate risks concerning smoking.

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The Dark Side of Brand Community: Inter-Group Stereotyping, Trash Talk, and Schadenfreude

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ABSTRACT

Prior work on brand communities has emphasized the positive aspects of community participation on brand involvement and loyalty. Qualitative studies have noted the possibility that involvement in brand communities may encourage participants to adopt disparaging views of rival brands and their users, but little research has tested these assumptions using structured measures. The present study investigates the relationship between identification with a brand community, and such “dark” behaviors as inter-group stereotyping, “trash talking” rival brand communities, and feeling pleasure at the misfortune of rival brands and their users.

The sociological aspects of consumer behavior, and in particular the phenomena surrounding membership in brand communities, have become a focus of increasing research attention in recent years. Prior work (e.g., Muniz and O’Guinn 2001; McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig 2002; Muniz and Schau 2005; Algesheimer, Dholakia, and Herrman 2005) has concentrated on exploring the effects of community membership on loyalty toward a brand, and the effects of participation on involvement with other brand loyal consumers. The potential for brand community membership to provoke negative attitudes and actions toward rival brands and their users has been noted, but not systematically investigated using structured measures. The focus of the present paper is to explore how loyalty to one brand community provokes negative views of not only rival brands but their users. Moreover, we introduce and explore the concept of “trash talk”—negative communication about a rival brand provoked not by specific unsatisfactory experiences with the brand (like negative word-of-mouth) but instead provoked by a sense of inter-group rivalry. Our study furthermore explores the effect of inter-group stereotyping on emotions toward the rival brand, and particularly the emotion of “schadenfreude,” a German term denoting pleasure felt in response to another’s misfortune. The present study’s investigation of the relationships among identification with a brand community, negative stereotyping of rival users, “trash talk,” and feelings of schadenfreude makes distinctive contributions to consumer research.

THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF BRAND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Past research on brand community participation has emphasized the effects of participation on brand loyalty. Schouten and McAlexander (1995) explored how participation in the Harley-Davidson motorcycle subculture encouraged users to link their biker personas more closely to the Harley-Davidson brand. They observed that participants in the brand community required ownership of a Harley-Davidson to be accepted an authentic “insider” in the community. Once inside, they noted that community status was related to the purchase of progressively higher status Harley-Davidson bike models. Members also engaged in status competition with respect to the assemblage of “authentic” branded parts, accessories, and apparel related to their biker persona. As members became involved in user groups such as “HOG” (the Harley-Davidson Owners Group), they became bound to the brand through social ties to other members. Through these ties, the Harley owners studied exchanged mutual ratification and social support in their usage of the brand. Schouten and McAlexander (1995) note, but do not emphasize, the tendency of Harley owners to make invidious

distinctions between Harley-Davidson and other motorcycle brands, especially Asian brands.

Muniz and Schau (2001) explored the positive aspects of brand community among Macintosh and Saab owners. The researchers investigate how brand communities are defined by, and engender, shared consciousness, rituals and traditions, and a sense of moral responsibility among members to the brand and one another. Muniz and Schau observed that participants in brand communities tend to develop a “consciousness of kind,” a sense of “we” versus “them.” The positive consequences of this sense of wholeness included, in their observation, a focus on rituals and traditions involving celebration of the brand’s distinctive, positive qualities often through the sharing of stories about the brand’s extraordinary performance (e.g., the ability of Saab’s to negotiate icy roads or the power of Macintosh computers to render graphics). Moreover, they found that participation in a brand community entailed a sense of “moral responsibility” to the brand and fellow owners. Thus, community participants felt an obligation to recruit new members to the community, encourage new users to become involved with the brand, and lend technical as well as moral support to fellow users. In a later study, Muniz and Schau (2005) found that participants in the Apple Newton brand community displayed a devotion to their obsolete brand bordering on religious fervor. As Newton users interacted with one another, they constructed a shared mythology emphasizing the unfair abandonment of their brand, its miraculous abilities, and its potential resurrection in the form of a rumored new model. They found that community participation and interaction tended to reinforce the reality of this brand mythology encouraging users to continue to use an outmoded technology.

Building on past work, Algesheimer, Dholakia, and Herrman (2005) introduced a conceptual model emphasizing the relationships among brand community identification, community engagement, normative community pressure, brand loyalty, and such behavioral correlates of loyalty as brand re-purchase. Their study emphasizes the positive impact of community identification on community engagement and loyalty behaviors, but notes that community engagement can also result in an unwelcome feeling of reference group pressure to conform to community norms for participation and brand use. Algesheimer et al (2005) test their model using structured measures and a large sample of European car club members. Their study illustrates an effort to test and quantify insights about the largely positive effects of brand community using structured measures drawn from prior work in social psychology. Our study follows in this tradition, but focuses on the “dark side” effects of brand community.

THE “DARK SIDE” OF BRAND COMMUNITY IDENTIFICATION

Past work, particularly in the qualitative research tradition, has noted that brand community members may define their identities in opposition to rival brands. For example, Muniz and Schau (2001) discuss the concept of “oppositional brand loyalty.” They observe that groups define themselves not only in terms of who they are, but who they are not. They observed that Macintosh users were prone to view themselves as different from, and perhaps better than, PC and Windows users. In general, Apple users seemed to characterize themselves as more individualistic and creative than PC and win-

dows users, dimensions convergent with Apple's brand image as a computer for creatively inclined individualists. In a later qualitative study of the Apple Newton community, Muniz and Schau (2005) likewise found that Newton users contrasted themselves favorably with the users of more mainstream PDAs. In particular, they seemed to view themselves as more individualistic, creative, and technically adept than mainstream PDA users. In both studies, Muniz and Schau suggest that inter-group rivalry, and particularly the threat users of a small market share brand felt from dominant competitors and mainstream users played a role in the genesis of hostile views toward the out-group. Although Muniz and Schau have provided rich qualitative insight into what brand community members say about rival users, little work has so far investigated these perceptions using structured measures. Moreover, the influence of inter-group rivalry on the perception of rival users personalities, although hinted at by Muniz and Schau's work, has been little investigated. Finally, the relationship of negative inter-group stereotyping to community members' communications about rival brand communities and their emotions toward these communities has been little explored by past studies.

In recent work, Escalas and Bettman (2005) found that consumers felt stronger self-brand connections to brands whose images were consistent with the consumers' in-groups, and felt less connection to brands whose images were not consistent with their in-groups. Furthermore, they found that brands whose images were consistent with consumers' out-groups were less likely to be rated as close to the self. Their study demonstrates the powerful effect of group membership on the brand-self connection. Relevant to "dark side" effects, they show that consumers are reluctant to connect brands associated with out-groups to their self-image. However, their study little explores the potential for highly identified brand community members to derogate out-group brand users, engage in negative communications toward these users, or feel pleasure at their misfortunes.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIAL IDENTIFICATION, STEREOTYPING, AND BRAND-RELATED TALK

Henri Tajfel, an influential scholar in the development of social identification theory, defined social identification as 'the individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of the group membership,' (Tajfel 1972, p. 292 as cited in Hogg and Terry 2000). When individuals adopt a social identity, they are motivated to think of themselves as positively distinct from other groups. Thus, social identification implies inter-group stereotyping. When a consumer identifies himself or herself as a member of a social group (e.g., a young person or an old person) or, more relevant to the present study, a member of a brand community, that consumer will have a natural tendency to seek information that positively discriminates his or her own brand community from others (Hogg and Terry, 2000). In most cases, consumers seek favorable information about their own group, and either seek or accept negative information about others groups. Inter-group stereotyping is especially likely to emphasize the negative aspects of out-groups that are perceived as in competition for scarce resources or threatening. In the case of brand communities, the threat posed by one brand to the resources of another may not at first be apparent. However, consumers may be aware that dominant brands often seek to eliminate weaker brands from the market, and thus deny further purchase of the brand to loyal users. Muniz and Schau (2001) note such concerns among Apple computer users. In communities of sports fans, rivalry over which team (and set of fans) will win a game and

eventually progress to championship games is likely to encourage inter-community hostility.

Trash Talk

Social identification theory predicts that group members have a strong motivation to portray their group in a positive light (Spears, Doosje, and Ellemers 1997; Tesser 2001). Drawing on social identification theory, Schnake and Ruscher (1998), leading scholars in understanding intra-group communication about out-groups suggest that motives to create a positively differentiated group identity and build group cohesion typically encourage group members to develop and repeat shared negative beliefs about out-groups. In a series of studies (e.g., Ruscher and Hammer, 1996; Schnake and Ruscher, 1998; Beal, Ruscher, and Schnake 2001), Ruscher and colleagues have confirmed that in-groups are strongly motivated to develop negative views of out-groups that tend to be repeated and affirmed in intra-group communication. These negative beliefs help the in-group achieve a sense of positive differentiation from other groups, and promote intra-group cohesion. In the present study, we borrow a term from the sports world to describe such negative intra-group communications about rival brands and their users. We use the term "trash talk" to describe such communications to underline the differences between trash talk and "negative word-of-mouth," the type of negative consumer communication most often studied by marketers. In past studies, negative word-of-mouth has usually been conceived and studied as negative communication about a brand resulting from a specific unsatisfactory experience with the brand. Thus, the assumption has been that negative communications about a brand are most likely to result from the purchase or use of the brand, and the failure of the brand to perform to an expected level. Thus, negative word-of-mouth has been conceived as originating from individual transactions and largely controllable causes. In contrast, trash talk arises from the desire of brand communities to positively differentiate themselves from rivals, is a fundamental sociological process, and is largely uncontrollable.

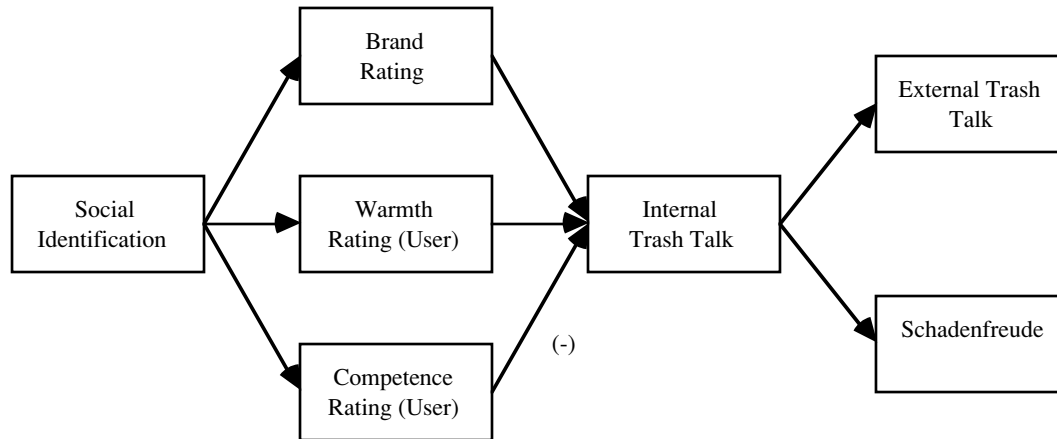
Hypotheses

Figure 1 depicts the full model tested in the research. All relationships are hypothesized as positive unless noted. The model begins with the construct of social identification. The study predicts that consumers who identify more with a brand community, will be more likely to hold negative stereotypes of out-group brands, and in particular the users of these brands. The model in particular predicts that consumers who identify more highly with their own brand community will perceive members of rival brand communities to be less warm and less competent than members of their own community. Our focus on warmth and competence is drawn from work by Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, and Xu (2002) who found that in-groups structure their perceptions of out-groups along two primary dimensions: warmth and competence. We thus predict that:

- H1: Brand community members who identify more strongly with their brand community will (a) rate their brand as better than rival brands, (b) will perceive their fellow brand community members to be more warm than the members of other brand communities, and (c) will perceive their fellow brand community members to be more competent than rival community members.

We further predict that consumers who have a stronger bias against rival brands will engage in more intra-group "trash talk" about the rival brand. Moreover, we predict that brand community

FIGURE 1



members who perceive their members as more warm (rivals as more cold) will engage in more trash talk about the rival brand community. In addition, we predict that brand community members who perceive their own community members as more competent (rivals as less competent) will engage in less trash talk about the rivals, since they represent less of a threat to their personal brand community and identity.

H2: Brand community members who report more inter-group bias on (a) brand ratings and (b) user warmth ratings will report engaging in more intra-group trash talk about the rival brand. However, (c) group members that report more inter-group bias on the competence dimension will report less frequent intra-group trash talk.

In addition, we predict that brand community members who engage in more intra-group trash talk about rival brands will emerge as “apostles” of the rival brands failings to people outside the brand community. Thus, we predict that:

H3: The level of intra-group trash talk is positively related to respondents’ tendency to communicate negatively about a rival brand to people outside the brand community.

INTER-GROUP STEREOTYPING, COMMUNICATION, AND SCHADENFREUDE

The emotional feelings that rivals have for each other cannot be taken lightly. The animosity typically spills over to feelings of satisfaction and joy whenever the rival suffers failure. Schadenfreude is a social hostility that has been defined as the malicious pleasure that an individual or group derives by observing the failure of a relevant out-group (Feather and Sherman 2002; Leach, Spears, Branscombe, and Doosje 2003). Leach et al (2003) believe that while schadenfreude is directed at others, it is essentially a product of self-identity. They lend further insight with their finding that Dutch soccer fans with a higher interest with the sport experienced more malicious pleasure at the failures of German soccer than did those fans who responded lower on the interest scale. Put another way, those with greater passion for their team felt greater joy in the

demise of their rival. As a result of the close connection between social hostility, trash talk, and schadenfreude we believe that:

H4: Group members who report more frequent trash talking will experience higher levels of schadenfreude

METHODOLOGY

The hypotheses were tested in a field study using actual members of two sets of competing brand communities. We sought two sets of brand communities meeting a number of criteria. In each set, we sought two communities of consumers devoted to rival brands. Although little investigated, communities of users who perceive themselves in competition with rival brands are common (PC vs. Apple users, Chevy vs. Ford owners, fans of rival sports franchises). For the present study, two sets of brand rival brand communities in widely different industries were chosen. One set of rival communities included a user club devoted to Apple computers and a user group devoted to personal computers (PCs). The other set of rival communities included fan clubs devoted to two college football teams—one devoted to the University of Iowa and one devoted to Purdue. Although seemingly not a classic “brand” context, sports teams are brands that a large percentage of the world’s population spend time and money to support. Moreover, inter-community rivalry can be intense in these communities (e.g., the riots that sometimes accompany soccer competitions around the world). Although not classic rivals, the fans of Iowa and Purdue compete in the same conference, and thus issues of which brand is the “best” are salient.

The research team attended group meetings and events prior to the collection of structured measures to better understand the social dynamics of each community and build trust. We found that each user group—the Apple club, the PC club, the Iowa fan club, and the Purdue fan Club—was a living brand community with at least 50 active members. Each club meant periodically (usually about monthly) to celebrate its brand. At the computer user group meetings, participants focused on talking about their own brands, but also indulged in comparing their computer brand to rivals, usually to the rival’s disadvantage. The research team observed the classic signs of brand community in each group—consciousness of kind, a

sense of moral responsibility to the group, and special catch phrases describing the brand and its rivals (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Moreover, variance in devotion to the brand was observed among the active members of each of the four brand communities.

The leadership of each club agreed to encourage members to complete a set of structured measures. The structured measures were distributed to club members via e-mail lists that each club maintained. Each respondent completed a survey that included a three item social identification scale adapted from Elmers, Van Knippenberg, and Wilke (1988). (Example item: "I identify with this group" measured on a 7 point strongly agree-strongly disagree scale). Respondents rated their image of their own brand (e.g., Apple) and their rival brand(s) (PC computers) on a three item brand image scale adapted from Brown (1995). (Example item: "Compared to all other brands, I believe Macintosh to be the very best" on a strongly agree-strongly disagree scale). In addition to brand images, respondents rated their image of the users of their own brand and rival brand(s) on scales measuring "warmth" (three items) and "competence" (three items) adapted from Fiske, Cuddy, Click, and Xu (2002). (Example items are: "How warm are members of this group?" "How competent are members of this group?") Once again, these items were measured on seven point strongly agree-strongly disagree scales. Participants rated their propensity to engage in "trash talk" about their rival brand(s) to other group members on an adaptation of Homer's (1995) scale of within group communication. This scale included three items measured on seven point always-never scales. (Example item: "Other group members and I talk about how negative we feel about [the rival]"). Respondents reported their tendency to "trash talk" rivals to people outside their group on a three item word-of-mouth scale adapted from Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996). (Example item: "Say negative things about [the rival] to other people" measured on a seven point very likely-not very likely scale).

As part of the survey, respondents read a scenario that describing a blow to the brand equity of the rival brand. In the computer users groups, respondents read a scenario in the form of a news article describing a serious virus afflicting the rival brand of computers. In the college football fan clubs, participants read a scenario describing their rival team reeling from scandals involving player recruiting violations and player misconduct off the field. Following exposure to the scenario, respondents were asked to rate how they felt about reading news of their rival's misfortune. The respondents' tendency to feel schadenfreude was measured on a three item scale adapted from Feather and Sherman (2002). (Example item: "I would feel joy" measured on a seven point strongly agree-strongly disagree scale").

RESULTS

The Apple club completed 108 surveys, the PC club 64, the Iowa club 77, and the Purdue club 105. Relative to the number of "active" members of each club (subjectively estimated on the basis of recent event attendance), roughly half the active members of the computer user groups responded to the survey, and roughly one third the active members of the college fan clubs responded.

In order to assess the hypotheses, we utilized structural equation modeling (SEM) with the Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) 5.0 software developed by Arbuckle (2003). Prior to analysis, we computed difference scores to measure intergroup bias. For each respondent, we computed the difference between the respondent's rating of their own brand and their rival brand (or set of brand when PCs as a group of brands are considered) on the 1) brand image ratings, 2) user warmth ratings, and 3) user competence ratings. For example, to the extent a respondent rated his or her own brand as better than a rival brand, the resulting difference

score would be more positive. Thus, a positive regression coefficient relating social identity and inter-group brand image bias would mean that as respondents reported identifying more highly with their own group, they tended to rate their brand more positively relative to the rival brand. All measures had Cronbach's alphas greater than .7.

The hypothesized model (recall Figure 1) had a good fit to the data according to the CFI of 0.936 and the RMSEA of 0.079. Moreover, discriminant and convergent validity were tested through a matrix of latent variable scores and individual indicators variables. We found that virtually all the indicator variables were more highly related to their intended latent variable than other latent variables. Overall, the factor loadings displayed strong convergent and discriminant validity.

Hypothesis H1a predicted a positive relationship between social identification with a brand community and inter-brand bias as measured by the brand image measure. This hypothesis was supported by the data. These measures were related by a .473 regression coefficient with a critical ratio of 5.23, significant at $p < .001$. As respondents identified more highly with their own brand community, their tendency to rate their own brand as better than rival brands increased.

Hypotheses H1b and H1c predicted, respectively, that respondents who identified more strongly with their own brand community would tend to rate users of their brand as more competent (H1b) and more warm (H1c) than users of rival brands. These hypotheses were confirmed. As respondents reported higher levels of identification with their own brand community, they rated users of their brand as more competent than users of rival brands (Regression estimate=0.234, critical ratio=5.021, $p < .001$). More identified respondents rated users of their brand as more warm than users of rival brands (regression estimate=.305, critical ratio=6.12, $P < .001$). These results demonstrate that brand users who feel a stronger sense of social identity with their brand community not only feel that their brand is better than the rival, they feel that users of their brand are both more competent and warmer than users of a rival brand. These findings are thus among the first to demonstrate that brand community involvement can result in inter-group stereotyping on such broad dimensions of person perception as competence and warmth.

Hypothesis 2a predicts that brand community members who report a higher degree of bias in favor of their brand's image over their rival brand's image will report a greater tendency to trash talk the rival brand within their own brand community. This hypothesis was confirmed (regression coefficient=0.150, critical ratio=3.57, $p < .001$). Hypotheses 2b and 2c make contrasting predictions about the effect of inter-group bias on the dimensions of warmth versus competence on within group trash talk about the rival brand. Hypothesis 2b predicts that respondents who report that their own brand community members are more warm than rival community members will tend to indulge in more trash talk about the rival brand. Hypothesis 2b was confirmed (regression estimate=0.231, critical ratio=2.79, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 2c predicts that respondents who perceive that their own community members are more competent than the members of the rival community will be less prone to trash talk the rival brand. Convergent with Fiske et al (2002), brand community members who perceive their rivals to be less (vs. more) competent will perceive them as less of a threat, and thus feel less of a need to derogate their brand within their own community. Hypothesis 2c was confirmed (regression estimate=-0.228, critical ratio=-2.52, $p < .05$).

Hypothesis 3 proposed that the level of intra-group trash talk should predict trash talk to people outside of the brand community. The model shows strong support of H3 (regression estimate=0.333, critical ratio=-6.82, $p < .001$). Thus, users who are prone "trash talk"

rival brands to their own brand community members emerge as more likely to be “apostles” of negative word-of-mouth about the rival to people outside the community. The relationship between brand community loyalty and the tendency to engage in negative word-of-mouth about rival brands prompted by inter-group bias, not specific negative experiences, has been little documented in past studies.

Finally, hypothesis H4 predicted that individuals who were active in derogating a rival brand to fellow brand community members would be especially prone to derive pleasure from news of their rival’s misfortune. Once again, this hypothesis was confirmed (regression estimate=0.168, critical ratio=4.24, $p<.001$). Apparently, highly identified community members who enjoy deriding rival brands also derive emotional pleasure (schadenfreude) from news of their rival’s failures. Perhaps they perceive such news as confirming their own position and providing fodder for further negative talk about their rival brand.

General Discussion

Bhattacharya and Elsbach (2001) illustrate the fire and ice relationship that an in-group and an out-group can have by demonstrating that organizations with a strong and divisive set of values tend to spark feelings of support or opposition and lead to highly polarized opinions. This research amplifies the importance of strong brand communities by providing an in-depth examination of brand community members’ judgment of rival brands and rival brand users. By implementing a quantitative methodology, linkages were found that demonstrated that those members who more strongly identified with the community were more likely to engage in intergroup stereotyping. In turn, this stereotyping was shown to lead to active derogation of the out-group as measured by trash talking. Finally, it was shown that those members who most actively trashed the rival and its users within the group were the most likely to trash the rival to members outside of the community and were the most likely to experience schadenfreude.

Theoretical Implications

This study extends the theoretical knowledge of previous inquiries into our comprehension of brand community behavior by examining two sets of rival brand communities and their perceptions of the rival group. Because this research utilized quantitative measures, it represents one of the most systematic analysis of the impact of social identification of the brand community on the dimensions measured.

This study was also able to successfully extend the work of Fiske et al (2002) through usage of a new construct introduced to the literature—trash talk. It was shown that as brand community members view users of a rival product as increasingly cold that the derogatory commentary directed at the out-group product will increase.

The necessity of the introduction of the trash talk construct becomes clear once the distinction is drawn between it and its more commonly studied predecessor—negative word of mouth. Trash talk is the unusual assessment of negative word of mouth that the commentator has no previous experiences with and has no intentions of using. This lack of usage is diametrically opposed to traditional word-of-mouth studies that rely on past usage with the product.

Finally, this research explored schadenfreude, or the malicious pleasure in the suffering of another. While social psychology has given the topic some recent consideration (Feather 1999; Hareli and Weiner 2002), schadenfreude has largely been neglected in the consumer research arena. Despite the oversight, schadenfreude has

been conjectured about for nearly 200 years dating back to 1817 with Adam Smith’s essay. He stated that, “The hatred and dislike, in the same manner, which grow upon habitual disapprobation, would often lead us to take a malicious pleasure in the misfortune of the man whose conduct and character excite so painful a passion” (Smith 1817/1997). True to the words of Adam Smith, this study showed that brand community members that had a higher propensity to derogate a rival within the brand community were more likely to take pleasure in the hypothetical demise of the rival brand.

Limitations

Like any study, this research is not without its limitations. In terms of data collection, members who are more attached to the group might also be more motivated to complete a survey that allows them to state their feelings about the group. This problem is somewhat mitigated in that academicians and brand managers alike are interested more with the thoughts and actions of dedicated brand community members than they are with peripheral members.

A second limitation is that the sample size collected for each group was too small for individual analysis. This shortcoming is balanced by the fact that the study grouped four diverse brand communities. It was shown that the theory was able to hold across a number of contexts, which is a cornerstone of generalizability. Similar studies utilizing brand communities should have an understanding of this potential shortcoming and choose communities with a large enough base to increase the likelihood that at an adequate sample will be collected to test the hypotheses of the research.

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A Meta-Analysis of Humor Effects in Advertising

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Although the pace of humor research in advertising has quickened over the past decades, the body of empirical evidence regarding humor effects in advertising remains equivocal. Previous qualitative reviews barely provide generalizable conclusions on the question *if* humor is effective or *when* humor in advertising is effective. Both issues, the search for generalizable results and for factors that moderate the impact of humor in advertising are specific tasks to be addressed by application of a meta-analysis. Assumptions for the analysis are based on theoretical models and on previous qualitative reviews.

Theoretical Models and Previous Qualitative Reviews

Two types of models, cognitive and affective, have been used to explain the impact of humor in advertising. The models suggest a positive impact of humor on attitude towards the ad (A_{AD}), attitude towards the brand (A_{BR}), purchase intention and behavior. Effects on attention, comprehension, recall, and recognition may be positive in case humor impact follows an information processing perspective. However, if humor causes distraction, humor decreases elaborate processing and reduces cognitive responses (CR); it harms comprehension and probably also memory effects. The overall conclusions reached by the authors of previous qualitative reviews are fairly consistent with respect to some of the outcome variables. They infer that humor attracts attention and awareness, enhances source liking (A_{ADV}), ad liking, and brand liking, but is not very effective in bringing about actions/sales. However, it is not clear if humor detrimentally affects comprehension and recall or not, if it enhances or decreases source credibility, and if it is more persuasive than serious messages or not.

Previous studies vary with respect to several characteristics related to product, placement, humor, and method that have been discussed as possible moderating variables in the literature. Advertisers believe that humor is best suited for low involvement products, particularly for hedonic/feeling products compared to functional/thinking products. Humorous ads are said to be more successful for existing than for new products. Furthermore, ad executives believe humor to be most suited in radio and TV-advertising compared to print advertising. Humor seems to work best for younger and well-educated consumers, particularly males. Two method factors may be important that allow for more control and should hence lead to increased effects: the way the control ad is chosen and if humor research is field research or performed as laboratory study. The crucial moderating factor, however, is apparently the humorous stimulus. Advertisers seem to conceive humor as the degree of personal recognition and appreciation of humor. Humor ads that vary in the level of humor they evoke in the target audience lead to variations in advertising effect variables as well. The relationship between humor intensity and ad effectiveness can be conceived as either linear or curvilinear.

Method

The literature search for the meta-analysis revealed 64 studies investigating the impact of humor in advertising; 47 studies provided enough data to calculate relevant effect sizes. The effect size metric selected for the analysis is the correlation coefficient between humor and dependent variables. Since most papers reported multiple measures, also multiple effect sizes from single studies for particular relationships were included. Altogether, 443 effect sizes were available for the purpose of the meta-analysis. Integration of

effect sizes is performed based on sample size weighted and attenuation corrected correlations. In order to consider multiple measures per study, correlations between the same constructs from a single study were averaged for integration purposes. If the integration of effects sizes yielded heterogeneity, a WLS regression analysis applying moderator variables was performed. Moderator variables were coded by two coders based on information given in the studies.

Results

The integration results show that humor significantly enhances A_{AD} , A_{BR} , attention, comprehension, cognitive responses, positive emotions, purchase intention, recall and recognition. Humor reduces credibility and negative emotions. Humor has no impact on A_{ADV} , distraction, and purchase behavior.

The results of the moderator analysis come up with rather consistent findings. Contrary to expectations, humor works better in influencing attitudes for high involvement products and thinking products than for low involvement or feeling products. No effects were found for established vs. new brands. Also media have an effect that contradicts previous assumptions: humor effects are stronger for print media than for broadcast media for A_{AD} . Ads are also more liked when the program context is rather humor incongruent than congruent. Repeated exposure enhances A_{BR} , but shows no effect on other dependent variables. Finally, reception in social group leads to less attention compared to reception of humorous ads alone. No difference was found for different demographic groups. Also culture does not influence attitudes and memory, but attention: humorous ads do enhance attention particularly for US consumers compared to other countries. Methodological factors impact only the attention measure such that more controlled ads and laboratory studies enhance the effects on attention.

Results of nonlinear regressions of humor intensity on ad effectiveness show that perceived humor does not affect A_{AD} or attention, but brand attitudes and memory. While A_{BR} increases with perceived humor which is in line with the idea of conditioning theory, memory effects rather follow a curvilinear relationship for humor intensity; particularly, they increase with strong levels of humor intensity.

Discussion

The results go against some previous assumptions of advertisers who believed that humor is mostly appropriate for low involvement products presented in broadcast media. The managerial implications of those generalized results seem quite obvious.

The results give first evidence that humor rather impacts variables as suggested by affective models; humor does not lead to distraction, but shows an effect on attention and memory. The results let us also question the idea that humor effects are either based on mere affective reactions or mere reasoning, rather it seems that both processes play an important role for humor effects and can interfere to some extent. Particularly, memory effects seem to be related to affective reactions as well. Further conceptual developments should allow for bringing together reason and affect in order to explain the impact of humor in advertising more thoroughly.

The considerations have tentative character and need further proof, preferably by applying causal models to the data against the background of different conditions of the studies, e.g. high involvement vs. low involvement conditions.

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(*asterisks denote studies used in the meta-analysis)

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The Role of Power in Consumer Persuasion

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In recent years there has been an increased interest in studying the effects of power over different consumer behaviors and cognitive processes, including the context of consumer decision making (Flurry and Burns 2005; Roedder-John 1999; Webster 1996), marketing (e.g., Berthon, Pitt, Ewing and Bakkeland 2003; Hunt and Nevin 1974, Rosenberg and Stern 1971) and purchasing behavior (Joy, 2001; Ruth, Otnes, and Brunel 1999; Rugimbana, Donahay, Neal, and Polonsky 2002), choice of selling and influence tactics (Anderson, Lodish, and Weiz 1987; Gaski and Nevin 1985; Keith, Jackson and Crosby 1990; Kim and Hsieh in press; Mallalieu 1998), and budgeting (Henry 2005).

Despite this importance, very little research has been done relating power and persuasion (e.g., Festinger and Thibaut 1951; French and Raven 1959). The present research provides a first and initial step to address this gap by examining whether power can influence consumer attitudes by affecting the confidence people have in their own thoughts.

Building on previous research demonstrating that power is associated with approach tendencies (Galinsky, Gruenfeld, and Magee 2003), we argue that greater levels of power might be associated with increased confidence in one's thoughts. Because power singles action, individuals can be confident in and rely upon whatever thoughts they have in response to an advertisement.

This reasoning leads to the prediction that if power does influence the confidence with which people hold their cognitive responses (study 1) to an advertisement, we would expect high power to increase thought effects on attitudes relative to low power (Briñol, Petty, and Tormala 2004). One way in which the direction of the thoughts (favorable or unfavorable) in response to the ad can be manipulated is by varying the quality of the arguments contained in the ad (study 2). Another approach to vary thought-direction consists of asking consumers to think about positive and negative aspects of a given proposal (study 3). If power does influence the confidence with which people hold their cognitive responses to advertisement, we would expect power to increase thought-direction (e.g., argument quality) effects.

This finding would be important because it would a) suggest an entirely unexplored role for power in the persuasion process, b) introduce a new variable for the existing work on self-validation, and c) provide a completely new mechanism for the literature of power.

Experiment 1

Eighty participants were randomly assigned to the high-power or low-power conditions in a between-subjects design. Power was manipulated by asking participants to play the role of a supervisor or an employee in a work simulation game (Galinsky, et al. 2003; Kipnis 1972). Following this induction, participants rated their confidence and feelings of power. We predicted and found that participants in the high-power condition felt more confident and powerful than low-power individuals. After demonstrating the link between power and confidence, we tested the role of power (confidence) in consumer persuasion.

Experiment 2

Eighty-two participants were first exposed to a printed advertisement promoting a new cell phone containing either strong or weak arguments. Argument quality was varied in this study to lead participants to generate mostly positive or negative thoughts toward the consumer product. After participants read the ad and wrote their cognitive responses about it, power was experimentally induced using the same role-playing technique described in experiment 1. Finally, all participants reported their attitudes toward the product.

If power does influence the confidence with which people hold their thoughts, we would expect power to increase the argument quality effects, that is, more persuasion with the strong than the weak ad. In line with this self-validation hypothesis, we found that the effect of argument quality on consumer attitudes was greater when consumers had high rather than low confidence in their cognitive responses. Thus, with relatively high confidence, consumers relied on their thoughts in forming attitudes, but with relatively low confidence, consumers did not use their thoughts to judge the product (producing a lower attitude-thought correspondence). Experiment 3 turned to examine the proposed a mechanism as well as test the plausibility of rival explanations.

Experiment 3

In order to manipulate the direction of participants' thoughts (i.e., negative or positive), sixty-eight participants were asked to write arguments supporting or opposing a new university policy. After listing their arguments, we manipulated power by asking participants to remember two situations in which they had power over others (high-power condition) or two situations in which others had power over them (low-power condition). Then, participants rated the confidence they had in their arguments about the policy and their attitudes towards the policy.

We predicted and found a significant interaction between power and direction of thoughts generated. High-power participants reported more positive attitudes toward the policy than low-power participants when they wrote pro-arguments, and high-power participants reported less positive attitudes toward the policy than low-power participants when they wrote counter-arguments. It was also confirmed that power affected participants' confidence in the validity of their own thoughts and this in turn mediated the observed differences in attitudes.

Discussion

Across different manipulations of all the variables, we predicted and found that power can influence consumer attitude change by affecting the confidence with which consumers hold their own thoughts in response to an ad. As a consequence of the link between power and confidence (study 1), power was shown to increase argument quality effects in a classic paradigm of persuasion consumer research (study 2) and the persuasive impact of the direction of thoughts on a traditional self-persuasion paradigm (study 3). Of most importance, we demonstrated for the first time that the effects of power on consumer judgment can be mediated by

changes in thought confidence (Experiment 3). Taken together, these findings are important not only because they provide an entirely unexplored role for power in the persuasion process, but also because they highlight the importance of power as a new variable to consider when studying the consumer of persuasive attempts.

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The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Firm Reputation, Advertising Correction, and Consumer Defensiveness

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Corrective advertising is one means by which regulators address problems that arise from misleading ads. However, research has found it to be a double-edged sword: Corrective advertising is somewhat effective in correcting false beliefs (Wilkie et al. 1984), but it can also have undesirable effects by undermining valid beliefs about other product benefits (Mazis and Adkinson 1976) and by damaging the firm's reputation (Armstrong et al. 1982; Johar 1996).

This paper reports the findings of three studies that suggest the undesirable punitive consequences of corrective advertising are much broader than previously thought: Correction of a misleading ad diminished the persuasiveness of subsequent ads from not only the offending firm (specific effects), but also from unrelated second-party firms (generalized effects). This occurred regardless of whether the correction was attributed to an independent regulator or the firm itself, in response to both subtle and blatant instances of advertising deception, across both similar and very different product categories, and regardless of the strength of the arguments in the second ad. Correction also undermined the reputation of both the offending firm and other firms, even when these firms had a positive prior reputation. Together, these findings imply that correction may be a less appealing remedy to deceptive advertising than previously thought, in that it has the potential to seriously compromise the effectiveness of future advertising concerning other products from the same firm, and also undermines the ability of other, unrelated firms to promote their products.

Our studies also identify the mechanism responsible for these effects. Specifically, they demonstrate that corrective advertising can cause consumers to feel tricked or fooled, leading to a defensive bias in the way that they process subsequent ad claims. Exp 1 finds that correction of one advertisement undermined the perceived trustworthiness of subsequent advertisers, which in turn had a negative effect on the resulting product attitudes. Exp 2 builds on these initial findings by offering more direct evidence of a defensive bias: Under objective processing, strong arguments should be less vulnerable to distrust than weak ones (Petty and Cacioppo 1986), yet the distrust induced by the ad correction had a negative impact on attitudes regardless of the strength of the arguments in the second ad. Further, these effects were not cognitively mediated, suggesting that the underlying process is heuristic/automatic rather than systematic/effortful. These findings are consistent with the predicted defensive stereotyping mechanism (Darke and Ritchie 2006), where negative stereotypes are evoked to undermine the credibility of the subsequent advertiser, leading to more negative attitudes, and thereby reducing the threat of being fooled.

Exps 1 and 3 also examined the role played by the source of the correction, and found there were negative effects on subsequent attitudes regardless of whether the correction originated from an independent regulator or the company itself. Exp 3 also found that correction by a regulator prompted more negative perceptions of the offending firm than corrections from the firm itself. Together, these findings suggest that the source of correction is relatively unimportant when it comes to product evaluations, but that there

may be more subtle effects of the corrective source on the reputation of the offending firm.

Firm reputation proved to be a complex moderator of the effects of corrective advertising. Exp 1 considered the reputation of the *offending firm*—specifically whether it was well-liked—and found that it made little difference in terms of whether the distrust caused by ad correction generalized to second-parties. Exp 2 manipulated the reputation of the *subsequent second-party advertiser*, comparing an unknown firm to one that was previously trusted by subjects, and again found that firm reputation was ineffective in stemming the negative effects of correction. Exp 3 further examined firm reputation and discovered that a positive reputation can offer some protection against correction-induced distrust, but only when the second firm's ethics are endorsed by an independent regulator. This is consistent with the notion of subtyping in the stereotyping literature (Taylor 1981), whereby stereotypes are deemed not to fit certain members of the category (i.e., this is not the typical kind of advertiser).

From a theory-building perspective, our findings build on existing work concerning deceptive advertising and defensive stereotyping (e.g., Darke and Ritchie 2006) by better specifying important boundary conditions. Specifically, we find that the distrust arising from deceptive advertising is less likely to generalize to ads from firms that are endorsed by an independent regulator, as well as to product information provided by an independent, trusted source (i.e., *Consumer Reports*). This is consistent with predictions made by Rotter (1967), who suggested that specific sources of trust should be preferred to more general sources. Interestingly, however, it appears that the specific information must come from an independent source in order to be effective.

For managers, our work once again sounds a cautionary note about the consequences of misleading advertising, and the need to avoid it. Revelations of deceptive advertising have the power to adversely affect advertising as a whole, not just the specific firm involved in the deception. For regulators, our findings suggest that careful consideration must be given to the punitive effects that such practices can have in reinforcing negative stereotypes about advertising in general. Further, the evidence suggests that regulators also have some role to play in protecting firms against the unintended consequences of correction; namely by publicly endorsing ethical firms. Our findings also imply that the broad distrust that is induced by corrective advertising may actually harm—not aid—consumer welfare, by decreasing the likelihood the consumer will recognize valid information. Corrective advertising is thus a tool that must be used judiciously, so as to strike a balance between the cost of erroneous product beliefs in the marketplace and the potential damage that correction can do to advertising as a whole, to honest advertisers in particular, and to consumers themselves.

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The Impact of Perceived Advertising Creativity on Ad Processing and Responses

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Recent years have witnessed a steady increase in creativity research in marketing, especially in the strategy literature (e.g., Andrews and Smith 1996; Im and Workman 2004; Moorman and Miner 1997). However, with the exception of a handful papers, creativity research in a consumer/advertising context is scarce (e.g., Burroughs and Mick 2004; Zinkhan 1993). Even these few papers only focus on the effects of ad creativity on a limited set of outcome variables such as recall/recognition and attitude.

A primary goal of the present paper is to provide process explanations of how creative ads work by proposing an integrative structural model to capture the impact of perceived advertising creativity on consumer ad processing and response. A second objective is to investigate the mechanisms through which creative ads are effective in reducing consumer resistance to persuasive messages. A third objective is to delineate the boundary conditions of the effects of advertising creativity. A fourth goal of the paper is to expand the list of outcome variables currently focused upon by the creativity literature. Specifically, cognitive responses, affective responses and conative responses will be examined (e.g., MacKenzie, Lutz and Belch 1986).

In the current paper, creative ads are defined as ads high in both divergence and relevance. In an advertising context, divergence refers to the extent to which an ad contains elements that are novel, different, or unusual in some way. While divergence is deemed as the central element to the definition of creativity, the ad also must be relevant—it must be meaningful, appropriate or valuable to the audience.

For the structural model, perceived advertising creativity is proposed to affect ad response variables (cognitive, affective and conative responses) via two routes. In the cognitive route, perceived advertising creativity activates an open-minded approach of information processing (heightened desire to postpone closure), which in turn leads to fewer negative statements and more curiosity statements about the brand. Accordingly consumers' brand attitude is more favorable and their intentions to view the ad again and purchase are enhanced. In the affective route, the positive affect engendered upon viewing creative ads affects downstream ad processing and response variables by (1) indirectly affecting consumers' desire to postpone closure (2) directly transferring to brand attitude and intention to view the ad again.

The proposed structural framework was examined in a 2 (divergence: high vs. low) x 2 (relevance: high vs. low) x 2 (exposure conditions: directed exposure vs. incidental exposure) experiment. Participants were asked to review an ad embedded in an entertainment news program and provided their answers to a set of questions aiming to measure their ad processing and ad responses. The proposed structural relationships received good empirical support (9 out of 12 hypotheses were supported), providing reasonable support that desire to postpone closure plays the key mediating role in explaining the effect of perceived advertising on ad processing and response variables. Both cognitive route and affective route were found to impact consumers' ad processing and responses.

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WORKING PAPERS

Endowment Effect as Inertia Equity in Brand Switching

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Abstract

Little research has investigated the behavioral aspect of brand inertia in brand switching based on behavioral decision theory. The present research employs endowment effect to conceptualize the inertia element of brand switching (e.g., from brand A to B). Past research normally separately assesses consumers' willingness to accept (WTA) to give up brand A and the willingness to pay (WTP) to acquire brand B. The effect postulates that the WTA is normally larger than the WTP. The present research proposes a joint assessment of the endowment effect in brand switching. It uses the price reduction (i.e., inertia equity) that just overcomes brand inertia to measure the difference between WTA and WTP. Empirical evidence demonstrates and strengthens the conceptualization of endowment effect as inertia equity in brand switching.

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Relationship Proneness—The Concept, Its Dimensions and Indicators

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Introduction

In the last decades, research has highlighted the existence of a wide spectrum of approaches to buyer-seller exchanges, ranging from transactional to relational (for instance, Dwyer, Schurr and Oh 1987). In search for explanations of such a wide spectrum, reference is sometimes made to the individual attributes of both buyers and sellers, pointing towards their inclinations to engage into or to shy away from relationships. As far as buyers are concerned, researchers have evoked the existence of "relational", "long-term oriented" or "transactional", "short-term oriented" customers (Garbarino and Johnson 1999)—meaning that some of the customers are eager to engage in stable relationships and interactions with their suppliers, while others are more prone to establish arm's length transactions.

Nevertheless, very little research has been devoted to the analysis of this orientation, and of its antecedents and consequences, if it isn't for some pioneering efforts and a few noteworthy exceptions (De Wulf, Odekerken-Schroeder and Iacobucci 2001; Odekerken-Schroeder, De Wulf and Schumacher 2003).

Such an orientation is meant to be a stable trait of individuals and has been termed "relationship proneness", defined as a conscious tendency to engage in relationships.

"Relationship proneness" has been associated with an interest for stable exchanges, and has been measured in terms of willingness "to be a regular customer" and "a steady customer", and for "going the extra mile" to buy at the same shop (De Wulf et al., 2001). But, occasionally, a different approach has crept into and different items have been used, without much discussion, related to the existence of personal contact and special treatment ("looking for personal contact with the personnel" and "making efforts in order to be treated in a special way") (as in De Wulf and Odekerken-Schroeder 2000). This is an important undertaking, since relations are multidimensional, and it is therefore very important to work out their different facets and to better understand how those facets relate to each other.

Researchers have also dealt with a whole host of constructs related to the antecedents and consequences of relationships. On the one hand, in keeping with evidence from social psychology, showing that relationships are influenced by stable traits of personality of the partners involved (Robins, Caspi and Moffitt 2000), they are suggesting that also buyers-sellers relationships are influenced by those traits (Aaker, Fournier and Brasel 2004). On the other hand, they have addressed the complex web of links between the propensity to engage in relations (relationship proneness) and behavioral intentions or relationship outcomes (De Wulf and Odekerken-Schroeder 2000; De Wulf, Odekerken-Schroeder and Iacobucci 2001; Odekerken-Schroeder, De Wulf and Schumacher 2003).

Research objectives

Our research objectives are threefold.

First of all, we want to analyze the 3+2 items that have been associated originally to relationship proneness (De Wulf et al., 2000; 2001), and that have been referred to above, to uncover their links.

Secondly, we want to explore the many aspects of relations, that add to the ones which have already been focused upon and that have been associated to interpersonal relations in the literature in socio-psychology (Fiske, 2000). Finally, we relate relationship proneness to personality traits, and in particular to basic traits (Big Five) and narrower dimensions (sociability and approval motivation).

Methodology

We develop a scale of relationship proneness, trying to capture the many-sided facets of relations; we end up with a compact and parsimonious 14-items scale, referring to the relationship to hairdressers. We measured the Big Five with a short version of the Big Five Questionnaire (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni & Perugini, 1993). Sociability is measured as in Cheek and Buss (1981); approval motivation as in Martin (1984). We run the traditional correlation and factor analysis. The sample is a convenience sample of 220 subjects, with diverse socio-demographic characteristics.

Results

When the 3+2 original items are pooled together and factor analyzed, 2 factors emerge, accounting for 68% of variance, with the 3 initial items loading on the first factor and the other 2 on the second.

When factor analyzing our 14-items scale, 3 factors emerge—social/interpersonal dimension, preferential treatment and reassurance, explaining 51% of variance. Correlations among factors ranged from .26 (social/interpersonal and preferential treatment) to .46 (social/interpersonal and reassurance).

When the 3+2 original items are pooled together with our 14 items, 4 different factors emerge, with the 3 items loading on a factor by themselves, and the other 2 splitting on 2 different factors (social/interpersonal and preferential treatment).

The social/interpersonal dimension was significantly correlated with traits of extraversion ($r=.21$), friendliness ($r=.18$) and sociability ($r=.30$). Preferential treatment and reassurance were respectively correlated with extraversion ($r=.20$) and approval motivation ($r=.34$). Relationship proneness and social/interpersonal dimension were significantly correlated ($r=.30$). These two dimensions showed the only relevant associations with satisfaction, respectively $r=.27$ for social/interpersonal and $r=.35$ for relationship proneness. An alpha level of .01 was used in all significance test.

Managerial implications:

We suggest that managers need to analyze the multi-dimensional nature of buyer-supplier relationships and to identify their different facets, and the relations among them.

We have established clearly that the orientation towards repeated and stable relationships is different, and can be treated differently, from the willingness to establish personalized relations; but also that they are related to a certain extent. This same orientation is not linked to the willingness to receive a special treatment and reassurance from one's own supplier.

We have also established that there is a significant relation between personality traits and orientation towards relations, implying that buyers will establish the same kind of relation across categories and across suppliers.

Limitations and extension for further research:

Although it has been widely used in research, we are aware that results may not be directly generalizable, because of the idiosyncratic nature of the service setting. Therefore a wider research approach is required, in order to feature in differences across categories (in the service sector and otherwise) and different approaches towards categories by consumers.

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U.S. Consumer's Cultural Choices: The Interplay of Ethnocentrism and Global Openness

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Extended Abstract

This paper focuses on the factors affecting U.S. consumers' cultural choices, especially their consumption of domestic versus foreign movies. The U.S. movie market is the world's most profitable and has been dominated by domestic productions for nearly a century (Vogel 2004), with foreign movies rarely exhibited in American theaters and often only at smaller independent theaters (Kaufman 2006). Although this market situation is often explained by corporate or government tactics (Puttnam 1997), it may also be attributed to the American consumer, the focus of this inquiry.

The constructs of ethnocentrism and global-openness can be especially useful in explaining their behavior. The propensity of American consumers to primarily view domestic movies may reflect the citizenry's ethnocentric tendencies and lack of global-openness. Global-openness, also referred to as cultural-openness, reflects a willingness to interact with foreign people and cultures, including cultural products (Suh and Kwon 2002, Sharma, Shimp and Shin 1995). It connotes both cognition and emotion, whereby the human will is engaged in learning about global differences and similarities, and is characterized by three essential components: (a) a desire for cross-cultural understanding, (b) cultural self-awareness, and (c) the development of cross-cultural skills, such as languages (Wenger 1998). Ethnocentrism is a psychosocial construct depicting the proclivity for individuals to view their own group as superior and to reject people who are culturally dissimilar (LeVine and Campbell 1972). This concept was first adapted into consumer research by Shimp and Sharma (1987) who developed an instrument to capture consumer ethnocentrism. Research found it to be an important predictor of domestic versus foreign purchases, and more consistently of the former than of the latter (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos 2004). The extant research suggests that these constructs should apply to cultural choices, with ethnocentrism being positively related to consumption of domestic movies and global-openness positively related to consumption of and desire for watching foreign movies.

These propositions were tested with survey data collected from American moviegoers. Movie consumption was addressed by having respondents list the last five movies they had watched at a theater and at home in the past month. This actual consumption measure ensured the validity of the answers. All reported movies were subsequently coded by country-of-origin to compute ratios of U.S. and foreign movie consumption. Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding the factors contributing to their movie choices and preferences. They indicated their level of agreement with a series of statements, including measures of the two key constructs, on 5-point Likert scales. Control measures about movie consumption and preferences as well as demographic data were collected last.

The dataset included 405 complete responses from U.S. consumers (151 males; mean age 22.5). The age group represents an important segment for movie consumption. In 2003, consumers aged 12-24 comprised 39% of all U.S. moviegoers (USCB 2005; MPAA 2004). Respondents had watched an average of 10.15 movies in the past month. In general, ethnocentrism levels ($\alpha=.72$) were low, with a mean of 1.95 ($SD=.64$), echoing recent research reporting that America's Generation-Y expresses little ethnocentric tendencies (Werder and Roberts 2005). Global-openness ($\alpha=.74$) was skewed to the high end of the scale with a mean of 4.15 ($SD=.70$). The two constructs were negatively correlated ($r = -.41, p < .01$).

Consumption ratios were computed based on the reported movies watched at the theater. Movie consumption was strongly skewed toward U.S. films, with 95.86% being American movies. Global-openness and ethnocentrism scores were compared between those consumers had seen 100% American movies at the theater and those who had seen at least one foreign movie. As the literature suggested, consumers in the first group were more ethnocentric and less globally open than consumers in the second group (1.99 vs. 1.54 $t(292)=3.42, p < .01$ and 4.08 vs. 4.56 $t(292)=3.43, p < .01$ respectively); but regression analyses indicated that global openness (or lack thereof) was the only factor ultimately affecting movie consumption.

To provide additional insights, the ratings of movie decision factors were also compared. Interestingly, for foreign movie consumers, only the language of the movie was rated as a less important factor, suggesting that language may be a strong barrier to American movie consumers. A close investigation of the open-ended responses provides further insights into the resistance to foreign movie consumption amongst U.S. consumers. Respondents were asked if they preferred movies from any specific country, and why. Even though few respondents had reported seeing foreign movies, the majority of the comments (67%) reflected openness to them. 11.7% brought up, without being prompted, the lack of access or limited exposure they have to foreign movies. Few indicated they disliked foreign movies (2.9%); that they would never watch one (4.3%); or that foreign films are difficult to relate to (3.2%); still, 14.3% indicated that domestic movies were easier to relate to and understand.

A truer test of participants' openness to foreign films is their choice for the movie tickets offered as an incentive for participation. Chi-square analyses comparing choices between respondents who expressed global-openness and those who did not showed that, of the latter group, only 1.2% selected the foreign movie tickets whereas amongst the former, 13.8% did ($\chi^2(1)=19.2, p < .01$). Those selecting foreign movie tickets were more globally open (4.7 vs. 4.10; $t(398)=5.37, p < .01$) and less ethnocentric than those selecting domestic films (1.41 vs. 2.00; $t(398)=4.98, p < .01$). Logistic regression analyses on the choice variable further indicate that global openness is the only predictor of foreign movie choices, through a main effect and an interactive effect when ethnocentrism is low.

This research provides initial evidence of discriminant and predictive validity for the constructs of global-openness and ethnocentrism. U.S. consumers' cultural choices were mainly affected by their level of global-openness, both in terms of actual movie consumption and in a hypothetical choice situation giving consumers an unequivocal option to consume foreign films.

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Self-Monitoring and Status Motivation: An Implicit Cognition Perspective

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Extended Abstract

People differ in the way they regulate themselves in social situations (Snyder 1974). Some care little about the appropriateness of their behavior in the eyes of others. These are the *low self-monitors*, who project towards others a stable self in diverse settings of social interaction. *High self-monitors* exert more expressive control over their social behavior and tend to adapt their appearance and acts to specific people and situations.

In an extensive review, Gangestad and Snyder (2000) concluded that we know little about the motivational factors in self-monitoring. They called on researchers to study the possible role of status as a motivation associated with self-monitoring. They claim that high self-monitors wish to progress upward in social hierarchy by trying to win others' favor. Therefore, they adapt their behavior to the specificities of the context. Indeed, "high self-monitors may well attempt to cultivate public images that create appearances that connote social status and may strive to construct social worlds that function as effective instruments of status enhancement" (Gangestad and Snyder 2000, p. 547). Status motivation could therefore be the driving force behind the high self-monitor's social behavior, whereas low self-monitors should be motivated less by status. If self-monitoring indeed proves to be motivated by status seeking, this should explain why it is an important moderator of consumer behavior. In particular, why low self-monitors are more receptive than high self-monitors to functional quality cues; whereas high self-monitors are more receptive than low self-monitors to symbolic cues serving a social-adjustive function (DeBono 1987, 2000; DeBono and Harnish 1988; DeBono and Rubin 1995; Shavitt, Lowrey, and Han 1992; Snyder and DeBono 1985).

Our approach is based on advances in implicit cognition and builds heavily on Fazio and Olson (2003). Fazio et al. (1986) conceptualized attitudes as object-evaluation associations in memory. According to the MODE model of attitude-behavior processes, there are two ways in which attitudes may exert an influence on consumer behavior (Fazio and Towles-Schwen 1999). Depending on motivation and opportunity, attitudes play a role in behavior either through spontaneous processes or deliberative processes. In spontaneous processing, "attitudes may have an impact on eventual behavior, even without the individual's reflecting upon the attitudes" (Fazio and Towles-Schwen 1999, p. 98). That is, some attitudes can be activated spontaneously, on the mere presentation of the attitude object. In such cases, a behavior is acted upon on the basis of the automatic attitudes that become spontaneously accessible in memory (Fazio, Powell, and Williams 1989). Spontaneous processing contrasts with deliberative processing, whereby the consumer engages in extensive retrieval of any data available about the attitude object. In deliberative processing, automatic attitudes may also be activated; however, they will be used less to form explicit judgments and to choose a response vis-à-vis the attitude object.

The motivation component of the MODE model is our central interest. If the attitude object does not induce sufficient motivation, subsequent explicit judgment and behavior toward it will be guided by spontaneous processing, through automatically activated attitudes. In this case, we can expect a high correspondence between automatic attitudes about an object and explicit judgments about it (Fazio and Olson 2003). On the other hand, if motivation is high, the consumer engages in a processing of the attributes of the object, situational factors etc. In these circumstances, the consumer would rely less on automatic attitudes to form explicit judgments. Therefore, a weak match is expected between automatic attitudes about the object and explicit judgments about the same object (Fazio and Olson 2003).

We expect high self-monitors to be highly motivated by status. When probed explicitly about their attitude toward status with no time constraints, we expect elaborated answers from them in agreement with deliberative processing, leading to a low correspondence between automatic attitudes and explicit attitude measures about the concept of status. If motivation is low, as Gangestad and Snyder (2000) theorize it should be for low self-monitors, then the explicit evaluation of an attitude object should correspond to automatically activated attitudes (Fazio and Olson 2003; Karpinski and Hilton 2001), leading to a high correspondence between automatic attitudes and explicit attitude measures with respect to status. The following hypothesis is therefore to be tested:

For low self-monitors, there will be a high correspondence between automatic attitudes about status and explicit attitude measures about status; for high self-monitors, there will be a low correspondence between automatic attitudes about status and explicit attitude measures about status.

Eighty-one undergraduate students participated in the study in individual sessions. The traditional Implicit Association Test (IAT) was used to measure automatic attitudes about status (Greenwald, McGhee, and Schwartz 1998). Word stimuli to represent the attitude objects of interest (high status vs. low status) were selected on the basis of a pretest. For “high status”, *upper class*, *high status*, *high class*, *high society*, *noble*, and *royalty* were used. For “low status”, *lower class*, *employee*, *worker*, *low status*, *blue collar*, and *working class* were used. For the “pleasant” and “unpleasant” attributes, stimuli were randomly selected from Greenwald et al. (1998). Explicit attitude measures were elicited through six-item, seven-point semantic differentials: “unpleasant-pleasant”, “bad-good”, “dislike-like”, “ugly-beautiful”, “unfavorable-favorable” and “awful-nice” (Swanson, Rudman, and Greenwald 2001). The order of IAT and explicit attitude measures was counterbalanced. Finally, participants completed Snyder and Gangestad’s 18-item self-monitoring scale (Snyder and Gangestad 1986).

To calculate IAT effects, we used Greenwald, Nosek and Banaji’s (2003) scoring algorithm. For explicit attitude measures, difference scores (e.g. summed item score for “prestige brands” minus summed item score for “common brands”) were calculated. Groups of high- vs. low self-monitors were constituted using conventional median split.

Implicit attitude measures were positive for low and high self-monitors. Traditional IAT measures correspond to automatic association strength between status-related concepts and valence attributes. They may be interpreted as the sum of environmental stereotypes and personal experience with attitude objects in a specific cultural environment (Dasgupta and Greenwald 2001; Karpinski and Hilton 2001; Olson and Fazio 2004). The dominance of positive automatic associations suggests the presence of shared stereotypical associations about status.

Explicit attitude measures were also positive for low and high self-monitors. Following Aiken and West (1991), explicit attitude measure was regressed on IAT measure ($t=3.26, p<.01$), self-monitoring ($t=-.32, p<.01$) and the IAT X self-monitoring interaction ($t=-2.27, p<.05$). As expected, the correlation between IAT and explicit measures was significant for low self-monitors ($r=.45, p<.01$) but not for high self-monitors ($r=.01, ns$). These results suggest that consumers have positive automatic associations about status, but only low self-monitors seem to rely on those associations to form explicit status judgments, confirming our hypothesis. However, this preliminary result calls for more empirical evidence about the processes at play.

Replications with other consumer segments are warranted. Within the same cultural environment, people with different income levels may share the same stereotypes about status and status symbols. However, personal experience with status symbols could vary, with affluent people having easier access to these brands than people with lower incomes. The effects we observed could actually be stronger with high-income consumers, since they might have more and more diverse experience with status and status symbols than undergraduates. Relatedly, it would be interesting to introduce variation in the level of cultural capital (Holt 1998). We may expect consumers with a high cultural capital either to be less sensitive to stereotypes or to have different stereotypes than people with lower levels of cultural capital. Additionally, high self-monitors may reveal different types of status evaluations depending on situational cues. For example, if they are in a party with people who all look down on prestige brands, the high self-monitor may adapt to the circumstances and reveal a very negative evaluation of these brands, just to please others. Therefore, future research may benefit from the manipulation of situational cues, too.

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A Construal Level Theory Approach to Understanding Self-Control Strategies

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Failures to exercise self-control over one's behavior contribute to a variety of maladies that affect modern society. Virtually constant media attention, on such issues as increased health care problems due to obesity, rising bankruptcies caused by overextension of credit, lack of savings by Americans, and a variety of addictions to both legal and illegal substances, suggests a common link to under-regulated behavior. As such, understanding strategies that can be used to increase consumer self-control is crucial. Many strategies have been discussed in the marketing and psychology literature, but a thorough integration of the different strategies is lacking. In extant research, Hoch and Loewenstein (1991) distinguish between desire reducing and willpower enhancing strategies. Similarly, Dholakia et al. (2006) categorize self-control strategies either as "approaching the desire-resistance goal" or "avoiding the temptation".

The present research seeks to enlighten various strategies that consumers use to exercise control over their own behavior by organizing these strategies using construal level theory (CLT) principles of psychological distance (Trope and Liberman 2003). Recent research by Fujita et al. (2005) discussed the integration of CLT and self-control in order to better understand consumer decisions. The basic proposition is that consumers' high-level construals are more highly correlated with their actual values and attitudes than are their low-level construals.

Although the primary focus of their CLT research is temporal construal, Trope and Liberman (2003) suggest that the same principles apply to other dimensions involving psychological distance, and therefore propose level of construal as a basis for a unified theory. The specific construal level mechanisms are known as the four W's of CLT: 1) When (temporal distance), 2) Where (spatial distance), 3) Who (social distance), and 4) Whether (hypotheticality or probabilistic distance). Across the various construal level mechanisms, a concerted focus on higher-level construals enhances the likelihood that an individual will successfully exercise self-control. The present research uses the four construal level mechanisms to organize and understand specific a total of 30 distinct consumer self-control strategies.

Construal Level Self-Control Strategies

Many temporally-based self-control strategies are likely to be fairly common for consumers. Because two of the three primary components of self-control (i.e., both standards and the monitoring of progress) (Baumeister 2002) are represented in the temporal distance category, this set of strategies is foundational to overcoming potential consumer self-control failures. Spatial strategies primarily involve contextual changes to one's environment, such as avoidance or removal. Social distancing strategies use distance between oneself and others, as well as one's actual and ideal selves. Probabilistic strategies cover a broad spectrum of approaches to regulating self-control through careful assessment of one's potential actions and the impact of these actions on the likelihood of accomplishing higher-level goals.

The present research specifies strategies as representing one or more CLT mechanism. Many interesting issues arise from this organization of self-control strategies. It is simply not possible for all of the various strategies to be equally effective or for the same strategies to be equally effective for all individuals. Identifying the circumstances and individual difference variables that most impact self-control represents an important next step in understanding the effective use of self-control strategies.

Factors Affecting Self-Control Strategy Use

The first individual difference factor for examining the differential effectiveness of self-control strategies is one's inherent level of self-control. Generally, consumers with high levels of trait self-control will be more likely to successfully use self-control strategies than those with low levels of self-control. Identifying which strategies or category of strategies work most effectively for those with low levels of self-control would be an important contribution. Individuals with low self-control are likely to try fewer strategies in their efforts to self-regulate. Self-efficacy suggests that past failures in exercising self-control will be taken into account in dealing with current temptations (Bandura 1977). Similarly, those with high levels of self-control simply need fewer strategies to obtain the desired results because they are confident in the success of a few core strategies based on past experiences. However, consumers with moderate levels of self-control are more likely to draw from a larger assortment of strategies when attempting self-regulation because of the greater ambiguity associated with their own ability to exercise self-control.

Method. Two studies involving various individual difference measures and open-ended response data regarding use of self-control strategies were conducted to enlighten the use of such strategies by consumers. Study 1 used a student sample (n=80), while study 2 consisted of adult consumers (n=157). Select study 1 results are reported below. The data collected in the two studies provide a rich data source that can be analyzed in a variety of ways useful to understanding consumers' use of self-control strategies.

Results. A total of 238 self-control strategies (i.e., an average of 3.0 per participant) emerged from the open-ended responses obtained in study 1. Two coders independently coded responses into predetermined categories, based on extant literature and the CLT framework.

Temporal strategies were the most common (127), followed by probabilistic (85), spatial (21), and social/self (3). These results indicate that temporal and probabilistic strategies are the most commonly used strategies. Specifically, budgeting was by far the most common self-control strategy used by consumers.

The data collected in study 1 also allowed for a test regarding the number of self-control strategies used by individuals differing in their level of self-control. Responses to Tangney et al.'s (2004) 13-item self-control measure were averaged to form an index ($\alpha=0.83$). The sample was then split three ways to represent low, medium, and high self-control groups. A one-way ANOVA revealed the predicted curvilinear relationship among the three groups, with the greatest number of different strategies being used by those in the moderate self-control group ($M_{\text{LowSC}}=2.77$, $M_{\text{MediumSC}}=3.44$, $M_{\text{HighSC}}=2.69$, $F=2.82$, $p=.066$).

Summary

Although previous research has investigated the ability of various self-control theories to explain a variety of consumer behaviors, only limited research has focused on understanding the strategies used to combat self-control failure. The present CLT based approach for organizing and understanding self-control strategies serves to enlighten previous research on self-control and provides a foundation for future related work. Increasing understanding of how, when, and why particular self-control strategies are used provides an important avenue for enlightening the problems associated with self-control failure.

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Collins's Interaction Ritual Theory: Using Interaction Rituals to Conceptualize How Objects Become Sacred Symbols

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Abstract

Numerous marketing articles have been published on special possessions emphasizing the roles that objects play in constructing identity or self. While these articles emphasize the importance of special possessions, there has been a dearth of theory and understanding as to how these objects are commissioned as "special" by the consumer. Currently unbeknownst to marketers, Collins's Interaction Ritual Theory provides a new conceptual tool by which marketers can investigate this consumer selection process. By examining consumer's interaction rituals, marketers can gain a better understanding of the process by which objects become sacred, that is to say how material objects become special possessions symbolically representing previous positive interactions.

Summary

It was not until the late 1970s that sociologists like Heise (1979), Hochschild (1979), Kemper (1978), and Shott (1979) undertook the systematic study of emotions. In retrospect, this late date is remarkable in spite of the fact that emotions permeate virtually every aspect of human experience. How could a majority of sociologists have turned a blind eye to emotions all this time? Not all of them did, but with relatively few exceptions, sociologists had studied just about every aspect of human behavior and somehow given comparatively little attention to the dynamics of emotion (Turner & Stets 2005). Historically, it seems that Western thought has juxtaposed emotion or affect and cognition. Cognition is often associated with rational thinking, such as information processing models. However, research on the neurology of emotions now demonstrates that this is simply incorrect. Data clearly indicate that when areas of the cerebral cortex, particularly the prefrontal lobe, are disconnected from subcortical emotion centers of the brain, individuals have difficulty making decisions of any kind and almost always make what appear to be irrational or at least suboptimal decisions (Damasio 1994, 2003). Thus, human rationality and, more generally, decision making are dependent on emotions, and without them, individuals cannot attach valences or utilities (Turner & Stets 2005).

Therefore, emotions make individual decisions, social structures, and systems of cultural symbols viable. Conversely, emotions are also what can drive people apart and push them to tear down social structures and challenge cultural traditions (i.e. Berlin wall). Thus, experience, behavior, interaction, and organization are connected to the mobilization and expression of emotions and greatly need to be

more understood at the individual level of consumption. Randall Collins (2004) argues that emotions are the common denominator of rationality because rationality depends on assessing the utility (or capacity to bestow positive affect) of alternative lines of conduct. Hence, in general, sociological theories of emotion assume that people pursue lines of conduct that bring about positive emotional outcomes and try at all costs to avoid experiences that lead to negative emotional consequences. Using this assumption of emotional behavior, it is the purpose of this paper to bring to light Collins's Interaction Ritual Theory and its possible impact on marketing literature in understanding how emotions transform symbols (objects) into sacred artifacts for groups and individuals.

Collins explains that the interaction ritual is an emotional transformer, turning some transient emotions (e.g. joy, happiness, fear) into other enduring emotions (privilege, power, status acceptance or rejection) as outcomes representing emotional energy that is carried across situations. Collins gives us a model by which this emotional transformation process occurs. For a ritualistic situation to produce emotional energy, there are some necessary ingredients required of the situation. First, there must be a co-presence of bodies or a group assembly (more than one). According to Collins, an interaction ritual cannot occur by one's self. Next, barriers to outsiders must be established. These can be physical barriers like house walls or a group of girls standing in a tight circle, or these barriers can be psychological. Either way, a person commonly knows whether they are on the inside or outside of the interaction circle. Thirdly, there must be mutual focus of attention by all persons in the ritual. People focus their attention upon a common object or activity, and by communicating this focus to each other become mutually aware of each other's focus of attention. Finally, there must be shared common mood or emotional experience among the individuals. Ingredients three and four become a feedback loop that intensifies through rhythmic entrainment, meaning that as the persons become more tightly focused on their common activity, more aware of what each other is doing and feeling, and more aware of each other's awareness, they experience their shared emotion more intensely, as it comes to dominate their awareness.

This feedback intensification then produces collective effervescence, or what Durkheim called collective consciousness, which is the collective situation engrossment or participation in the moment that results in shared common excitement. This process then produces very specific ritualistic outcomes that become important only to the group who experienced the collective effervescence. The first outcome is group solidarity or group identity, which is a feeling of membership to each person. Secondly, each member receives emotional energy, or a feeling of confidence, elation, strength, enthusiasm, and initiative in taking action, which is able to be transferred beyond just this interaction ritual. Thirdly, emblems or other representations (object, visual icons, words, gestures even) become sacred symbols of social relationship. These artifacts are representative of the group interaction and only the interaction. These objects are not sacred to those who did not experience the interaction ritual, but only to the participants. And finally, the group develops standards of morality or the sense of rightness in adhering to group norms, especially concerning the sacred symbols. Participants respect these symbols and will even defend them against group transgressors or outsider's violations of the symbols. Therefore, it is clear to see how Collins's IR Theory describes the process by which symbols or objects become sacred to a group or individual, and how these objects become symbolic representations of positive emotional rituals.

Within a marketing context, numerous articles have been published on special possessions and the roles that these objects play in constructing identity or a sense of self (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton 1981; Belk 1988; Curasi, Price, & Arnould 2004; Ahuvia 2004). While these articles emphasize the importance of special possessions, there has been a dearth of theory and understanding as to how these objects are commissioned as "special" by the consumer. Currently unbeknownst to marketers, Collins's Interaction Ritual Theory provides a new innovative conceptual tool by which marketers can investigate this arena of the consumer selection process. By examining consumer's interaction rituals, marketers will be able to gain a better understanding of the process by which objects become sacred, that is to say how material objects become special possessions symbolically representing previous positive interactions.

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Increasing Persuasion, Reducing Resistance: Maximizing the Efficacy of Persuasive Appeals for Esthetic Product Consumption

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Consumers are inundated with messages via print, television, Websites and interpersonal conversations—all with the purpose of inducing a certain behavior or eliciting attitude change. The choice decision process has increased in complexity as consumers are presented with more and more options in today's marketplace. In some cases, the consumer may have difficulty in arriving at a decision.

Knowles and Linn (2004) propose that there are two different ways to persuade people to accept alternatives. Using Dollard and Miller's (1959; Miller 1944, 1959) approach-avoidance conflict model as a conceptual framework, Knowles and Linn (2004) introduce two different strategies for promoting movement toward a goal: Alpha and Omega strategies. Alpha strategies activate the approach forces, thereby increasing motivation to move toward the goal. Alpha strategies have a long tradition in the marketing literature. Offerings are made more attractive by adding incentives, creating more convincing reasons, and finding more credible sources (Knowles and Linn 2004).

Conversely, Omega strategies promote change by minimizing the avoidance forces, reducing the motivation or resistance to move away from the goal. Omega strategies have appeared less frequently in the influence literature. Examples of Omega strategies, as codified by Knowles and Linn (2004), include sidestepping resistance, addressing resistance directly, addressing resistance indirectly, distracting resistance, disrupting resistance, consuming resistance and using resistance to promote change.

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of using both Alpha and Omega persuasive message appeals in a consumption domain where consumers express or exhibit some resistance—attending the symphony orchestra.

Attendance at Symphony Orchestras

The symphony orchestra, one of the oldest artistic institutions in America, is facing declining audiences (Wang 2003). Nationwide, the average age of consumers who attend orchestra performances is 57; sadly, audiences of many local and regional orchestras are dying off (NEA 2002; Winzenreid 2004; Page 2005). Critics admonish that as the segment that appreciates this art form dwindles, the local orchestra may cease to be a beacon of civic pride. (Brooke 2005).

Symphony orchestras face a challenge in finding convincing ways to communicate to younger consumers the affordability and enjoyment of attending the symphony. In order to ensure survival, marketing managers should look to develop innovative marketing practices to attract new and younger audiences. Subsequently, this involves tailoring elements of the marketing mix to meet the needs of younger audiences. One way marketing managers can go about targeting younger audiences is by developing marketing communications with the goal of reaching this segment. In addition to emphasizing the benefits of attending a symphony orchestra performance, the resistance that younger consumers might have to such an experience should be addressed.

Two studies in this paper assess the efficacy of various persuasive appeals directed toward younger adults in encouraging them to attend the symphony orchestra. In Study 1, Alpha and Omega influence strategies as well as self and other-referencing techniques were examined for their efficacy in engendering favorable attitudes and strong behavioral intentions towards attending the symphony orchestra. The moderating role of affect intensity (Larsen 1984) was also examined to ascertain whether individuals that have more favorable attitudes toward attending a symphony orchestra performance possess this trait in greater magnitudes.

Study 2 complemented Study 1 by further examining the effectiveness of Alpha and Omega influence strategies, but in the context of temporal framing. Additionally, ego-control (Block 1980, 2002), or the inhibition/expression of impulse, was examined for moderating effects on temporal frame.

Study 1

Study 1 was a between-subjects experiment that included manipulations of advertisements using both Alpha and Omega influence strategies as well as self-and other-referencing. The experiment was a 3 (Alpha/Alpha-Add Incentive/Omega- Acknowledge-Validate Resistance) x 2 (Self/Other Referencing) x (High/Low Affect Intensity) between subjects design. A total of 119 students from a southern university participated in the study.

The Alpha condition was a "traditional" advertisement that made the symphony orchestra experience appear "enjoyable, exciting and dramatic;" the benefits of attending the symphony orchestra were emphasized. The Alpha-Add incentive condition included the same enticing appeal but also offered a free T-shirt with each ticket purchase. The Omega-Acknowledgement/Validation condition confronted resistance by acknowledging that one "might think that the symphony is dull and boring". All three conditions referenced the self by use of first person (i.e., "you want to be sure to experience this enjoyable evening") or referencing others, by use of third person (i.e., "everyone should be sure to be a part of this enjoyable evening"). All ads indicated that student tickets were available.

In study 1, it was found that individuals that possessed greater magnitudes of the emotional component of affect intensity expressed more favorable attitudes ($M=4.48$ and $M=4.01$, $p<.05$) and behavioral intentions ($M= 3.96$ and $M=3.52$, $p.05$) toward attending the symphony orchestra. Additionally, in the Alpha: Add Incentive and Omega: Acknowledge/Validate conditions, individuals that exhibited high levels of affect intensity expressed stronger intentions toward attending the symphony orchestra than those in the traditional Alpha condition. Furthermore, self-referencing played an important role in increasing the persuasive impact of the advertising appeals, particularly for those that exhibited high levels of the intensity component of affect intensity.

Study 2

A total of 110 students from a southern university participated in Study 2. The experiment was a 2 (Alpha-Discount/Omega-Guarantee) x 2 (Proximal/Distal Temporal Frame) x 2 (High/Low Ego-control) between subjects design.

The Alpha-Discount condition consisted of an advertisement that again presented the symphony experience as “enjoyable, exciting and dramatic” but also offered a second subscription to the symphony for half-price with the purchase of one subscription at full price. The Omega-Guarantee condition promised a money-back guarantee if the performance was not enjoyed. Both conditions were framed in a proximal (in the present) and distal (several months from the present) temporal frame. Ego-control (Block 1980, 2002) was a measured variable.

Results from Study 2 indicated that the Omega-Guarantee condition elicited stronger behavioral intentions than the Alpha-Discount condition ($M=3.53$ and $M=3.07$, $p<.05$). There was no significant moderating effect between temporal frame (proximal/distal) and ego control; however, those individuals that exhibited higher levels of ego-control expressed more favorable attitudes towards attending the symphony orchestra than those low in ego-control ($M=4.27$ and $M=3.75$, $p<.01$).

These findings could have implications for marketing managers at symphony orchestras as well as those responsible for developing marketing communications for products that are emotionally provocative, hedonic and experiential in nature. Specifically, targeting consumers that exhibit higher levels of affect intensity might be prudent. These high affect intensity individuals might include more socially active consumers that belong to various clubs and organizations, as well as enjoy activities that are emotionally stimulating. In developing marketing communications targeted at these consumers, employing self-referencing techniques might be an effective strategy for increasing the persuasive impact of the message.

Also, either providing incentives for attendance or addressing some form of resistance that these individuals might have could yield better results than just emphasizing the features and benefits of a product or experience.

Are Good Intentions Enough? Encouraging Regular Savings Through Implementation Intentions

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Introduction and Hypotheses

This study concerns the implications of Gollwitzer’s (1993) concept of implementation intentions. Intention, attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and past behavior from for Ajzen’s (1985) Theory of Planned Behavior were used to measure the motivation of participants’ of an “America Saves” campaign to save regularly prior to an intervention in which participants made implementation intentions concerning when, how, how much, and from what source of income they will deposit money into their savings accounts in the next month. The study suggests the following testable hypotheses:

Participants who form implementation intentions concerning when, how, how much, and from what source of income they will deposit money into their America Saves account will be more likely to deposit money into their America Saves account than participants who do not form such intentions.

Participants who form implementation intentions will save in a manner consistent with their intentions.

Procedures

We are collecting data of three points in time: one baseline and two follow-up surveys. For the present paper, we present the results of the first two data collections. The third data collection is currently ongoing. One hundred and fifty-six participants completed the questionnaire at Time 1, $N=68$ completed the questionnaire at Time 2. The data collections for Time 2 and Time 3 are not yet completed but will be available for the conference presentation.

Measures

The standard “Theory of Planned Behavior” measures followed closely the description in Ajzen (2002). The implementation intention intervention was designed following the procedure described by Gollwitzer (1993) and Orbell, Hodgkins, and Sheeran (1997). Participants in the treatment group were asked to make implementation intentions specifying first, when they would deposit into their savings accounts in the next month, second, the dollar amount they would deposit, third, how they would deposit the amount, and fourth, from what income source the deposited amount would come from.

Results

Sixty-nine per cent of this sample were women ($N=47$) and 31 per cent were men ($N=21$). Participants’ mean age was 40.06 years ($SD=12.66$), most were white (66%), had a college degree (66.2%), were married (42.6%), employed full time (80.9%). The mean family size was 2.71 people ($SD=1.39$), the mean household income was \$42,000 ($SD=\$2,760$). The primary savings goals are saving for emergencies (30.3%) and for retirement (15.2%). The 47 responses are divided into 57.4 per cent treatment group ($N=39$) and 42.6 per cent control group responses ($N=29$).

All scale reliabilities were satisfactory, ranging from .689 (Past behavior) to .937 (Intention).

A MANOVA showed no significant differences between the two groups on preintervention measures of intention, attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, or previous behavior, $F(5, 64)=0.562$, *ns*. These findings indicate that prior to the intervention, the two groups held similar beliefs concerning regular savings.

Univariate *F*-tests confirmed that there were no differences between the groups on preintervention measures of intention, attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, or past behavior. Similarly, there were no significant differences in age, family size, household income, employment status, education (*t*-test not significant) between the groups and there were equivalent proportions of men

and women, races, marital status in the control and treatment group. We also inspected the correlations between past behavior and intention for the two groups. Past behavior is significantly associated with intentions for both the treatment group ($r=.578$, $p=.000$) and the control group ($r=.766$, $p=.000$).

In sum, both groups had positive intentions, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Behavioral intentions were strong in both conditions, with mean scores greater than 14 on a 3 to 21 scale. We can conclude that both groups base their intentions to save regularly upon their previous savings behavior and that both groups are motivated to save regularly.

Overall, the effect of the implementation intervention is not yet obvious from the data currently available. At the 1-month follow-up, 83 per cent of the respondents reported that they had deposited money into their savings account compared to 86 per cent of the control group (Chi-square=27.499, ns.). Thus, our first hypothesis cannot be supported. The effect of implementation intention manipulation may emerge on the second follow-up only as described in Sheeran and Orbell (1999).

At follow-up, participants were also asked to report when, how, and from what source they have deposited money into their savings accounts, and these responses were compared with their implementation intentions. At both time-points, most participants intended to and actually deposited on payday (baseline: 74.4%, follow-up: 71.4%) or on a specific day during the month (baseline: 23.1%, follow-up: 21.4%). At follow-up, all respondents in the treatment group reported to take the savings from their paycheck (100%), compared to 92.3 per cent in the implementation intentions. The responses differed for the mode of deposit. While about half of the respondents (54.1%) intended to use direct deposit, only 14.8 per cent did so, responding to an increase in payroll deduction, electronically/internet deposit, and mailing. About one-third of the respondents intended and actually deposited the funds in person (baseline: 29.7%, follow-up: 29.6%).

In conclusion, the ongoing data collection will provide further evidence of the usefulness of implementation intentions to increase the likelihood of action among people motivated to save.

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Consumers' Appreciation of Product Personalization

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Extended Abstract

Due to consumers' individual preferences, many consumers are unfulfilled with standard goods (Piller and Müller 2004). A promising strategy for companies is to offer consumers the opportunity to personalize their products (Franke and Piller 2003). Based on the definition of Blom (2000), product personalization is defined as a process that defines or changes the appearance or functionality of a product to increase its personal relevance to an individual. By implementing product personalization, consumers are offered a certain degree of design authority (Fox 2001). An example of product personalization is mass customization. Mass customization allows consumers to create a personalized product by choosing different options (e.g., colors) from lists that are predefined by the manufacturer. For example, Nike enables consumers to design their own personalized shoes (<http://nikeid.nike.com>). This study investigates consumers' attitude to and purchase intention for personalized products. Specifically, we focus on personalizing a product's appearance.

Consumers may want to personalize a product's appearance in such a way that the product becomes expressive of their identity (Blom and Monk 2003; Mugge, Schifferstein, and Schoormans 2004). If consumers are only offered a relatively low degree of design authority, the options to create a product that fits one's unique identity are limited, resulting in a suboptimal solution. In contrast, personalizing a product with unlimited options enables consumers to create a product with a supreme fit to their identity. It is likely that consumers have a more positive attitude and a higher purchase intention for personalized products if they are offered a higher degree of design authority.

Offering consumers a higher degree of design authority in product personalization also has a downside: Personalizing a product requires consumers' time and effort. Therefore, the outcome of the personalization process has to provide enough additional value for the owner. Otherwise, the required time and effort will negatively affect consumers' attitude to and purchase intention for the product. Expressing one's identity may have both a personal and a social goal. People have a need to define their identity to themselves (personal goal), but also to others (social goal). The social goal of self-expression is reduced if the personalization is only visible to the owner. Therefore, we hypothesize that the visibility of the personalization moderates the effect of design authority on attitude and purchase intention.

Our study had a 2 (design authority: low vs. high) x 2 (visibility: low vs. high) between-subjects full factorial design. In each condition, subjects read about a company that sells wireless home phones with an opportunity to personalize the phone's appearance. The personalization process was illustrated by a written description and several color pictures of examples of personalized phones. To

operationalize design authority, the number of personalization options was varied. In the low design authority condition, subjects were presented with 4 color options. In the high design authority condition, subjects could personalize the home phone by choosing a color out of a palette of 99 options. In addition, they could select one of the 24 possible patterns, resulting in a total of 2376 personalization options for the high design authority condition. Visibility was operationalized by varying the component of the home phone that was personalized (display vs. cover). Subsequently, subjects filled out a questionnaire in which measures were obtained for attitude, purchase intention, design authority, and visibility of the personalization. All variables were measured using multiple items on seven-point Likert scales.

The questionnaire was sent to 100 members of a consumer household panel. Sixty-one subjects (51% males, $M_{\text{age}}=41$) returned the questionnaire, resulting in 14 to 17 subjects per condition. Both manipulations were satisfactory and no confounding effects were found. The results revealed a significant design authority \times visibility interaction effect for attitude ($F(1, 57)=4.52, p<.05$) and purchase intention ($F(1, 55)=4.32, p<.05$). If the personalization concerned a highly visible product component, subjects in the high design authority condition had a more positive attitude towards the product ($M_{\text{low DA}}=4.60$ vs. $M_{\text{high DA}}=5.56$) and a stronger purchase intention ($M_{\text{low DA}}=4.21$ vs. $M_{\text{high DA}}=5.11$) compared to the subjects in the low design authority condition. However, if the personalization concerned a hardly visible product component, the opposite pattern was found: Subjects in the high design authority condition had a more negative attitude towards the product ($M_{\text{low DA}}=4.78$ vs. $M_{\text{high DA}}=4.24$) and a weaker purchase intention ($M_{\text{low DA}}=4.23$ vs. $M_{\text{high DA}}=3.43$) compared to the subjects in the low design authority condition.

Our findings suggest that although offering consumers a higher degree of design authority in product personalization enables them to create products that better fit their identity, consumers may in some cases actually prefer to have less freedom. Personalizing products only provides value for consumers if the personalization concerns a highly visible product component. Personalizing a visible aspect enables them to create a more self-expressive product to define their identity to themselves and to others. If the personalization is only visible to the owner, the social goal of self-expression is reduced, and consumers refuse to invest their time and effort in the personalization process.

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Consideration of Future Consequences as a Moderator of Temporal Framing and Regulatory Focus in a Risk Domain

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Introduction

In this working paper, we examine Consideration of Future Consequences (CFC; Strathman et al. 1994) as an important moderator of temporal frame and regulatory focus. CFC is an individual difference variable that captures the extent to which people consider distant versus immediate consequences of potential behaviors. Drawing from construal level theory (Liberman and Trope 2003), recent literature on temporal framing effects (Chandran and Menon 2004), and regulatory focus theory (Higgins 1997), we demonstrate how this time orientation variable can moderate framing effects observed in the literature.

Study 1

Study 1 examines the moderating effect of CFC on temporal frame. Hypotheses were tested using a 2 (temporal frame: proximal versus distal) X 2 (CFC: low versus high) between-subjects experiment.¹ During freshman orientation, 90 first-semester college freshmen were presented with a mock public service advertisement that discussed the risk for weight gain while in college. Temporal frame was manipulated by altering the time in which the typical college student experiences weight gain (i.e., one month versus 48 months). After stimulus ad exposure, participants responded to questions related to their perceived levels of risk for weight gain. The 12-item CFC scale was administered at the end of the questionnaire.

As predicted, the more proximal temporal framing of the risk message resulted in (marginally) higher probability estimates of gaining weight ($F=2.32, p<.10$) than the more distal temporal framing. However, this temporal framing main effect was qualified by an interaction effect between temporal frame and CFC. Pairwise contrasts show that the probability estimate for low-CFCs was much higher for the proximal temporal frame than for the distal frame ($t=1.70, p<.05$). However, high-CFC subjects reported similar probability estimates across temporal frame conditions ($t=0.64, p>.30$). Similar results were found for the risk likelihood variable.

Consistent with previous research (e.g., Chandran and Menon 2004), Study 1 findings suggest that framing the health risk in more proximal terms may be more effective than framing the risk in more distal terms. Study 1 also uncovered a moderating effect of CFC on temporal framing effects for consumer risk perceptions. For both the consumer's probability estimates and risk likelihood estimates, low-CFC individuals were more strongly affected by the more proximal framing of the health risk than were high-CFC individuals. As predicted, high-CFC individuals reported relatively high risk perceptions for gaining weight (a risk typically construed as long-term in nature) regardless of the temporal frame of the message. Low-CFCs reported low risk perceptions when the health risk was framed in distal (distant future) terms. However, when the health risk was framed in more proximal (near future) terms, low-CFC's reported much higher risk perceptions consistent with, and even exceeding that of high-CFC's.

Study 2

The purpose of Study 2 was to replicate findings from Experiment 1 and examine an important third factor, regulatory focus. Although there has been some studies that have examined the relationship between regulatory focus and temporal distance (e.g., Pennington and

¹A median split was performed to represent low versus high CFC subjects. This procedure for segmenting subjects based on an individual difference factor is consistent with past research (e.g., Strathman et al. 1994; Joireman, Sprott, and Spangenberg forthcoming; Boninger, Gleicher, and Strathman 1994).

Roese 2003), no study to date has examined the moderating influence of individual differences in time orientation on regulatory focus. Hypotheses were tested using a 2 (regulatory focus: promotion versus prevention) x 2 (temporal frame: proximal versus distal) x 2 (CFC: low versus high) between-subjects experiment. Temporal frame was manipulated by altering the time period in which consumers of high-fat fast food meals may suffer adverse health effects as a result of consuming the food. Regulatory focus was manipulated through evoking a promotion or prevention focus through framing of the message.² After exposure to the mock public service ad, 119 participants responded to dependent measures and the CFC measure.

Findings show a significant univariate temporal framing effect on the probability estimate ($F=2.90, p<.05$). Consistent with Study 1 findings, the more proximal temporal framing of the risk message resulted in higher probability estimates than the distal temporal framing. Also consistent with Study 1, CFC was found to moderate the temporal framing effects. Contrasts indicate that low-CFC individuals reported somewhat higher probability estimates ($M=58.48$ versus $49.37; t=1.40, p<.10$) when the risk was framed in proximal rather than distal terms. High-CFC individuals reported similar probability estimates for the proximal and distal frame conditions ($p>.30$). As in Study 1, similar results were found for the risk likelihood variable.

A regulatory focus by CFC interaction was found for perceived effectiveness of the message and attitude toward the message ($F's=2.94$ and 11.07 respectively; $p's<.05$). Consistent with predictions, low-CFC individuals evaluated the promotion framed message more positively ($M's=5.26$ versus 4.71) and perceived it as more effective ($M's=4.87$ versus 4.35) than prevention-framed message. In contrast, high-CFCs evaluated the prevention framed message more favorably ($M's=5.54$ versus 4.75) and more effective ($M's=4.54$ versus 4.22) than promotion framed message.

Findings from Study 2 show consistent effects of temporal framing in this health-risk domain and demonstrate that CFC can moderate these effects for risk-related variables. Findings also show that CFC can moderate regulatory focus for attitude and perceived effectiveness variables. High-CFC individuals evaluated prevention-framed messages more positively and as more effective; low-CFCs evaluated promotion-framed messages more positively and as more effective.

Brief Discussion

Consideration of future consequences has not yet been directly studied in a marketing context, nor has the potential interaction of this variable with temporal framing on risk variables been addressed. Findings from our preliminary studies offer evidence that CFC may be an important moderator of both temporal frame and regulatory focus. While Chandran and Menon's (2004) ground-breaking work addresses important moderators of temporal framing, our results extend their findings by demonstrating another important variable (CFC) can moderate temporal framing effects. This research also contributes to the small amount of literature examining the relationship between time and regulatory focus. The findings also have potential practical implications the important areas of public policy and health marketing (Aaker and Lee 2006).

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Managing Experiential Marketing: Insight from a Prototypical Experience

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Extended Abstract

One of the greatest assets that a company or individual can have is a strong brand identity. The leading brands of the world all enjoy one thing—a strong emotional connection with consumers. Recently, experiential marketing has gained momentum among marketers as a means of communicating a brand's personality and values (Live Brand Experience Association 2005). Conceptually, experiential marketing attempts to engage consumers in memorable ways by "staging experiences" around products and services, in hopes of invoking positive emotional energy around a brand.

²This manipulation is consistent with past studies that manipulate regulatory focus by framing outcome contingencies in terms of gains or losses (e.g., Higgins 2002; Lee and Aaker 2004, Pennington, Aaker, and Mogilner).

Experiential marketing can encompass everything from “live” product sampling to product demos. In 2004, companies spent 17.6 billion on in-store advertising and this number is expected to continue to rise (Nelson and Ellison 2005).

Limited research has explored and explained what actually occurs when experimental marketing is successful. The purpose of this paper is to provide theoretical explanation for the phenomena using Randall Collins’ Interaction Ritual Theory (1975, 1981, 1990, 2004). The paper will also present an ethnographic analysis of a prototypical interaction ritual—a live music performance. The specific purpose of this approach is to glean information from an ideal experiential context that can be applied to the management of experiential marketing phenomena.

Interaction Ritual Theory

An interaction ritual, according to Collins, is an emotional transformer, taking some emotions as ingredients, and turning them into other emotions as outcomes. There are four elements or ingredients that go into producing an Interaction Ritual: (1) co-presence of individuals (2) ecological barriers (3) common focus of attention (4) and common emotional mood among present individuals.

The outcomes of the Interaction Ritual are (1) symbols marking the social relationship, which can include objects, persons, gestures, words, and ideas (2) a sense of moral righteousness about symbols marking group membership (3) group solidarity (4) and enhanced emotional energy. Interaction Ritual Theory is a useful tool in explaining a live music performance since all the ingredients of an Interaction Ritual are present.

Enhancing the Experiential Marketing Experience

Ethnographic fieldwork was conducted in a local dueling piano bar, called Charley’s, in a medium-sized city in the southern part of the United States during the course of two months. Participatory observation and ethnographic interviews were conducted. Findings from field notes are discussed in terms of four major themes extrapolated from Collins’ Interaction Ritual Theory: (1) ecological barriers (2) emotional transformers (3) symbols and (4) emotional energy.

Ecological Barriers

According to Collins, a primary component of an Interaction Ritual is the creation of physical barriers to outsiders. The more effective boundaries are in separating people from external stimuli, the greater the likelihood that an emotionally rousing, successful interaction will occur. Charley’s was a quaint, charming venue. Every element of the club set its patrons up for an experience. Its décor, including the abstract paintings and the pencil sketching of musicians all helped to create and welcome an atmosphere for music and fun. Companies are aware that creating an environment that appeals to the senses is paramount in creating an experience for the consumer. Examples of retailers that successfully stimulate the senses by creating effective ecological barriers include Apple computers, Victoria Secrets Auntie Anne’s, and Bath and Body Works.

Transforming the Emotions: Focusing Attention and Creating Shared Mood

Interaction Rituals have the ability to transform negative emotions into positive emotions (Collins 2004). When individuals are gathered together and separated from the surrounding environment, a mutual focus of attention and common awareness can set the stage for a shared mood among the group. Moods are transitory and may ebb and flow, but creating shared mood can be facilitated by rhythmically synchronizing the group. The musicians at Charley’s were able to skillfully manage the emotions of the audience by allowing interaction among individuals at tables, but then periodically calling their attention back to the stage by getting the group to engage in an activity, whether it be clapping in unison or singing along.

Based on the values and interests of the target group for an experiential marketing endeavor, activities can be planned which stimulate interaction among consumers and get them to share in carrying out the same activities. This can include involving them in a recreational activity, enjoying a live music performance or eating and drinking.

Symbols

In Collins’ Interaction Ritual Theory, symbols become the focus of attention of emotionally entrained crowds. These symbols can be objects, ideas and theme, or people and are imbued with emotional overtones. Audience members at Charley’s engaged in a chant that had become the Charley’s rallying cry and theme. Even though there were expletives and offensive language in the chant, both men and women, young and old heartily participated in shouting out the chant at their top of their lungs along with the musicians on stage.

Collins’ symbols are not unlike brands. The most popular brands of the world have a strong emotional connection with consumers. Experiential marketing endeavors should be designed in such a way that the brand’s image (ie. logo) is always visible or present. At Charley’s an important artifact that became a symbol were the red mugs that patrons brought to the club on Thursday nights. Although very utilitarian, these mugs were imbued with meaning.

Placing the brand on other objects (in the form of promotional giveaways) that may be of both utilitarian and hedonic benefit for the consumer might help to create additional symbolic representations of the brand. Having the brand on these objects (although not necessary the actually product itself) can help to keep the brand at the “top of the mind” of consumers.

Emotional Energy: Becoming a Link in the Consumption Chain

Transient emotions such as joy help to fuel Interaction Rituals. In interaction Ritual Theory, these emotions intensify into shared excitement and culminate into a collective effervescence. The high, positive emotional energy generated from each encounter at Charley’s helped to facilitate and fuel subsequent visits. Patrons became “regulars” and Charley’s became part of their consumption chain.

Applying Collins’ theory in an experiential marketing context, if a marketing event is successful, the identity of the brand has been enhanced in the minds of consumers. This positive affect toward the brand, product, or even company should help to spawn future consumption of the brand or product.

As future consumption begins to take place and consumers develop strong emotional ties to a brand or product, they may start to feel a sense of belonging to the community of consumers that also share strong loyalty for the product. Consumers may become so enamored with the product that they are encouraged to participate in brand communities. Subsequently, by focusing on the ingredients that go into an interaction ritual, marketers can create successful experiential marketing experiences.

Immediacy Bias in Consumer Attitudes and Choices over Time

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Extended Abstract

Many consumer decisions involve comparing the emotional intensity of alternatives that occur at different points in time. Is a currently sampled movie preview more or less enjoyable than the last movie previewed? Is the present culinary sample more or less delicious than the last sample? Is the song just sampled in iTunes more or less enjoyable than the last song sampled? Such judgments of emotions over time have the potential to influence consumer attitudes, involvement, and choices.

Our past research finds that people tend to exhibit an “immediacy bias,” judging immediate emotions as more intense, all else equal, than temporally or socially distant emotions (Van Boven, White, and Huber 2006; Van Boven, White, Johnson-Graham, and Kruger 2006). For example, people perceive a recently viewed (i.e., more immediate) movie clip as creating more intense emotions than a movie clip that was viewed in the past (regardless of the order in which the two clips are shown). This immediacy bias appears to be quite robust and can emerge across various emotions such as fear, amusement, and sadness. In the current research, we suggest that the immediacy bias should have important implications for consumer attitudes, involvement, and choices when consumers sequentially sample different alternatives. In particular, we propose that a positive consumption experience that is immediately experienced is more likely to lead to positive attitudes, greater consumer involvement, and product choice than a consumption experience that is not immediately experienced.

In study 1 we provide a preliminary test of the predictions that consumers will experience more positive emotions, have more positive attitudes, and report greater involvement towards an immediately experienced alternative rather than an alternative that was experienced in the past. Fifty-nine participants were asked to watch and evaluate a short film by BMW (Ticker, 2002). One half of participants evaluated the film immediately after viewing it (immediate condition) and one half of participants evaluated the movie after a half hour delay (past condition). Participants were asked to report the intensity of their emotions, their attitudes towards the film, their involvement with the film, and whether they would be inclined to repeat the consumption experience. As predicted, participants rated their feelings while watching the film as more intense ($t(56)=2.05, p<.05$), indicated their attitudes were more positive ($t(56)=2.10, p<.05$), and reported a greater degree of involvement ($t(56)=3.48, p<.01$) when the consumption experience was immediate rather than in the past. Finally, those in the immediate condition reported being somewhat more interested in repeating the consumption experience again than did those in the past condition ($t(56)=1.93, p<.06$).

In study 2 we tested the same predictions as in study 1, but also wanted more explicitly to test our prediction regarding consumer choice—that consumers would be more likely to choose an immediate option as opposed to a past option. Sixty-nine participants viewed two video clips of stand up comedians (i.e., Tim Allen and Robin Williams), each approximately four minutes long. The order in which the two film clips were shown was counterbalanced and the viewing of the film clips was separated by a 50 minute time delay. Thus, half of the time the Tim Allen clip was the immediate option (and Robin Williams the past option), whereas half of the time Robin Williams was the immediate option (and Tim Allen the past option). After participants viewed the first film they were asked to report their attitudes towards the first film. Immediately after viewing the second film, participants were asked to report the intensity of emotions in response to each film, their attitudes towards each film, their involvement with each film, and which comedy routine they would like to view in its entirety (i.e., our measure of consumer choice). Repeated measures ANOVAs, including film 1 and film 2 ratings as the repeated measure and order as a factor, revealed that participants reported more intense emotional reactions ($F(1, 67)=4.85, p<.03$), more positive attitudes ($F(1, 67)=4.10, p<.05$), higher involvement ($F(1, 67)=4.08, p<.05$), and a greater inclination to actually watch the entire comedy routine ($F(1, 67)=7.73, p<.01$), when the film was immediate rather than distant. Participants also misremembered their emotional reactions to the first film as less intensely positive after viewing the second film. Finally, the immediacy bias meant that participants were more likely to “mischoose”—that is, choosing to view the film they actually enjoyed less—when they chose the second rather than the first film.

The results of the current studies demonstrate that the immediacy bias does indeed have implications for consumer attitudes and choices. That is, compared to the distant option, the more immediate option led to greater perceptions of emotional intensity, more positive attitudes, higher involvement, and consumer choice. The results of our research have implications for both consumers and marketers. For consumers, it is valuable to be aware of this bias and to be cautious regarding choosing immediate options (i.e., Do I really want a cheeseburger more than chicken teriyaki, or is just because I can currently smell the cheeseburger?). In addition, because consumers show a preference for more immediate alternatives, marketers should invite consumers to make choices while they are currently experiencing or sampling the key product option.

The Second Wind Phenomenon: Recovery from Cognitive Fatigue with Sensory Arousal

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Extended Abstract

Historically, researchers studying cognitive overload have examined the effects of decision making such as suboptimal choice and choice deferral. However, research is just beginning to focus on how consumers recover from overload in order to try to maintain optimal decision making ability (Brice & Smith, 2001 and van Duinen, Lorst, & Zijdwind, 2005). Brice and Smith (2001) administered caffeine to participants in a one-hour simulated driving task and found that steering accuracy was improved. Van Duinen et al. (2005) explored

the effectiveness of caffeine in improving cognitive performance when faced with motor fatigue. Researchers found that caffeine improved cognitive performance resulting in fewer errors during a motor task. However, these studies did not examine decision making in cognitively demanding scenarios that consumers often face over prolonged cognitive effort resulting in cognitive overload. There may also be more effective means for improvement than chemical arousal (which may have decreased effectiveness over longer periods of time).

Here, we explore the effectiveness of other strategies: decreasing arousal (relaxation or sleep), increasing mental arousal (listening to music, playing an involved video game), increasing arousal through physical activity, distracting oneself from the task, interacting with people (talking on the phone or to someone), or as a control merely continuing the task until completion or failure. The perceived and actual effectiveness of cognitive overload cures has important implications for how and when consumers will use different strategies to cope with difficulty in decision-making situations.

One hundred and twenty participants participated in a preliminary study focused on gaining initial insight into the ways that consumers experience and attempt to remedy cognitive overload. Participants were first asked to describe a situation in which they felt “mentally tired,” and subsequently, provided a description of the measures they took to relieve their tiredness. After describing their remedy strategies, consumers reported the degree to which they felt their strategy was effective, and how cognitively tired they remember feeling after undertaking this measure.

Overload cures were coded as either:

1. Decreasing Arousal
2. Increasing Arousal—mental
3. Increasing Arousal—physical
4. Distraction from the task
5. Social Interaction
6. No cure used, attempted to keep working.

The most common cognitive relief strategy reported by participants involved the use of artificially induced physical arousal—caffeine—in order to recover from their cognitive overload. Interestingly, although such strategy was most widely used, it was not reported to be the most effective: A significant effect for cure type ($F=3.478, p<.006$) revealed that instead, “Social Interaction” ($M=7.286, SD=.745$) and “Distraction” ($M=6.769, SD=0.547$) were perceived as significantly more efficacious as compared to the control of “No change” ($M=4.091, SD=.594$), ($M=3.195, p<.001$ and $M=2.678, p<.001$ respectively). The most common reported strategy, physical arousal through the use of caffeine or other chemical stimulants, did not differ significantly from the reported effectiveness of doing nothing to alleviate cognitive fatigue.

These preliminary results indicate that consumers may be misguided in their choice of recovery strategies. Although they routinely choose increased physical arousal (especially through using chemical stimulants such as caffeine and nicotine) as a means to get a cognitive “boost”, this strategy seems to be less effective than mere social interaction. As a result, consumers may make poor judgments and actually decrease their cognitive ability in the long run, even if they experience a short enhancement (van Duinen, 2005).

Based on these results, Study 1 will be conducted in order to further explore the efficacy of strategies cited by consumers as means of recovery from cognitive overload. We will increase cognitive load by asking participants to conduct a series of ordinary cognitive tasks, such as price-related calculations. These tasks will include objective timing and performance measures, so that pre-remedy performance can be measured. Participants will then either increase cognitive arousal by listening to fast-paced music, decrease cognitive arousal by listening to slow music, send an email on an unrelated subject (social interaction), eat a piece of chocolate candy (to increase physiological arousal), or simply continue working on calculations. After their remedy activity, participants will resume another objectively measured cognitive task. Finally, they will rate their own feelings of cognitive tiredness and subjective sense of the efficacy of their remedy activity. Analysis will focus on performance patterns subsequent to the remedy activity, particularly as compared to participants’ subjective sense of cognitive repair. Results from this study will be available for discussion at ACR 2006.

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The French Paradox Redux: Internal and External Cues of Meal Cessation

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Extended Abstract

A person who uses internal cues (such as hunger, satiation, or taste) to determine when to stop eating may be more effective in ultimately eating less than one who relies on external cues (such as portion sizes, social norms, or when an accompanying beverage or activity is over).

A demographically-matched sample of 134 Parisian and 148 Chicagoan students completed a brief survey on meal cessation, which asked the extent to which they agreed with three statements associated with internal cessation cues and three statements with external cessation cues. Their answers to these were compared across countries, genders, and BMI-levels.

While the French indicated they were more likely to be influenced by internal cues of meal cessation than Americans ($P < .001$), Americans indicated they were more likely to be influenced by external cues of meal cessation ($P < .001$). In summary, compared to their counterparts, French people ($P < .001$), females ($P < .05$), and normal weight individuals ($P < .01$) were more influenced by internal cues of meal cessation than external cues.

This study shows that one correlate with obesity may be the extent to which people rely on external cues to determine when they will stop eating a meal. While there are a number of possibilities of why those in some countries have less of an obesity problem than the United States, these results suggest one contributing explanation would be they are more likely to use internal cues, versus external cues to know when to stop eating.

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Exercise Behavior in Loyalty Program: The Influence of Regulatory Focus

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Abstract

Our study examines the influence of regulatory focus (RF) on reward preferences in a customer loyalty program. Specifically, we aim to contribute to the emerging literature on RF by addressing five issues. First, we simultaneously investigate RF as a state and a customer trait. Second, we address the interaction between type of rewards and message framing. Third, we test whether the influence of the RF trait on consumer loyalty is mediated by exercise motivation. Fourth, we examine whether the transfer of regulatory fit effect is embedded in multiple interrelated constructs that make up a customer's evaluative judgment. Finally, we investigate the impact of simultaneously presenting promotion and prevention rewards on customer loyalty.

Overview of the Research

In many retail contexts, loyalty programs are employed to attract new and retain existing customers. This form of customer relationship management is also enjoying widespread popularity in health club services (e.g. <http://www.fitrewardsclub.com>). Many gyms have adopted loyalty programs (similar to frequent flyer programs in the airline industry). We investigate the influence of regulatory focus (RF) on reward preferences in a health club member loyalty program.

RF posits that there are two types of foci; (1) a promotion focus which aims at achieving positive outcomes and guides an individual to use an eagerness strategy and (2) a prevention focus aimed at avoiding negative outcomes, instigating individuals to use a vigilant strategy (Higgins, 1997). In prior research on RF, these foci are either framed as situational states or personal traits (e.g., Lee & Aaker, 2004). However, as reward preferences of health club members may be determined by both situational and individual differences, it is both theoretically and managerially relevant to understand the relative contributions of situational and dispositional foci by analyzing them simultaneously rather than independently (Kammrath et.al, 2005).

In addition, regulatory focus fit has recently been advanced to explain the match between a person's goals and the way to pursue these goals (Avnet & Higgins, 2006). The fit between regulatory focus and the manner in which goals are pursued influences customer beliefs about the appropriateness of their (re)actions. It has been argued that the 'feel right' factor, in turn, enhances motivational intensity in goal pursuit (Avnet & Higgins, 2006).

We address the interaction between types of reward and message framing, advocating an action to pursue loyalty program credit points. The type of reward is presented to health club members as a means to induce their state RF. Two types of goal exercise-related rewards are used: *approach reward* (which aims at *improving* their health) and *avoidance reward* (which aims at helping them to *maintain* good health). Thus, the messages are framed as either eagerness (using a gain frame) or vigilance (using a loss frame). In the gain frame, respondents are informed about the benefits of recommended future exercise. In contrast, in the loss frame, health club members are informed about the consequences of not exercising frequently enough. Consistent with RF theory, we expect that a fit effect occurs between the approach reward and gain frame as well as the avoidance reward and loss frame. Furthermore, this fit effect is predicted to be embedded in multiple interrelated constructs that form a customer's evaluative judgment of loyalty.

Our research also aims at contributing to goal framing research in relation to the mixed results that have been reported with respect to message framing (Lee & Aaker, 2004). In our study, we assess the interaction effect between type of rewards and message framing in support of the regulatory focus fit effect. In addition, we hypothesize a main effect of frame in that a loss frame is expected to be more effective to promote exercise. This is suggested by Levin, Schneider, & Gaeth (1998), who report that a loss frame is more effective for goal framing. In addition to a main effect of message framing, we predict that avoidance type of reward will be most preferred by health club members, because, in general, exercise is predominantly construed as a preventive behaviour (Rothman & Salovey, 1997).

In addition to the direct impact of RF on consumer preference in loyalty programs, we investigate whether this impact is mediated by other, more domain-specific variables. We introduce exercise motivation as a mediating variable as it has been demonstrated that this is a powerful predictor of exercise behavior (Markland & Ingledew, 1997). In our experiment, we expect promotion (prevention) RF will be more enhanced if an approach (avoidance) reward is presented to a promotion (prevention)-focused individual than to prevention (promotion)-focused individual, and this strengthened-RF orientation is predicted to influence exercise motivations, which in turn, will have an effect on customer exercise behavior.

Another important concept in RF theory is regulatory relevance, which refers to the match between customer's goals and his/her outcome decisions (Avnet & Higgins, 2006). This theoretical refinement of RF theory posits that customers with different regulatory focus value a reward as a function of its relevance to their regulatory orientation namely, promotion (prevention)-focused individuals prefer promotion (prevention)-related stimulus. However, it has not been assessed how customers with a different regulatory focus orientation react to promotion and prevention focus stimuli when these are simultaneously presented. Wang & Lee (2006) argue that in this case, RF serves as a selective filter to process the information, such that people pay attention to information that fits their RF, but only when they use heuristic information processing. The argument for this finding is that regulatory fit occurs due to the use of heuristic rather than systematic information processing (i.e., customers paid attention to perceptual salience of the product that fit their regulatory focus). In this research, we test the robustness of the fit effect in the setting of loyalty program (a high involvement situation). We predict that promotion-focused health club members are more likely to adopt approach rewards than avoidance rewards and vice versa.

To test these predictions, two studies were conducted. The first study aimed testing regulatory focus fit theory in the context of exercise, whereas the second study aimed at regulatory fit relevance. For the first study we used an experimental design in which different participants were assigned to each scenario in 2 (type of rewards: approach, avoidance) X 2 (advocated message: gain, loss) between subject design, whereas in the second study, survey with questionnaire was used. Data analyses of both studies were conducted using structural equation modeling with partial least squares.

Significance and Implication of the Research

In general, our study aims at to contribute to the emerging RF and regulatory fit literature. Specifically, we investigate whether the regulatory focus fit effect is an important explanatory mechanism that accounts for the customer preferences in relation to loyalty programs.

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Hey, What Gives?

The Effects of Altruistic Versus Egoistic Charity Appeals on Donation Intentions

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Extended Abstract

In the face of unprecedented competition, charities have adopted many sophisticated marketing techniques—relationship marketing, branding, and the measurement of marketing return on investment—previously considered to be the domain on their for-profit counterparts.

One of the more notable techniques used by charities is a move away from traditional charitable marketing strategies that are characterized by altruistic appeals to initiatives that focus more on the egoistic (i.e., selfish) benefits received by the donor (Hassay and Peloza 2005).

The long-running debate between those who argue that charitable donations are based in altruism (e.g., Batson 1990) and those who argue charitable donations are merely an exchange relationship (e.g., Cialdini et al. 1987) highlights the primary distinction between the majority of charitable appeals. When charities are seeking donor support they typically position the appeal either as an opportunity to help others (i.e., an altruistic appeal) or an opportunity for the donor to receive something in return (i.e., an egoistic appeal). Whether altruistic or egoistic appeals lead to more positive responses to requests for charitable donations remains equivocal and research has produced mixed evidence supporting the effectiveness of both altruistic and egoistic appeals (e.g., Pessemier, Bemmaor, and Hanssens 1977; Holmes, Miller, and Lerner 2002). The current paper seeks to address this contradiction by exploring moderators of the influence of appeal type (i.e., altruistic versus egoistic) on donation intentions.

A series of three experiments was conducted in order to test for the effects of potential moderators of the influence of egoistic versus altruistic appeals on consumers' willingness to donate. We predicted that consumers would respond more positively to egoistic rather than altruistic appeals under conditions that make egoistic motives salient. In particular, we examined the type of donation (volunteerism versus money), the donation setting (private versus public), and self-construal (independence and/or interdependence) as moderators of the effectiveness of egoistic and altruistic appeals. Across all three experiments, participants were shown an advertisement requesting donation in which the appeals were either egoistic (i.e., promoting donation as a self-serving behavior) or altruistic (i.e., promoting donation as a selfless behavior). One local charity that provides shelter and food to the homeless was chosen because in pretests it was generally well regarded and was equally likely to receive donations of time and money.

First, we hypothesized that people would respond more positively to egoistic appeals when the donation request was for time rather than money because donations of time mean higher costs which tend to lead to exchange valuations (i.e., more egoistic motives) by potential donors (e.g., Snyder, Omoto, and Crain 1999; Wilson 2000). In study 1, participants responded to either altruistic or egoistic appeals and indicated on a three-item scale how willing they would be to donate time and how willing they would be to donate money. As expected, a 3 (Appeal Type: egoistic vs. altruistic vs. combination) X 2 (Donation Type: volunteer vs. monetary donation) mixed model ANOVA revealed a significant interaction ($F(2,57)=10.39, p<.01$). Intentions to donate time were significantly higher than when participants viewed the egoistic versus the altruistic appeal ($M_s=5.2$ and 3.6 respectively, $t(57)=4.33, p<.001$). Intentions to donate money revealed the opposite effect, with intentions to donate time significantly higher intentions to donate time in response to altruistic appeals ($M_s=4.3$ and 3.4 respectively, $t(57)=2.38, p<.025$).

Next, we hypothesized that the donation setting would impact the effectiveness of charity appeals on donation intentions since individuals alter consumption patterns in private versus public (Ratner and Kahn 2002). Because society generally expects individuals to donate to charity as a selfless act, we expected egoistic appeals to be more successful than altruistic appeals when donation intentions are private. A 2 (Appeal Type: egoistic vs. altruistic) X 2 (Donation Setting: public versus private) ANOVA revealed a significant interaction ($F(1,140)=14.68, p<.001$). When donation intentions were private, people were more willing to donate in response to the egoistic than the altruistic appeal ($M_s=4.45$ and 3.77 respectively, $t(140)=2.13, p<.04$). When the donation intentions were public people demonstrated a trend towards being more likely to donate in response to altruistic than egoistic appeals ($M_s=4.22$ and 3.14 respectively, $t(140)=3.27, p<.002$).

The third study expands on the results from study 2 by examining the interactive impact of self construal (Singelis 1994) and donation setting on responses to egoistic and altruistic charity appeals. Previous research has shown that those high in independence are less likely to have negative reactions to the misfortunes of others (White, Lehman, and Cohen, in press). The private donation setting should reveal respondents' "true" intentions and those who are independent should exhibit the most positive donation intentions in response to egoistic appeals. A 2 (Appeal Type: egoistic vs. altruistic) X 2 (Donation Setting: public vs. private) X 2 (High vs. low independence) ANOVA revealed a significant 3-way interaction ($F(1,137)=14.95, p<.001$). In the private condition, consumers high in independence were reported significantly higher donation intentions in response to the egoistic than the altruistic appeal ($M=5.03$ and 4.05 respectively, $t(137)=2.23, p<.03$). In addition, among those low in independence in the private condition, donation intentions were stronger in response to the altruistic appeal ($M=4.81$) than the egoistic appeal ($M=3.73$; $t(137)=2.08, p<.04$).

Despite the fact that the execution style of an advertisement has been shown to affect consumer response in a variety of settings (e.g., Shiv, Edell, and Payne 1997), the debate over the efficacy of egoistic and altruistic appeals in motivating charitable giving has, until now, remained relatively unexamined. Although it has been argued that both egoistic and altruistic appeals can be successful, our research provides evidence that the efficacy of each appeal is dependent upon the task, contextual characteristics, and individual differences.

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Consumer Goal Orientation in Different Service Contexts: The Different Impacts of Affect on Perceived Quality and Satisfaction

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Extended Abstract

The role of affect in consumption experience has attracted substantial research interests in the last two decades (e.g., Erevells 1998; Mano and Oliver 1993). A general finding from the literature is that affective responses are important consumption outcomes that relate to satisfaction/dissatisfaction. However, in addition to being just a consumption outcome, affect can also serve as a primitive motive for consumption as consumers purchase products (e.g., video games) and participate in leisure activities (e.g., theme parks) in order to experience desired affect (e.g., Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Holbrook and Hirschman 1982). When the consumption is driven by affect, consumers usually anticipate that they will experience higher levels of some specific affect (e.g., pleasure, arousal) during the consumption process. Such goal orientations often play very important roles in consumer behavior. For example, Garbarino and Johnson (2001) have demonstrated that customers' goal orientation can determine what information is used in satisfaction evaluation of a live theatre company. Yet, little is known about how consumers' goal orientation and affect derived from the service consumption experience together influence quality and satisfaction evaluations in different service contexts.

Therefore, the objective of this research is to investigate the different impacts of affect (pleasure and arousal) on perceived service quality and satisfaction in different service contexts in which consumers' major goal orientation is either task-fulfillment, pleasure-seeking, or arousal-seeking.

Hedonic services refer to those services that are consumed primarily for affective and sensory experiences (e.g., Hirschman and Holbrook 1982). Hence, consumers' major goal orientation in hedonic services is to experience desired affect. Such an affect-seeking goal orientation can be further classified as primarily pleasure-seeking (e.g., fine dining), primarily arousal-seeking (e.g., nightclub), or both (e.g., theme park). On the other hand, utilitarian services are those services that are consumed primarily for instrumental and functional values, e.g., banking. Therefore, consumers' major goal orientation in utilitarian service contexts is task-fulfillment.

Consumers' perceived service quality usually results from the comparison of subjective standards with service performance (Parasuraman, Zaiethaml and Berry 1988). However, satisfaction differs from perceived quality in that it is relative to situational expectations and involves affective dimensions. As consumers' major goal orientation in different service contexts determines their expectation of different levels of affect, affect may have different impacts on perceived quality and satisfaction.

In utilitarian service contexts, quality evaluations are mainly based on the judgment of the functional utilities. Such judgment often results in pleasant or unpleasant feelings. The valence of affect may influence perceived service quality through the usage of "how-do-I-feel-it" heuristic (Pham 1998) and/or mood transfer (Bagozzi, Gopinath and Nyer 1999). Given that consumers do not anticipate pleasure in utilitarian service contexts, pleasure may not impact satisfaction directly. Instead, such unanticipated pleasure is likely to influence satisfaction through the mediation of perceived service quality. Similarly, consumers do not particularly pursue arousal in pleasure-seeking hedonic services or pleasure in arousal-seeking hedonic services, such secondary affect may enhance the primary affect and influence consumers' service quality perception. Therefore, the effect of such secondary affect on satisfaction is expected to be mediated by perceived service quality.

On the other hand, when consumers specifically anticipate strong feelings of pleasure in pleasure-seeking hedonic services and arousal in arousal-seeking hedonic services, such primary affect will have a strong effect on satisfaction even after the effect of perceived service quality is controlled. In other words, primary affect will have a direct effect on satisfaction.

We have conducted two empirical studies to test our hypotheses. In study 1, we examine the different impacts of affect on service quality and satisfaction in a hedonic service context in which consumers' major goal orientation is pleasure-seeking, and a utilitarian service context in which the major goal orientation is task-fulfillment. In study 2, we examine such relationships in two different hedonic service contexts in which the goal orientation is primarily arousal-seeking or pleasure-seeking.

In study 1, a pretest was conducted to identify the prototype pleasure-seeking hedonic service and utilitarian service. Participants from a university in Hong Kong rated that karaoke and banking services were such services that they often patronized. Questionnaires with a screening question asking participants whether they had patronized karaoke or banking (excluding online banking and ATM) services in the last one month were given to undergraduate students in Hong Kong. Consistent with our hypotheses, results show that the effect of pleasure on satisfaction was mediated by perceived service quality in the utilitarian service context in which the major goal orientation is not pleasure-seeking. As expected, pleasure had a direct effect on satisfaction in the pleasure-seeking hedonic service context; the effect of arousal on satisfaction was mediated by perceived service quality as arousal-seeking was not the major goal orientation.

Study 2 was designed to test our hypotheses in two different hedonic service contexts in which the major goal orientation is either arousal-seeking or pleasure-seeking. Two pretests were conducted to identify and confirm such service contexts. In the first pretest, participants from a U.S. university agreed that nightclubs and fine restaurants represented such service contexts. In the second pretest,

participants who didn't participate in the first pretest were asked to rate the extent of different feelings they wanted to experience the last time they went to a nightclub or a fine restaurant. Results show that participants wanted to experience more arousal than pleasure at nightclubs, whereas they wanted to experience more pleasure than arousal at fine restaurants. Questionnaires with a screening question asking whether they had been to a nightclub or a fine restaurant in the last one month were given to undergraduate students in two U.S. universities. Consistent with the findings of Study 1, the results showed that pleasure had a direct effect on satisfaction in the pleasure-seeking hedonic service context. As hypothesized, arousal also had a direct effect on satisfaction in the arousal-seeking hedonic service context.

This research adds to the literature of consumer goal orientation and service consumption experience. It further examines consumers' pleasure-seeking and arousal-seeking goal orientation in different hedonic service contexts. This research also shows how goal orientation determines the direct and indirect impact of affect (pleasure and arousal) on satisfaction. Based on the results of the two empirical studies, we can conclude that the affect that consumers pursue most will have a strong and direct impact on satisfaction; whereas, the impact of other desirable secondary affect on satisfaction will be mediated by perceived service quality.

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Multidimensional Price Comparison: The Moderating Role of Across Consumers and Across Firms Price Comparison on Perceived Fairness, Regret, and Satisfaction

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Extended Abstract

This study is part of a research project that examines the interaction of dimensions in a transaction space of reference price. Research on reference price can be aligned into a congruent perspective by using Bolton, Warlop, and Alba's (2003) four dimensional transaction space, which postulates that consumers may consider the price of any point along the *consumers* (i.e., comparing between consumers), *products* (i.e., comparing cost and profit), *firms* (i.e., comparing between competitors), and/or *time* (comparing across time) dimensions in a four dimensional transaction space as a reference point. The results of such realignment exercise enlighten an insight, that sparse effort has been expended to investigate, and clearly separate, both independent and joint influence of multidimensional price comparison on consumer behavioral variables.

Of the four dimensions, the *consumers* and *firms* dimensions are particularly important because comparison across consumers is related to the concept of fairness and comparison across firms is related to the concept of regret. While both concepts influence consumer satisfaction, no study has investigated the joint influence of reference price across consumers and across firms on fairness and justice. This investigation not only contributes to both research on reference price and satisfaction but also links the two streams of research together. The relative importance of the two concepts on consumer satisfaction in different price comparison situations may be examined. An equally interesting issue is whether the amount of influence on fairness and regret depends on the direction of price discrepancy; that is, whether the impact is symmetry or asymmetric.

The purposes of this study are 1) to investigate the independent and joint effects of across consumers and across firms price comparison on perceived fairness, regret, and consumer satisfaction, and 2) to examine the presence/absence of asymmetric effect of price inequality on perceived fairness and regret in an experimental setting.

When consumers engage in price comparison, discrepancy in prices across *consumers* may lead to the issue of fairness (Feinberg, Krishna, and Zhang 2002). Larger price discrepancy across consumers decreases perception of fairness, leading to lower satisfaction (Bolton and Lemon 1999). Similarly, when consumers engage in price comparison, discrepancy in prices across *firms* may lead to the issue of regret (Inman, Dyer, and Jia 1997). Larger price discrepancy across firms increases perception of regret, leading to lower satisfaction (Taylor 1997). However, the joint impact of discrepancy in prices across consumers and across firms may not simply be additive for two reasons.

First, Kahneman, Knetsch, and Thaler's (1986) principle of dual entitlement suggests that a price increase is perceived to be fair if the firm's existing level of profit is the same. When discrepancy occurs across consumers, consumers may attribute the extra income the

company generates as extra profit, this attribution is more applicable when comparing within firm than across firms because the cost of offering the same product/service to different consumers should be very similar. Second, Tsiros and Mittal (2000) identified counterfactual thinking as the underlying cognitive mechanism that stimulates regret. Possibility of counterfactual thinking is reduced when price discrepancy is within firm than across firms.

Regarding asymmetric effect, the property of loss aversion in Kahneman and Tversky's (1979) prospect theory implies that the impact of a loss is larger than the impact of a gain of equal magnitude. The influence of disadvantageous price discrepancy, which is coded as a "loss", on consumer perception of fairness and regret is expected to be larger than advantageous price discrepancy, which is coded as a "gain".

Previous studies have examined the impact of perceived fairness (Bolton and Lemon 1999) and regret (Tsiros and Mittal 2000) on satisfaction independently. This study examined their joint impact on satisfaction. It follows that:

- H1: The impact of price inequality across consumers on fairness is diminished when such price comparison is also across firms.
- H2: The impact of price inequality across consumers on regret is magnified when such price comparison is also across firms.
- H3: The effect of disadvantageous price inequality on perceived fairness is larger than the effect of corresponding advantageous price inequality.
- H4: The effect of disadvantageous price inequality on regret is larger than the effect of corresponding advantageous price inequality.
- H5: Perceived fairness has a positive influence on satisfaction, and regret has a negative influence on satisfaction.

One hundred and thirty-six undergraduate students in Hong Kong participated in the experiment. The manipulation was scenario-based, in the context of choosing an internet service provider. Price equality (advantageous vs. disadvantageous vs. control) was manipulated to be across consumers and/or across firms. Existing scales for perceived fairness, regret, and satisfaction were adopted and measured. Manipulation checks and suspicion probe were measured. The manipulations were successful and all scale reliability was satisfactory with alphas above 0.80. Data analysis with ANOVA, regression, and SEM yielded converging results supporting all five hypotheses.

This study contributes to the reference price literature in four ways. Firstly, it extends Bolton and Lemon's (1999) antecedents of payment equity by proposing that consumers not only use their own normative expectation but also another consumer's outcome as reference points in judging fairness and satisfaction. Secondly, in response to Bolton et al.'s (2003) suggestion, this study investigated the influence of prices paid by other consumers on fairness perception. Thirdly, the findings of asymmetric price effect add support to the property of loss aversion in perceived fairness and regret. Fourthly, this study demonstrates that different dimensions of the transaction space can interact with each other. The significant interaction effect between across consumers and across firms price comparison suggests that simply looking at one dimension of the transaction space at a time may oversimplified the complexity of reference price research. Future reference price research is encouraged to examine other multidimensional interactions.

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Impact on Online-store Loyalty from Store Image under Influences from Consumption Values

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Extended Abstract

Fast development of electronic technology and low entry barrier precipitated a heated competition in the online business (Auger and Gallaughier 1997; Klein 1998). More and more online shops are seeking new ways to stand out the competition to win over customers, loyal ones in particular.

Extant researches focusing on off-line business found *store image* a key contributor to business performance (Nevin and Houston 1980; Samli 1989; etc.). Online store also bears image which is able to create a competitive advantage that is not easily duplicated by other

retailers (Rosenbloom 1983). Store image is the complex of a consumer's perceptions of the different attributes of the store, namely, general attribute, appearance and service (Manolis et al. 1994). Good store image may lead to *store loyalty* (Lessig 1973; Sirgy and Samli 1989).

People buy out of various incentives, thus paying attention to different aspects of the store image, which is universal in everyday life. Researches on *consumption values* suggest that the reason why consumers pay attention to different aspects of the product and make different choices is the seeking of different consumption values (Sheth et al. 1991). The five values identified by Sheth et al. (1991) are *functional value*, which derives from the perceived utility of the object in the choice situation; *social value*, attached to a product from its association with social groups; *emotional value*, which relates to the affective or emotional response to the product; *epistemic value*, obtaining to a product through curiosity, novelty or knowledge seeking; and *conditional value*, ascribed to an object through circumstance of use.

818 eligible finished questionnaires were collected online by a professional research company. Demographic indicators of these respondents are consistent with former studies of online-shoppers in China (Dong 2005; Cui 2004).

According to Sheth et al. (1991), although the basic five-dimension framework of consumption values is given, the items for the values should be designed based on specific condition, and each dimension may consist of more than one factor. The multi-dimensional value structure is proved in previous research (c.f., Long and Schiffman 2000; Pope 1998).

Following the guidelines suggested by Churchill (1979), we developed scales of consumption values on online-shopping. Each consumption value scale was independently factor analyzed using SPSS. Seven factors for the consumption values were identified, the uni-dimensional social value, epistemic value, and conditional value, along with two-dimensional functional value (functional and costs advantages) and emotional value (gratification and safety). Tests indicate a good reliability of all the seven values (Cronbach $\alpha > 0.80$).

Hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward's method with Squared Euclidean distance, based on the seven factors, grouped the respondents into three, comprising of 230, 297 and 291 people respectively.

The results of ANOVA indicate that the three groups differ significantly in their evaluation about the consumption values ($p < 0.001$). The second group has the lowest evaluation about all the consumption values except functional advantage and safety. In contrast, the third group exhibits the highest evaluation of all the other values, with the epistemic value lower than the first group. The first group has most values ranked between that for Group 2 and Group 3, as well as the highest epistemic value and lowest functional advantage and safety.

A model was constructed to examine the difference of the impact on store loyalty from the three dimensions of online-store image—general attribute, service and appearance, and the mediation of satisfaction and commitment in these three groups. We examined the model using AMOS in three groups separately. Statistical results of the path coefficients of all the three models indicate that, the impact from the three aspects of online store image on loyalty differ from one group to another. The mediation of satisfaction and commitment, and the impact of the two mediators on loyalty are also different among the groups.

Group 1 demonstrates the highest level of store loyalty through satisfaction, but the lowest level of transition from satisfaction to commitment, and from commitment to loyalty. Besides, consumers in Group 1 pay more attention to short-term oriented consumption values, like conditional and epistemic value. Those two features lead to the fact that people in Group 1 turn out to be *undecided consumers*, apt to switch from store to store. General attribute is the most important store image for Group 1. Enhancement in general attribute image, like better overall sales performance, higher reputation, may help maintain the undecided consumers in Group 1.

Group 2 has the lowest level of transition from satisfaction to loyalty. And only general attribute image has direct positive influence on their commitment. According to the path coefficients, they are least possibly to become loyal. Along with the lowest evaluation about the consumption values, they are termed as *non-frequent buyers*. Enhancing general attribute is also important for encouraging more purchase from the non-frequent buyers.

For all the three groups, satisfaction and commitment towards online stores will lead to store loyalty, and satisfaction will be changed into commitment. However, path coefficients indicate that, consumers in Group 3 are the easiest to change from satisfaction into commitment. Also, they have the highest level of loyalty through commitment, and relatively high level of loyalty from satisfaction. This result, which is consistent with their high evaluation of the consumption values, indicates that Group 3 is composed of *loyal customers*. In general, consumers in Group 3 are the most valuable to an online-store. For this group, service is the factor which has the greatest influence on loyalty. Taking their evaluation of consumption values into account, service differentiation can further satisfy those consumers. Customized service can meet the high appeal of the social value from this group.

Additionally, in all the three groups, general attribute image exhibits the highest contribution to loyalty, while appearance image shows the lowest, if any.

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The Effects of Product Scandals on Parent Brands: Linguistic Signatures of a Protective Mechanism

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Extended Abstract

Brand architectures involving a parent brand can improve the perception of their associated brands and allow for a simple and cost saving introduction of new products (Smith, 1992). New or established product brands may benefit from associations with parent brands (Aaker & Keller, 1989; Sattler, Völckner, & Zatloukal, 2002). The opportunity of such positive transfer effects, however, comes at a price: The transfer is neither restricted to positive affect, nor is it unidirectional. There are also examples that negative evaluations of product brands can affect parent brands and other associated products. The empirical findings concerning such negative feedback, however, are not equivocal: while Sullivan (1990) found that technical problems with one model of Audi deteriorated the brand image and lowered sales of other Audi products, other researchers did not find negative feedback effects (Aaker, 1996, Loken & Roedder John, 1993, Keller & Aaker, 1992; Romeo, 1991). It seems that, under certain circumstances, parent brands are resistant to effects of negative evaluations of associated product brands. In the present study, we examined whether attribution processes that are specific to parent brands with a strong positive image may prevent strong parent brands from negative feedback effects.

Attribution research is concerned with the judgment of causes for a perceived event. For example, Heider (1958) examined whether the behavior of an individual and his or her individual dispositions are the primary cause of an outcome, or whether external, environmental influences are considered as a primary cause. While attribution research is predominant in research on person perception, there are also a few studies examining causal attribution in the domain of product failures and product-harm crises (e.g., Folkes, 1988; Siomkos & Kurzbard, 1994; Su & Tippins, 1998). Previous research focused on the effects of an incident's severity (Su & Tippins, 1998) and the consumer's personal vulnerability (Laufer & Gillespie, 2004). However, research on expectancy biases in person perception also suggests that the categorization of an actor and the associated expectations influence how causes for negative incidents are construed. For example, Maass, Salvi, Arcuri, and Semin (1998) found that individuals communicate undesirable behavior more abstractly when it was performed by an out-group member than when it was performed by an in-group member. A high level of abstraction can be regarded as a specific form of attribution pertaining the disposition of the actor or the respective group. In contrast, a low level of abstraction can be considered as a more situational attribution in which the undesirable behavior is perceived as caused by external, environmental factors, and is not generalized to the actors' dispositions. The underlying mechanism is that expected behavior is construed and communicated in more abstract terms and considered as more intentional, while unexpected behavior is construed and communicated more concretely and is considered as less intentional (Fiedler, Blümke, Friese, & Hofmann, 2003). Since the behavior expected for the in-group is mostly positive while for the out-group expectations are often negative, this is a good explanation for the findings of Maas et al.

We assume that a similar mechanism moderates the responses to a product scandal or failure related to strong or weak parent brand. As strong parent brands we consider parent brands that are well established in the market and to which consumers hold strong positive views. In contrast, a weak parent brand should be less established in the market and consumers should not have strong attitudes towards these brands. Since strong positive attitudes are directly linked to positive expectations, a product scandal or product failures are not congruent to the expectations towards a strong parent brand. Therefore, we hypothesized that a product scandal that concerns failures of a product associated with a strong parent brand is construed and communicated by consumers in more concrete terms, and does affect the view of the brand to a minor degree than if the same scandal pertains a product of a weak parent brand.

To test our assumptions, participants received information about a scandal associated with a new product of either a strong or weak parent brand. The product was a soft drink and the scandal was that the product did not contain what the consumers expected. The information about the scandal contained a pictograph and two short essays. The information was sparse and allowed for a variety of interpretations about the causation. The pictograph indicated discordance between what the manufacturer was bottling and what the consumer thought he was drinking, but did not provide any clues on how this had happened and whose fault it was. The essays looked like editorial content of some marketing periodical. They described how the respective company prepared the launch of a new brand in several countries. The product behind the new brand was described, the very competitive market was mentioned, and a vague schedule

for the launch was provided. Also, participants were given the information that the planned launch of the new brand had failed and been aborted to avoid further damage. No exact reasons were explained, only a “flop” was mentioned. Participants were asked to carefully study the material. They evaluated both the product brand and the parent brand before, and after the presentation of the scandal. After studying the information of the scandal, we asked participants to retell the story with their own words as if they were telling it to a friend. The space was limited to one page. We analyzed the resulting texts using the Linguistic Category Model (Semin & Fiedler, 1988, 1991, 1992).

Our Data is consistent with our expectations: the language participants used to retell the story was significantly less abstract, indicating a more situative attribution of the events that were described. In line with this, the strong parent brand took significantly less damage than the weak parent brand did.

This finding implies that the risk of imposing a parent brand may be smaller than thought by some marketing experts. The parent brand, if it is strong enough, can clear the path for a more favorable perception, even of negative behavior.

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Choosing Between Service Sequences: The Joint Effect of Ego Depletion and Mood on Consumers' Decision Strategy

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Extended Abstract

Previous research on preferences for sequences of outcomes shows that people prefer some sequences over others. For example, people prefer sequences where positive and negative outcomes are spread out over time (Loewenstein and Prelec, 1993). Although previous research presents us with valuable insights into the sequence evaluation process, the conditions under which these sequence preferences hold have not received much attention. Previous research has shown that mood and ego depletion have a profound influence on the level and quantity of information that is processed and as a result on the decision making process (Schwarz, 2001; Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, and Tice, 1998). Therefore, we believe that when looking at sequence preferences, these two mechanisms can not be overlooked.

This research presents the results of an experiment designed to test a theoretical framework in which the combined effect of mood and ego depletion influences preferences for sequences of service experiences. We argue that ego depletion and mood play an important role in service encounters and that the initial mood state of the customer will influence which components of the service are considered important for the evaluation of the service. In addition, certain events within a service encounter require active self-control by the customer,

such as long waiting times, which might result in ego depletion. In turn, ego depletion will determine how much information is extracted from the service for evaluation.

Our theoretical framework treats mood and ego depletion as two separate mechanisms which operate under different principles. These principles are based upon the level and the quantity of information processing. Based upon these operating principles, we identify 6 'rules' for sequence evaluation which determine service encounter preferences of consumers.

The level of information processing is influenced by mood and can be either gestalt-based or components-based. Gestalt-based refers to the fact that people in a positive mood will process information more superficially (heuristics) than people in a negative mood (Schwarz, 2001) and therefore they will look more at the gestalt, or 'overall' appearance of the sequence. Spreading, improvement and the peak-end rule are three sequence characteristics which are important for the sequence evaluation in this case, because spreading, improvement and peak-end are all related to the gestalt or overall 'appearance' of the sequence.

Component-based means that people in a negative mood treat the sequence as consisting of separate components instead of looking at the overall pattern. This is grounded in the fact that negative mood states usually lead to more systematic information processing (Schwarz, 2001). Balanced count, myopia and simplified count are characteristics which are important for the sequence evaluation in this case. Balanced count refers to the fact that people determine the overall utility of the sequence and equally weigh all attributes in this count. Myopia (short-sighted) means that people focus primarily on the first element in the sequence. Simplified count means that people will only look at the utility of their most preferred attribute when evaluating the sequence. These sequence characteristics thus focus on the separate components or one component in the sequence instead of the overall pattern.

The quantity of information processing is influenced by the level of ego depletion and can either be focused on multiple components or few components in the sequence. Multiple components refers to the fact that non-depleted people will focus on more information/components in the sequence when making their choice than depleted people. This is based on the reasoning that depleted people have limited resources available to process information and therefore they will use a more simplified decision strategy and evaluate fewer pieces of information (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, and Tice, 1998). The peak-end rule, myopia and simplified count are important for sequence evaluation in this case because in all these strategies of sequence evaluation, the focus is on only a few elements in the sequence. Non-depleted people have more resources available and are able to focus on more information/multiple components in the sequence. Spreading, improvement and balanced count are important for sequence evaluation here. All these strategies require the processing of multiple components in the sequence.

The combination of the different levels of mood and ego depletion make up a 2 x 2 experimental design with 4 experimental conditions: positive mood/no depletion, positive mood/depletion, negative mood/no depletion and negative mood/depletion. We expect important interaction effects between mood and ego depletion, where mood moderates the selection of decision strategies based on ego depletion. In particular, people in a positive mood who are depleted, will focus on the peak and end moment in the service encounter. In contrast, people in a negative mood who are depleted, will use myopia and simplified count as strategies for choosing between service sequences.

We investigate our proposed hypotheses in a computerized experiment using Windows MouselabWEB where we systematically manipulate mood and level of depletion and present subjects in each condition with choices between sequences of positive and negative service experiences. We expect that the choice and the decision making process in each experimental condition are based on the rules for sequence evaluation that are provided by the theoretical framework for that specific experimental condition.

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A Need-Satisfaction Model of Superstitious Behavior

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Extended Abstract

Chinese manufacturers favor the use of digit 8 and avoid using the digit 4 in their pricing as buyers in China connote digit 8 with "enrichment" and digit 4 with "death" (Simmons and Schindler 2003). This numeric superstition also results in a price premium for properties on the 8th floor in Cantonese societies (Chau, Ma and Ho 2001). Many American hotels skip from the 12th floor to the 14th floor to avoid having guests stay on the unlucky 13th floor (Mowen and Carlson 2003).

Why do so many people, usually well-educated members of a modern, scientific society, engage in these behaviors? What motivates such behavior? The objective of this research is to present a comprehensive model of the mechanisms driving superstitious behavior among individuals and highlight its relevance both in terms of theory and practice. There are five basic problems with existing models of

superstition. First, some models view superstitious behavior as a consequence of a superstitious belief system which is based on a superstitious personality trait (e.g., Mowen and Carlson 2003). Such models are narrow in that they do not provide an adequate explanation for a variety of superstitious behaviors that are not based on a lack of belief in science. A second criticism is that current models fail to recognize the differences between superstition in contemporary society and traditional superstitions. Third, even models that accommodate superstitions based on “half belief” ignore instrumentality-based and social-based superstitious behavior. Fourth, existing models have an inordinate focus on *negative* superstitions instead of *positive* superstitions. The most widely used scale measuring superstitious beliefs—the three-item superstition sub-scale of the Paranormal Belief Scale (Tobacyk and Milford 1983; Tobacyk 1988)—only measures the belief that certain omens (e.g., seeing a black cat) are associated with harmful consequences. Not only does this constrain our view of what constitutes superstition, but restricts it to *negative* superstitions instead of also considering positive superstitions such as rubbing a lucky charm to bring good luck (Wiseman and Watt 2004). Finally, superstition models based on psychological therapeutic effects do not fully explain why the superstitious behavior takes on the particular and stereotyped form that it does.

Assuming that superstitious behaviors serve some underlying individual need, we present a need-satisfaction model of superstitious behavior that classifies the needs met by superstitious behavior into (1) Functional Needs, (2) Psychological Needs, and (3) Social Needs. The operating principle underlying functional need satisfaction is the *illusion of control* (Langer 1975). A key construct driving this need is perceived *luckiness*. Luck has been conceptualized as a personal and stable trait that leads individuals to maintain irrational and superstitious beliefs (Darke and Freedman (1997). The illusion of control effect has been found to be a robust psychological effect underpinning lottery gambling (Rogers 1998).

The operating principle underlying the psychological need satisfaction of superstitious behavior is *counterfactual thinking* (cf. Kahneman and Miller 1986). Individuals evaluate outcomes not only in isolation, but also in relation to alternative events that *could* have, *might* have, or *should* have happened. While a gambler may initially engage in a superstitious ritual because of an illusion of control, the literature has often been at a loss to explain why they continue to engage in the ritual when a series of negative observations show that the ritual is not effective in influencing outcomes. The psychological need-satisfaction element of our model suggests that there is an emotional comfort offered by continuing a ritual and having hope in positive future outcomes. On the flip side, should a superstitious behavior (e.g., picking an anniversary date as one’s personal lottery numbers) be discontinued, there is the “emotional amplification” effect associated with the dread that those numbers would be drawn soon after the behavior is discontinued. Since a person can easily imagine the situation of these long-played numbers hitting right after s/he chooses a different number, there is a strong pressure to continue the superstition. Engaging in a superstitious behavior to avoid a negative outcome “might stem not from the belief that bad things are more likely to happen . . . but from the belief that any bad thing that does happen will be more psychologically painful.” (Miller and Taylor 1995; p. 368). Our model expands on the concept of “hope” (MacInnis and de Mello 2005) and invokes “anticipated regret” as an opposite emotion that is just as important in driving behavior.

The operating principle underlying the social need satisfaction dimension of superstitious behavior is *social learning* (Bandura 1962). A great deal of superstitious behavior may be based on observing others and following traditions simply as a way of identifying oneself with the group. Several non-religious superstitious behaviors are driven by social factors without any individual-level belief in its instrumentality. The showering of a newly married couple with rice (interestingly, many modern weddings substitute soap bubbles for the rice suggesting the lack of belief in any instrumental or religious significance of rice), the sharing of rice cakes in Korea before important exam days, and the Indian superstition of crushing a lemon under the wheels of a new automobile are examples of superstitions driven by socio-cultural norms. While it is possible that some of these superstitions were originally developed based on perceived instrumentality, they get adopted as a social ritual over time. The main motivation for individuals engaging in such behavior is to maintain or strengthen their social ties.

This research makes several contributions to the marketing, consumer behavior, and superstition literature. It is the first to present a comprehensive model of superstitious behavior that accommodates a variety of superstition types and different motives consumers may have for engaging in superstitious behavior. The model resolves several problems with prior models of superstitious behavior and provides the operating principle underlying each of the motives for superstitious behavior. We offer a new conceptualization of the emotional underpinnings of counterfactual thinking. Our presentation of hope and anticipated regret as positive and negative emotions associated with counterfactual thinking opens a promising research stream for researchers. The model also lays the groundwork for the development of a more comprehensive scale for the measurement of superstition. Existing scales are grossly inadequate in capturing the variety of factors underlying superstitious behavior. Finally, the model helps those interested in superstition-related marketing communications—both marketers and public policy advocates—to better understand how various communication elements influence consumers to enhance or reduce their superstitious beliefs.

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Is There an Expected Trade-off Between a Product's Ethical Value and Its Effectiveness?: Exposing Latent Intuitions about Ethical Products

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This research seeks to demonstrate consumers' intuition that there is an inherent tradeoff between a given product's "ethical attributes" and the product's effectiveness, or functional performance. Ethical attributes are those attributes that reflect a person's conscience and which may relate to a variety of environmental, individual and societal issues. We demonstrate in our first two studies, using toothpaste (Study 1) and laundry detergent (Study 2) as a product context, that the "ethical=less effective" intuition is moderated by the degree to which the consumer believes that the focal ethical issues are important overall. Those consumers who place the highest importance on these ethical issues infer that these products will actually be more effective. This halo effect, however, disappears and ultimately reverses such that the less importance the consumer places on the ethical issues, the less effective they believe the product will be, i.e. products rated "superb" on ethical attributes were rated significantly lower in effectiveness than products rated "poor" on ethical attributes. We also intend to replicate these studies using a broad, nationally representative sample, as well as test moderators of the intuition such as self/other judgments and precommitment to the intuition.

A national survey found that 88% of consumers were more likely to purchase products from a company deemed socially responsible (Public Relations Quarterly Winter 94/95). However, anecdotal evidence suggests that products from these companies receive limited distribution support and capture a minority share of the market when they are available. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that many ethical products are positioned as premium products, and that price, therefore, may be a critical barrier to their mass market appeal. Recent research, however, suggests that the relative lack of success of ethical products is much more complex than just the tradeoff of ethicality and price. For example, Ehrich and Irwin (2005) demonstrate that consumers who are more motivated to buy products positioned as socially responsible are proportionally less likely to seek out information about a product's ethical attributes. This "willful ignorance" is driven by an avoidance of the guilt one might experience upon discovering that a desired product does not perform well on ethical attributes. Ehrich and Irwin's (2005) research also hints at the tradeoff that consumers assume they must make between purchasing a product that satisfies their immediate consumption needs versus one that satisfies their conscience.

In order to more fully understand consumer decision making about ethical products, our research explores both consumers' inferences as well as their judgments about these products. We propose and test the following hypothesis:

- H1: Rated importance of the relevant ethical issue will moderate ethical-effective inferences: As importance increases, respondents are more likely to infer greater product effectiveness from product ethicality. Conversely, as importance decreases, respondents are more likely to indicate that ethical products are less effective.

Thus, consumers who do not believe that a product's ethics are important make inferences consistent with an intuition we believe is widespread in the market place, i.e. that ethical=less effective. Consumers who do place high importance on a product's ethics will, instead, make inferences consistent with a halo effect mechanism, in which ethical products are inferred to be more effective.

While we intend to show that rated importance moderates ethical-effective inferences, we also intend to explore whether expression of the ethical=less effective intuition also depends on how the question is framed. It is likely that responses of subjects who rate the ethical issues as important will be more reflective of social desirability influences than of subjects' beliefs. Belk et al (2003) demonstrate that when dealing with sensitive issues, such as ethical responsibility in our case, projective techniques will mitigate subjects' tendency to respond in a manner consistent with social desirability influences. As such, we propose to test the following hypothesis:

- H2: When subjects are asked to infer what the average person would think about the ethical-effective relationship (vs. what they personally believe), self rated issue importance will no longer moderate responses and instead all subjects will tend to express the intuition that ethical=less effective.

In our first study (n=207), we manipulated product ethicality by telling participants that a new brand of toothpaste had received a rating from the Environmental Sustainability Council (ECS) of either "poor," for a lack of environmentally friendly practices, or "superb,"

for a demonstrated record of environmentally responsible actions. Thus, the study had a 2 factor (ethics: poor vs. superb) design. In order to test H1, participants were given information about the ethical attributes of the toothpaste, which varied by condition, and were asked to infer its effectiveness. The two key dependent variables were how well the toothpaste was inferred to whiten teeth and how well it provided the benefits the participant looks for in a toothpaste. Participants also rated the importance of a product's ethics in general.

Two 2 factor ANOVAs (ethicality of toothpaste x participants' ratings of importance of a product's ethics) were conducted with inferences about whitening ability and the benefits provided as the dependent variables, respectively. In neither case was there a main effect of ethics on inferences. However, consistent with H1, there was a significant interaction between the ethicality of the toothpaste and the importance ratings such that those participants who felt that a product's ethics were less important rated the toothpaste with poor ethics as better able to whiten, $F(1, 203)=4.53, p<.05$, and more likely to provide the benefits they desired than the toothpaste with superb ethics, $F(1, 203)=13.73, p<.001$, while participants who rated a product's ethics as more important showed the opposite effect: they believed that the toothpaste with superb ethics would whiten better and would be more likely to provide all the benefits they desired in a toothpaste.

A second study confirmed the interaction between the ethicality of a product and ethical issue importance ratings in a new product context. Since toothpaste ingredients may also have health consequences for the consumer, we chose a new category without this confound: laundry detergent. Consistent with our findings in Study 1, we found a significant interaction between ethicality of the detergent and ethical issue importance ratings with both dependent measures: likelihood of the product's being recommended by Consumer Reports, $F(1, 179)=17.32, p<.0001$, and likelihood of providing the benefits desired in a detergent, $F(1, 179)=4.84, p<.05$.

While these initial studies support H1, Study 3 intends to test H2, i.e. whether subjects will believe that ethical=less effective when asked to infer what the average person would believe about the focal products (as opposed to what they personally believe). In addition, this study will use a broad, nationally representative sample to improve generalizability of the results. Finally, Study 3 will explore what effect precommitment to the intuition has on subjects' responses. This will be accomplished by varying the order of questions such that we can determine whether the ethical importance ratings were influenced by subjects' prior inferences. While we have no a priori hypothesis for this manipulation, our intent is to understand the degree to which the ethical importance rating is an accurate assessment of subjects' beliefs as opposed to resulting from subjects' desire to be consistent with their prior inference ratings.

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Examining the Influence of Prominent on Nonprofit Organizations

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Abstract

Corporate sponsorship is an often used fundraising strategy for nonprofit organizations and is considered to be a "win-win" situation for the sponsoring company as well as the nonprofit. While prior research suggests that corporate sponsorship can positively affect the sponsoring company, little research to date has investigated the impact of such sponsorships on the nonprofit particularly when it is the nonprofit that is communicating the existence of the sponsorship. We address this question and examine the impact of corporate sponsors on people's perceptions of and willingness to support nonprofit organizations. Results from an experiment suggest that revealing corporate sponsors may, under certain conditions, *negatively* affect a nonprofit's effort to garner financial support from the general public.

"I'm Glad I Did" or "I Wish I Had:" The Comparative Effects of Satisfaction and Non-Purchase Regret on Future Purchase Intentions

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Extended Abstract

It seems counterintuitive that a consumer who does not experience your product may be just as valuable as your most satisfied customers. Even less obvious is the recommendation that marketers design promotions such that they can highlight missed opportunities to consumers who did not take advantage of the offer. In this research we examine regret for a forgone purchase opportunity and

demonstrate that non-purchasers reveal a motivation to purchase the product in the future similar to customers who experienced the product and were satisfied.

Traditionally, marketers have focused a great deal of effort on understanding customers who have tried and used the product. The issue has always been to keep these customers satisfied and to find ways to ensure that they continue to purchase the product in the future. The flip side of this equation is to ensure that consumers feel a minimal amount of dissatisfaction and regret for their purchase. The study of regret has been restricted to regret following some action, most often a purchase (Cooke et al. 2001; Tsiros and Mittal 2000). Such a focus is clearly relevant and justified given the negative effect that feelings of dissatisfaction and regret have on repeat purchase and brand loyalty, among other post-consumption outcomes.

In this research we propose that the feelings of regret following a forgone opportunity, i.e. regret for inaction, represents a potent driver of consumer behavior. Unlike regret for inaction examined in the psychology domain, regret for inaction in the consumption arena might be assuaged by the possibility of a similar opportunity arising in the future.

Prior research on inaction inertia suggests that forgone opportunities increase the likelihood of similar inaction in the future (Arkes et al. 2002). At least this seems to be the case when the current opportunity is less attractive than the forgone opportunity, although still positive in an absolute sense (Tykocinski and Pittman 1998). However, it may not be the case when the current opportunity is as attractive as or more attractive than the forgone opportunity. We theorize that consumers who experience inaction regret tend to idealize the forgone opportunity (Newby-Clark and Ross 2003), construing it to be positive and satisfying and eliciting a necessity to act by the contrasting of present reality with favorable expectations (Oettingen et al. 2001). In this case, regret for inaction serves as motivation not to make the same mistake twice. Indeed, in two studies we examine the impact of inaction regret on future purchase intentions and demonstrate that regretful non-purchasers are just as likely as satisfied customers to purchase in the future, and also to pay a premium for this purchase.

Study 1 used a critical incident method to examine inaction regret arising from forgone opportunities versus the feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction arising from taken opportunities in a consumption context. One hundred and eighty-two undergraduates participated. Participants in the regret for inaction condition were asked to think about a product that they had not bought, but wished they had. Participants in the satisfaction and dissatisfaction conditions were asked to think about a product/service about which they felt either "much more happy or satisfied than you expected you would" (satisfaction condition) or "much less happy or satisfied than you expected you would" (dissatisfaction condition). After describing the incident, participants answered questions designed to assess future purchase intent and willingness to pay more. Results revealed no significant differences in either the likelihood of future purchase ($M_{\text{regret}}=5.91$ vs. $M_{\text{satisfaction}}=5.92$) or the willingness to pay more for the future purchase between the inaction and satisfaction conditions ($M_{\text{regret}}=4.67$ vs. $M_{\text{satisfaction}}=5.08$), but significant differences in both between these conditions and the dissatisfaction condition ($M_{\text{dissatisfaction}}=2.78$, $F(2, 156)=63.11$, $p<.05$ for likelihood of future purchase and $M_{\text{dissatisfaction}}=2.11$, $F(2, 156)=51.30$, $p<.05$ for willingness to pay more). These results indicate that consumers who experience regret for inaction are likely to purchase the item the next time they have a chance, and that they are willing to pay a premium for it.

Study 2 was designed to evaluate key findings from study 1 in an ecologically valid environment. One hundred and twenty-five undergraduates who had just returned from spring break completed a questionnaire online. Fifty-one participants had taken a trip during spring break and fifty-eight of the remaining participants wished they had. Next, satisfaction with spring break, regret with spring break, the desire to take a vacation in the future, and the willingness to commit resources to ensure a future vacation were measured. Results revealed that participants who had taken a vacation were significantly more satisfied with spring break than those who had not done so. A median split was conducted on reports of inaction regret for participants who had not gone on vacation, dividing participants into a low regret group (31 participants)³ and a high regret group (27 participants). Participants who had gone on the trip and those who had high inaction regret revealed an equally strong desire to go on a trip at the next opportunity ($M_{\text{satisfaction}}=6.54$ vs. $M_{\text{high regret}}=6.72$), and one that was significantly stronger than those who had low inaction regret ($M_{\text{low regret}}=5.78$; $F(2, 103)=13.43$, $p<.05$). Similar results were revealed for anticipated regret ($M_{\text{satisfaction}}=5.33$, $M_{\text{high regret}}=6.15$, $M_{\text{low regret}}=4.37$; $F(2, 103)=8.21$, $p<.05$) and for the willingness to commit resources to go on the trip at the next opportunity ($M_{\text{satisfaction}}=6.57$, $M_{\text{high regret}}=6.64$, $M_{\text{low regret}}=5.75$; $F(2, 103)=10.67$, $p<.05$). These results indicate that when consumers feel considerable inaction regret, this feeling leaves them just as motivated to seek out the forgone product at the next opportunity, just as likely to anticipate regretting forgoing the product, and just as likely to commit to purchasing at the next opportunity as are those consumers who did avail of the opportunity and enjoyed the product experience.

An important implication of these findings is that potential customers who have missed or declined opportunities to purchase may be more important than previously surmised. Past promotional efforts directed at those customers are not necessarily sunk costs, with no anticipated future value. Instead, managers may take advantage of the forgone purchase opportunities by highlighting them in retrospect, thus intentionally inducing inaction regret.

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³An analysis of the open-ended statements revealed that participants who experienced low regret for inaction had deliberately chosen to stay home for spring break for work or some other commitment. On the other hand, participants who had high regret for inaction were those who wanted to go for spring break but failed to make plans or had plans thwarted for some reason.

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Food for Thought: Role of Counterfactual Thinking in the Interpretation of Health Claims and Nutrition Information

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Extended Abstract

According to the American Heart Association, obesity represents the number two preventable cause of death in the United States and leads to about 300,000 deaths each year (Center for Disease Control and Prevention). This trend is largely driven by an inactive lifestyle, a poor diet and inferior nutrition choices. In an effort to help consumers make more healthful food choices, government agencies have passed measures specifically aimed at strictly limiting misleading health claims used on food packages (Ford et al. 1996). The way consumers use, interpret and attend to both health claims and nutrition information has received considerable research attention due to the significance of the topic to packaged food marketers as well as public policy makers. (Ford et al 1996; Kozup, Creyer and Burton 2003). In the present study, we seek to extend the literature on consumers' interpretation and use of health claims and nutrition information by connecting it to the literature on counterfactual thinking (CFT).

Counterfactual thinking is the practice of mentally generating alternative realities. According to Page and Colby (2003), counterfactual thinking refers to the process of looking back at past events and mentally imagining how these events could have turned out differently. Krishnamurthy and Sivaraman (2003) suggest that the careful elaboration of information involved in the process counterfactual thinking influences future problem solving behavior and future attitude formation. Hence, by mentally creating alternative realities to past events, individuals may outline prescriptive actions for future encounters (Page and Colby 2003). We propose that the process counterfactual thinking may alter prior findings in regards to the relationship between health claims and nutrition information on food packages on the one hand and product nutrition attitudes and evaluations on the other.

We argue that consumers engaged in an elaborative processing of information through attempting to mentally construct alternative realities to a past negative event are more likely to carefully scrutinize subsequently encountered information. Hence, they will be more likely to distinguish between superior and inferior arguments in favor of a food package that promises better health. Accordingly, we predict that health claims will become especially salient to this group of consumers and as a result have a stronger effect on attitude formation and product evaluation. We also expect that this effect will be positively moderated by the presence of favorable nutrition information. In contrast to prior studies suggesting a limited effect of health claims on attitudes and intentions in the presence of nutrition information, we hypothesize that counterfactual thinking may intensify a positive effect of health claims on product nutrition attitudes. Furthermore, we argue that such effect is affected by the alignment of the nutrition information to the health claim.

The design of our first study was a 2(CFT vs. Control) x 2(health claim vs. no health claim) x 2(favorable nutrition information vs. unfavorable nutrition information.) The design for this study is identical to study 1 of Kozup, Creyer and Burton (2003). One hundred and fifty four undergraduate students participated in the study. The stimuli were identical to the stimuli developed by Ford et al. (1996). Subjects in the counterfactual thinking condition were instructed to indicate how this experience could have turned out differently while those in the control condition were asked to indicate how realistic this scenario was. All dependent measures were assessed using items similar to those used by Kozup, Creyer and Burton (2003). All dependent measures were assessed with seven-point scale, and on all scales higher values indicated a more positive response. Mean scores were used in the case of multi-item measures.

Multivariate effects of the health claim (Wilks' Lambda=0.06, $F=3.34$, $p<0.03$), nutrition information (Wilks' Lambda=0.25, $F=15.92$, $p<0.01$) were significant and interaction effect between health claim and nutrition information was not significant. There was no main effect of CFT (Wilks' Lambda=0.03, $F=1.52$, $p<0.22$). None of the other two-way interactions were significant. The three-way interaction between health claim, CFT, and nutritional information was marginally significant (Wilks' Lambda=0.04, $F=2.15$, $p<0.10$). Specifically, follow-up univariate analyses revealed a marginally significant interaction effect of health claim and CFT on nutrition attitude ($F=3.74$, $p<0.09$) in the favorable nutrition information condition. Thus, when the nutrition information was favorable, exposing subjects in the control condition to health claim negatively influenced the nutrition attitude whereas exposing subjects in the CFT condition to the health claim positively influenced their nutrition attitude. The univariate analyses also indicated a main effect of favorability on all three dependent variables (Nutrition Attitude: $F=59.28$, $p<0.01$; Attitude toward the product $F=62.93$, $p<0.01$; Purchase Intentions $F=44.49$, $p<0.01$).

Study 1 examined the influence of counterfactual thinking on the effect of health claim and nutrition information on health-related beliefs. Consistent with prior research, we find that the effects of health claim and nutrition information on judgments and favorability are independent. However, we find that the interaction effect of health claim and counterfactual thinking on nutrition attitude is strengthened in the presence of favorable nutrition information. This result is in contrast to prior research that has suggested that, in the case of packaged food products, the effect of health claims are independent of the effects of available nutrition information.

One of the limitations of this study is that we did not study the effect of counterfactual thinking on health claims when the ambiguity of nutrition information was varied. The use of the nutrition information panel on food packages is known to be influenced by the ability of consumers to interpret such information (Ford et al. 1996). Another limitation of Study 1 is that we did not study the effect of counterfactual thinking on health claims when no nutritional information was present. Study 2 addresses these limitations and also further

investigates the process by which counterfactual thinking influences the interpretation and use of health related claims and nutrition information.

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Choosing to Conceal: An Investigation of the Impact of Social Influence on Luxury Consumption

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Extended Abstract

Throughout the years various theories have been proposed to explain why people engage in conspicuous consumption. Veblen (1912) suggested that the purchase of expensive goods and services is used to signal status and wealth to others. McCormick (1983) suggests that people buy expensive items in an attempt to "keep up with the Joneses" due to a desire to maintain their self-esteem. Regardless of the motivation, both theories suggest that when people buy luxury goods they intend to make their purchase known by either talking about it or showing it off in some way. However, the current research investigates occasions when people may conceal their luxury purchases from others. In four studies, we examine whether and under what conditions the concealment of luxury purchases from others occurs.

Prior research by Kivetz and Simonson (2002) indicates that people need to force themselves to indulge through pre-commitment and that they need to earn the right to indulge through higher levels of expended effort. This stream of research prompts questions concerning what people do when indulgences have not been earned—will they indulge anyway and conceal their indulgences? In the first of two completed studies we explored the circumstances under which people tend to conceal purchases from others. Findings from this study indicate that consumers were more likely to conceal their purchases from others when the item purchased was a luxury or high-priced item. Also, participants tended to conceal from some friends and not other friends. For example, one participant indicated that she paid \$100 for a pair of jeans because they were an excellent fit. However, this participant decided to conceal the purchase from her boyfriend because "he'd think they were too much money" yet she revealed the purchase to her girlfriends because "they would understand how hard it is trying to find a pair of jeans that fit." Similarly, another participant indicated that he concealed the purchase of a \$400 cell phone from his friends because "it was expensive"; however, this participant revealed the purchase to his parents because he felt "closer to his parents." Overall, the findings from this exploratory study suggest that people do not always want to attract attention to the amount of money they spend on an item and that luxury good consumption does not always occur in order to signal wealth and impress others.

The second study investigated whether type of friend (e.g., friend seen day to day versus a friend seen less often) influenced whether or not participants concealed a luxury purchase. We expected that a friend seen day to day would be more aware of the participant's past purchase behavior and may be more judgmental than a friend seen less often. In general, participants in the day to day condition reported they normally told each other about the products they purchased for themselves to a greater degree than participants in the less often condition shared this information with each other. This is reasonable since participants in the day to day condition have more interaction with their friend as well as more opportunities to disclose information about their lives and consumption patterns. In the experiment, however, after purchasing a luxury good, participants in the day to day condition were more likely to conceal the luxury purchase from their friends than were participants in the less often condition. An investigation of the open-ended responses indicates that participants were particularly concerned about their friends knowing how much they paid for the luxury good. Here, we have converging evidence that concealment of luxury occurs and that people are not always trying to signal status or wealth with their luxury goods purchases. Specifically, people would prefer that their friends *not* know how expensive an item happens to be.

Prior research suggests that people will allow themselves indulgences when those indulgences can be justified (Prelec and Herrstein, 1991; Shafir, Simonson and Tversky, 1993). Kivetz and Zheng propose two routes to justification: through effort or excellent performance or without depleting income. This research raises the question of whether justification needs to be made to self, others or both. In two more studies we explore this question and examine whether effort (high vs. low) and a friend's awareness (public vs. private) of said effort influences the decision to conceal the purchase of a luxury good. In study 3, our manipulation of high effort is a natural one in that the survey was administered during the week of midterms, a demanding time for undergraduates. Low effort will be manipulated by administering the survey during a normal week. Whether the friend is aware or not (public vs. private) of the effort is measured asking participants about their friend's level of awareness. In study 4, both effort and awareness are manipulated. The public versus private factors are included to examine whether indulgence needs to be justified to self, to others or both. We expect that participants will be least likely to conceal a luxury purchase when effort is high and public and expect that participants will conceal most when effort is low and public. In the high effort condition we expect participants to conceal more when the effort is private versus public because participants are less

able to justify the indulgence to the friend who is unaware of their high effort. For this same reason, we expect participants in the low effort condition to conceal more in the public condition versus private condition. Overall, we predict that amount of effort and the ability to justify indulgence will significantly impact a consumer's tendency to conceal luxury goods purchases.

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From Egotism to Averseness: The Role of Implicit Self Judgments in Seller Choice

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Abstract

Actual bidders in Internet auctions were more likely to participate in auctions when sellers' screen names had the same first character as their own screen name. This is a case of implicit egotism, whereby people gravitate toward things that resemble the self, and the first such case to be driven by a non-birth given characteristic. However, bidders were less likely to win higher-priced auctions under the same conditions. We propose that this reversal of implicit egotism is due to the salience of risk that may have negative implications for the self.

John enjoys participating in Internet auctions. His screen name is *pguy111*. One day he comes across two auctions for a new DVD. One seller's screen name is *patrick6*, while the other's is *matman*. Judging from information like the sellers' feedback ratings, John believes both are equally trustworthy and that neither one's auction represents a potential cost savings over the other. In which auction will John participate? It may be expected that John will be indifferent. In this paper we propose that John will be more likely to participate in *patrick6*'s auction than *matman*'s auction. Further, we propose that if the auction was not for a DVD, but for a more expensive item such as a DVD player, then John might tacitly avoid *patrick6*'s auction.

One reason John may choose to participate in *patrick6*'s auction is because of John's apparent self association with the letter *P*, as indicated by the choice of his own screen name. Research on implicit egotism indicates that for the most part people feel good about themselves and that these positive associations spill over into judgments of stimuli that share even the most superfluous characteristic with the self such as the initial of their first name (Jones, Pelham, and Mirenberg 2002; Pelham, Mirenberg, and Jones 2002). The implicit egotism effect has been shown to be truly implicit, outside of conscious awareness (Jones et al. 2004). Implicit egotism has been shown to influence major life decisions including choices of professions (Pelham, Mirenberg, and Jones 2002; e.g. Dennis is likely to be dentist.), living locations (Pelham et al. 2003; e.g. Florence is likely to live in Florida.), and romantic partners (Jones et al. 2004; e.g. Jennifer is likely to marry Jesse.). It has also been shown to influence brand choices (Brendl et al. 2005).

Based on this line of research, if John associates himself with the letter *P*, then he should have positive associations about sellers who also use the letter *P* to represent themselves. Thus, while his conscious comparison of *matman*'s and *patrick6*'s auctions may deem them equal, we argue that John should be more likely to participate in the latter's auction because his implicit judgment of *patrick6* should be more positive than that of *matman*. This is an important contribution because extant research shows that implicit egotism stems only from a person's birth-given characteristics. This research shows that the effect of implicit egotism is more prevalent than previously thought because other types of self-associations (e.g., pseudonym) may lead to implicit egotism.

To date, research has shown only positive effects of implicit egotism. However, negative effects are theoretically possible. For example, if John encounters someone who resembles himself, like *patrick6*, and that person potentially has negative attributes, would John still gravitate toward this person? Prior research indicates that an individual will distance oneself from a group when the group exhibits undesirable attributes that might reflect negatively on oneself (Cialdini et al. 1976; Snyder, Lassegard, and Ford 1986; Schimmel et al. 2000). When John bids on Internet auctions, he is aware that sellers might act fraudulently. When auction prices are high, the threat of fraud should loom particularly large. John should not want to associate his self-concept with the negative attributes that sellers may possess. Therefore, if auctions for an item have high prices, then John should avoid those auctions in which the seller's screen name shares characteristics with his own. If *matman* and *patrick6*'s auctions are for a DVD player, then John should avoid *patrick6*'s auction because he does not want to associate potentially negative characteristics with his self-concept. As discussed next, our data support this argument. Thus, this research makes another important contribution by demonstrating the reversal of implicit egotism for the first time.

A field study demonstrates the influence of implicit egotism in Internet auction participant behavior. Data was collected from the popular Internet auction site Ebay from November 2005 through January 2006. The set included 123,639 unique auction-bidder-seller combinations and 59,208 unique auction-winner-seller combinations. To ensure that we were studying a truly implicit effect, we examined

the likelihood of bidding on an auction when only the first character of the seller's screen name matched the first character of the bidder's screen name. Indeed, bidders had a greater than chance likelihood of participating in an auction when the first character of the seller's screen name matched the first character of their own. To examine the hypothesis that the implicit egotism effect would reverse for high priced auctions, we looked at winner-seller pairs because auction winners are financially committed to the transaction. Consistent with our theorizing, for auctions with high bids over \$50, bidders had a less than chance likelihood of winning an auction when the first character of the seller's screen name matched their own. Experimental data currently being collected will replicate and extend these findings.

This research has a number of implications. Implicit egotism not only causes people to gravitate toward things that resemble the self. It also drives people away from self-resembling entities when those entities have potentially negative implications for the self. This opens up a new line of questioning in implicit egotism research. For example, would people named Carl have a higher than chance likelihood of living in Compton, California, notorious for its housing projects and gang activity? Additionally, implicit egotism had been primarily demonstrated through birth-given characteristics (name, birthday). This study shows that implicit egotism can also work via characteristics one selects to represent oneself (e.g., job title).

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An Exploratory Study on Attitude Toward Luxury Products, Counterfeits and Imitations

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This research investigates how individual and company-controlled variables affect attitudes toward original luxury goods, counterfeits and imitations. We distinguish original products, which are "goods for which the mere use or display of a particular branded product confers prestige on their owners" (Grossman & Shapiro 1988, p.82), from counterfeits, which are strict copies of genuine products (Kay 1990) and from imitations "designed as to *look like* and make consumers *think of* the original brand" (d'Astous & Gargouri 2001, p.153). Consumer's attitude toward brand imitations and counterfeits has a great impact on brand management decisions and has been recognised as an important stream of research (Keller, 1998). Although several academicians (e.g. d'Astous & Gargouri, 2001; Warlop & Alba, 2004) studied this field, the literature remains scarce and largely incomplete.

The purpose of this research is to study a main effect (the impact of product type on consumers' attitude), a potential moderator (conformity) and several items that may hinder the purchase of counterfeits or imitations.

Hypotheses

Our main proposition is that consumers will respond differently to original products than to counterfeits or imitations. The purchase of luxury goods is primarily intended to "satisfy buyers' appetite for symbolic meanings" (Dubois & Duquesne 1993, p.37). Since originals and counterfeits look exactly the same, the attitude toward these two types of products should not differ. However, imitations may be distinguished quite easily from an original or a counterfeit and should therefore be less liked. We propose:

- H1: Attitude toward original luxury products will be different from counterfeits and imitations. Specifically, attitude toward:
- (a): originals is the same as toward counterfeits
 - (b): originals is more positive than toward imitations
 - (c): counterfeits is more positive than toward imitations

However, this first hypothesis is moderated by a personal variable. "Individual behavior is motivated in large part by social factors [desire for prestige, esteem, popularity, acceptance... which] tend to produce conformism" (Bernheim 1994, p.842), defined as an

individual's behavior in the sense of the conventions of his peer-group. Consumers being highly conform to the rest of the society and wanting to appear as a part of the group (e.g. by dressing similarly to one's friend, Lumpkin 1985), will evaluate original products more favorably than consumers not caring about conformity to the group. Following these arguments, we propose that:

H2: Attitude toward the product will vary according to the level of conformity. Specifically:

- (a): originals are evaluated more positively (the same) than counterfeits by consumers with a high (low) level of conformity
- (b): originals are evaluated more positively (the same) than imitations by consumers with a high (low) level of conformity
- (c): counterfeits are evaluated more positively (the same) than imitations by consumers with a high (low) level of conformity.

Concerning company-controlled variables, we intended to assess factors which could hinder consumers to buy counterfeits or imitations. Eight items were chosen based on a literature review and on a pretest: perceived level of quality, legal issues, image perceived by others during product usage and purchase, external aspect, price, ethical aspects and made in of the product.

Method

Materials: Two brands (handbags and polo shirts) from the luxury industry were chosen because they were familiar to almost everybody and, even if expensive, were not out of touch for the respondents. Additionally, a lot of counterfeits and imitations for these two brands are available on the market.

Procedure: 62 undergraduate students participated in the study, comprised of two ostensibly unrelated surveys. The first one inquired about personal characteristics like dress conformity (Lumpkin, 1985) and other variables not taken into account in this study. In the second part, a 3x2 between-participants experiment was conducted (type of brand: original vs. counterfeit vs. imitation; conformity: low vs. high). The three stimuli of the experiment were composed of a scenario and an illustration (visual / semantic) describing one of the three types of products.

After time for reflection, the respondents were asked to rate their attitude toward the product (Sujan & Bettman, 1989) and the eight items which could possibly hinder their consumption. Every respondent was randomly affected to one of the three scenarios and evaluated the two brands. This gives us a total sample of 124 observations.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation checks indicated that the three types of products were perceived as having different levels of similarity compared to an original product ($M_{original}=6.05$, $M_{counterfeit}=5.45$, $M_{imitation}=4.61$ $F(1, 103)=15.962$, $p<.01$).

A 3 X 2 ANOVA was conducted with attitude toward the product as dependent variable, type of product and conformity as between-participant factors. Low/high groups on the conformity scale were constituted using a conventional median split.

The attitude toward original products, counterfeits and imitations was different ($M_{original}=4.44$, $M_{counterfeit}=3.75$, $M_{imitation}=3.11$, $F(1, 102)=7.38$, $p= 0.01$). Post hoc tests revealed that this difference is only significant between originals and imitations. These results confirm H1a, H1b and infirm H1c.

The two-way interaction between type of products and conformity was significant by Hotelling's criterion ($F(1, 99)=5.45$, $p<.01$). Planned contrasts revealed that the evaluation of the three types of products differed significantly for consumers with a high level of conformity ($F(2, 99)=11.27$, $p<.01$) but not for consumers with a low level of conformity ($F(2, 99)=.632$, $n.s.$). For high conformity individuals, participants evaluated more positively originals ($M_{HC Originals}=5.26$) than counterfeits ($M_{HC Counterfeit}=3.89$, $p<.05$) and imitations ($M_{HC Imitations}=2.98$, $p<.01$). For low conformity individuals, the evaluations of the three products are the same ($M_{LC Originals}=3.56$, $M_{LC Counterfeit}=3.65$, $M_{LC Imitations}= 3.21$, $n.s.$). Therefore, we confirm H2a and b. On the contrary, counterfeits and imitations were evaluated the same way by high and low conformity individuals, which infirms partially H2c.

Concerning the company-controlled variables, results indicate that the legal and ethical issues are not really taken into account when considering purchasing a counterfeit or imitation. The criterions identified as most important concern primarily the external aspect of the product and its quality.

On basis of this first research, high conformity consumers may be identified as an interesting target group since their product attitude is more favorable towards original products. In a second study, we plan to investigate not only attitudes but also purchase intentions and responses to the identified factors hindering the purchase of counterfeits and imitations. Therefore we project to develop several advertising stimuli in order to verify their effects on purchase intentions.

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The Effect of Market and Merchant Comparisons on Customer Satisfaction: The Moderating Role of Information Uncertainty and Price Negotiation

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Abstract

We examine whether consumers are influenced by comparisons to other consumers and to the merchant. Past studies have estimated the impact that each type of comparison has on customer satisfaction separately, but have not examined the relative impact of each comparison simultaneously. We also examine the moderating effects of information uncertainty and price negotiation on the relationship between comparison information and customer satisfaction. Results show that unfavorable market comparisons impact customer satisfaction significantly more strongly than unfavorable merchant comparisons. However, no such difference is found for favorable comparisons. Information uncertainty and price negotiation decrease the impact of unfavorable market and merchant comparisons.

Introduction

Past studies have shown that comparative information has an effect on consumer purchase evaluations. For instance, some studies focused on comparisons to other consumers while others looked at comparisons to the merchant. Past research has found that both market and merchant comparisons influence consumer evaluations of a purchase experience.

This research has two contributions. First, we examine the *relative* impact that comparisons to the market and comparisons to the merchant have on consumer evaluations of their purchase experience. Second, we examine the moderating effects of information uncertainty and price negotiation on the relationship between market/merchant comparisons and customer satisfaction.

Hypotheses

Since earlier studies examined only one type of comparison at a time, there is no evidence which type of comparison may have a stronger impact on customer satisfaction. However, people are likely to pay attention to information to the extent that it is relevant to their decision. For example, paying more than the market price implies that the consumer would probably pay less for the same item if s/he went to another merchant. On the other hand, getting more or less than the merchant typically has little direct impact on the consumer's wallet. Thus, we expect:

Hypothesis 1: (a) Favorable comparisons to the market affect satisfaction more strongly than favorable comparisons to the merchant; and (b) unfavorable comparisons to the market affect satisfaction more strongly than unfavorable comparisons to the merchant.

The more ambiguous and uncertain a piece of information is believed to be, the less likely people are to attribute value to it and incorporate it into their decisions. Consumer certainty in the market price and the merchant's net outcome (output–input) varies with the consumer's familiarity with the product category, the market, and the merchant. For instance, whereas consumers typically can only speculate about the merchant's net outcome from a sale, consumers familiar with the merchant's business or the industry (such as market analysts specializing in the industry) may have a fairly accurate idea of the merchant's outcomes. Thus, we propose:

Hypothesis 2: Information uncertainty decreases the impact of (a) comparisons to the market and (b) comparisons to the merchant on customer satisfaction.

Price negotiations are common in farmers' markets, garage sales and flea markets, the real estate market, and in markets for used products such as automobiles. Consumers at such marketplaces are likely to view initial comparison information as less relevant because the outcome of the transaction can potentially be changed through negotiation. Thus, we can expect that:

Hypothesis 3: Price negotiation decreases the impact of (a) comparisons to the market and (b) comparisons to the merchant on customer satisfaction.

Method

Two studies were conducted. In both studies, participants were asked to evaluate 25 hypothetical transactions with a local light fixture store. Participants were asked to imagine considering a table lamp for purchase. The retail price of the table lamp was \$50 in all 25 transactions. Two variables—the market comparative outcome and the merchant comparative outcome—were systematically varied in the hypothetical transactions. The market comparative outcome had five levels. At the midpoint level, the retail price was the same as the market price. There were two levels where the retail price was above the market price and two levels where the retail price was below the market price. Similarly, the merchant comparative outcome also had five levels: the midpoint level where both the consumer and the merchant benefited equally; two levels where the merchant benefited more; and two levels where the consumer benefited more. For instance, in one condition the transaction was described as follows: "The market price is \$50. You save \$10 from the market price. You benefit \$10 less than the store from the transaction."

Manipulation of Information Uncertainty and Price Negotiation. The market comparison information and the merchant comparison information were administered either as an exact number (low uncertainty) or as a range (high uncertainty). In the “no price negotiation” condition, participants were told that prices in the store were final and consumers could not negotiate prices at the store. In the “price negotiation” condition, participants were told that it was fairly common to negotiate prices at the store and were specifically instructed that the 25 scenarios showed transaction outcomes before any price negotiations had taken place.

Measures. Participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with each of the 25 hypothetical transactions on an eleven-point Likert scale anchored between “do not like at all” and “like very much.” Participants also completed manipulation checks.

The main difference between study 1 and study 2 was that, in study 1, participants saw the difference between the item’s retail price and the market price (the market comparison information), and the difference between their outcome from the transaction and the merchant’s outcome from the transaction (the merchant comparison information). In study 2, participants saw the market price, the product’s price, and the merchant’s total product cost and were left to infer the differences in outcomes.

Results

Preliminary results indicate some interesting relationships. More specifically, unfavorable market comparisons had a significantly stronger impact on customer satisfaction than unfavorable merchant comparisons in all conditions in both studies. In contrast, in all conditions in both studies, favorable market comparisons were not more impactful than favorable merchant comparisons. Thus, hypothesis 1b received full support, but hypothesis 1a was consistently disconfirmed.

In addition, information uncertainty significantly decreased the impact of comparison information on customer satisfaction for unfavorable merchant comparisons (when the market comparison was favorable) in study 1, and for unfavorable market comparisons in study 2. Hypothesis 2 was not supported for unfavorable market comparisons in study 1 or for any favorable comparison (market or merchant) in either study.

Finally, price negotiation had exactly the same pattern of effects as information uncertainty. Thus, hypothesis 3 was supported for unfavorable merchant comparisons (when the comparison to the market was favorable) in study 1, and for unfavorable market comparisons in study 2.

Do I Belong? Clothing, Group Membership, and Identity During the College Transition

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Clothing has always been “a rich source of signification” for teenagers (Danesi, 1994, p. 76). Fashion has also been described as “salient markers in [individuals’] narratives of personal history” and as “a repository for dreams of an envisioned good life” (Thompson & Haytko, 1997, p. 35). Unlike individuals’ personal possessions, which can be either private or public markers of identity, clothing by definition is a public marker of identity. That is, in a consumer culture clothing reflects various aspects of individuals’ identity to others, including group identity. Consequently when individuals experience identity uncertainty as they transition from one peer culture to another it is likely that they will actively reevaluate the communicative aspects of their wardrobe and adjust it accordingly in an attempt to create and communicate a socially acceptable identity to members of the new peer culture. Moreover, clothing aids in individuals’ attempts to maintain a coherent self-narrative during this period of identity uncertainty.

This paper, therefore, attempts to investigate what role clothing plays in helping individuals negotiate their changing identity during the high school to college transition. The paper begins by discussing how college freshmen engage in anticipatory consumption and pack clothing they believe is appropriate to communicate a college identity. The paper then examines the process by which informants learn to decipher the college fashion-meta code and adapt their fashion to conform to their perceptions of the group norm. Finally, the influence of the college peer culture on students’ fashion for special occasions, especially when they “go out,” is discussed.

Method

Overview and Rationale

The current study answers the call by Corsaro and Eder (1990) to employ longitudinal research to “chart children’s transitions from one peer culture to another” (p. 216). Longitudinal interviews were conducted with college freshmen at the beginning and end of their first semester to examine fashions’ role in the maintenance and creation of identity over time. A longitudinal approach is superior to cross-sectional (e.g., Karp et al., 1998; Mehta & Belk, 1991) and cohort (e.g., Silver, 1996) analysis because it allows the researcher to observe informants’ use of fashion as it changes in relation to both time and make-up of students’ self-concept and social networks. Previous research confirms qualitative methods such as depth interviews are the preferred means of measurement for this phenomenon for their ability to provide detailed descriptions of informants’ lived experiences (e.g., Hill & Somin, 1996; Mehta & Belk, 1991; Silver, 1996). Thus, the current study employed a semi-structured interview format because it provided informants some structure and direction during the interview while allowing them to discuss any additional topics they viewed as relevant. Further, this approach allowed informants to discuss their experiences in their own terms, accounting for the complexities of their lived experiences.

Informant Recruitment

Informants from a large Midwestern university were recruited via flyers posted in heavily trafficked areas around campus and via announcements made in entry-level English, Sociology, and Journalism courses. This approach resulted in 21 inquiries and 19 students (16 female, 3 male) agreeing to participate in the interview process. As compensation for their participation, informants’ names were entered into two random drawings for \$50. One drawing occurred at the completion of each round of interviews. This sample, although limited, is consistent with sample sizes of other studies in this field (e.g., Karp et al., 1998; Silver, 1996) and the goals of qualitative investigation, which values depth of description over breadth and generalizability.

Interview Schedule

Initial interviews were conducted during the first four weeks of the school year (September 9-24, 2004). Initial interviews ranged from 35-60 minutes. Second interviews were conducted between November 30, 2004 and December 9, 2004. Of the 19 informants who participated in the first interview, 14 (74%) participated in the second interview. Interviews during this round ranged from 26-54 minutes. Interviews were conducted either in a location of the informant's choosing (e.g., their dorm lobby) or in the lead author's office. All interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder for future transcription.

Interview Structure

Interviews began with "broad stroke" questions (Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1989), such as "tell me a little about yourself and your family," that were intended to put the informants at ease and make them feel comfortable sharing intimate details of their lives with the interviewer. Follow-up questions covered a wide breadth of topics, with the emphasis placed on the role of fashion in the transition process. The first interviews began with a discussion of informants' high school experience and their preparation for attending college. The interview then transitioned to students' initial experiences and impressions of college peer culture as well as descriptions of their daily lives. The second interview focused specifically on how students viewed themselves fitting into the college peer culture and whether their life had changed since high school and the beginning of the academic year. At the completion of the interview protocol, 33 individual interviews had been conducted, resulting in just over 26 hours of discussion. Interviews were then transcribed, resulting in a total of 308 single-spaced pages of text. Interviews were printed out and bound and this text served as data for the analysis.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed when all interviews were completed following the hermeneutic method (Thompson, 1997). First, the researchers began with an impressionistic reading and the identification of recurring themes within each individual interview. This initial reading sought to identify instances where informants explicitly discussed the role of media in their lives. Differences in informants' descriptions of media use across the two interviews were also noted so as to gain a better understanding of how the role of media evolved over time. A second analysis of the data involved cross-informant analysis, the goal of which was to identify "global themes" that emerged from informants' descriptions of their experiences. Because any qualitative analysis is an iterative process, a third reading of the transcripts sought to identify any emergent themes not previously identified. Emergent themes were analyzed based on their prevalence, their impact on the students' transition, and whether or not they contradicted any previously identified themes.

Summary

In response to the primary research question explored by this paper, what role do clothes play in the negotiation of identity, it appears that students change their personal style to reinforce and communicate changes in their self-concept, both to themselves and to their new peers. Adjusting their wardrobe allows individuals to express their changing internal identity to others. That is, by wearing certain peer culture approved clothes, students believe that they can communicate to their peers, individuals who possess and use a great deal of consumption stereotypes (Belk et al., 1982), and ultimately themselves, that they belong to the peer culture. This belief allows students to bolster their internal conceptions of self while dealing with the uncertainty associated with this period of transition.

Prior to their arrival on campus, students pack the "identity suitcase" with clothing they perceive as representative of college style in anticipation of their new identity. Once on campus, however, students must decipher the meanings communicated through others' clothing and decide whether to emulate that style, reject it, or use it to reinforce their previous consumption behaviors (Hirschman & Thompson, 1997). Students appear to most often emulate the style they see on campus in an effort to communicate an appropriate college identity to others and reinforce their own conception of self as a mature college student. Despite informants' assertions to the contrary, communicating a college identity typically involves some level of conformity to the group norm. Data illustrate that informants not only relaxed their personal style to reflect their perceptions of the group norm, but also purchased specific status items, all in an attempt to conform to the larger peer culture. The context of the situation (Silver, 1996) also has a direct influence on students' fashion, as both moving to the college campus and "going out" result in changes in students' prior dress. By adjusting their clothing, students can communicate various social identities to their peers that reflect the appropriate social role; wearing relaxed clothing such as that from The Gap and Abercrombie & Fitch, for instance, signifies the "student" role, whereas, specifically in this instance for women, wearing more upscale brands, "anything with a label," and dressing in a provocative manner signifies the adventurous "party girl" role. Clothing, therefore, allows informants to express various, and often contradictory, social identities to others and to themselves as they negotiate their new college identity. At this point it is interesting to note that male informants were less likely to adjust their wardrobes drastically to fit in to the college peer culture in comparison to the more pronounced changes female informants discussed. Whereas women felt a desire to dress in a more casual fashion and consume different brands than they did in high school, it appears male informants did not feel a similar desire. Rather, the casual preppy style males adhered to during high school appears to remain socially accepted within the new peer culture, potentially making the transition to college less stressful, at least in regard to the expression of a college fashion identity.

Overall, informants' descriptions of the high school and college fashion meta-code are extremely similar. Three possible reasons arise as to why this similarity exists: 1) both high school and college students appear to consume similar media and, therefore, become socialized to and emulate the ideal images the media presents depicting youth culture; 2) high school students emulate college fashion in a process that Goffman (1959) calls "anticipatory socialization" where individuals have already been well versed in the "reality" that is just becoming a reality for them; and/or 3) college students simply carry over their fashion from high school and adjust it slightly to distinguish their current identities from their high school identities by incorporating specific items and brands they perceive as being distinct to the college peer culture into their wardrobes. Future research should explore these possible reasons for the similarities between the two peer cultures in more detail. Regardless, clothing and the negotiation of identity during periods of transition seem to be intertwined. As the informants in this sample moved from the high school peer culture to the college peer culture, they purchased and brought clothing with them that they felt best reflected their identity at that point in time. However, as they slowly incorporated their college identity into their self-concept, specifically for female informants, they also adjusted their style to mirror the dominant peer culture, even taking some articles of clothing home with them. Thus, as they gain greater confidence in their ability to use clothing to enact the college identity, informants

became less reliant on their previous high school identity. Thus, they move one step closer to reconciling the identity uncertainty the transition from high school to college initiated.

What do Rats Think While They Run? Goal Distance and Cognitive Effort Acceleration

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Extended Abstract

Recent development in consumer goal research pointed out that goal-achieving effort increases as distance from goal decreases (Kivetz, Urminsky, and Zheng 2006). It was found that consumers accelerate their effort (e.g., making purchase more frequently and in larger quantity) when they approach the reward of a reward program (RP). Looking from the behaviorist perspective, these studies regarded the behavior as a manifestation of rats running toward the food. And the inverse relationship between rate of behavior and goal distance are robustly demonstrated in several studies. This paper argues that changes in the physical efforts are just part of the consequence of goal proximity. Cognitive efforts in processing goal-related information should also increase when one gets closer to the goal. Specifically, we propose that the amount of information people will attend to and the depth of processing should increase with goal proximity.

Generally speaking, people are more likely to engage in systematic and thorough cognitive processing when their involvement in a purchase decision is high than when their involvement is low (Bettman, Luce, and Rayne 1998). For people who are far from the goal of an RP (i.e., at the early stage of an RP), their involvement in the purchase decision is probably low because the subjective value of a distant future reward is minimal (Kirby 1997; Kirby and Herrnstein 1995). One consequence of low involvement is the tendency to use heuristics rather than effortful information processing when making decisions. This is consistent with previous findings that decision to join an RP is influenced by heuristics. Kivetz and Simonson (2003) showed that the perception of one's own effort relative to that of other consumers influences RP joining decisions. This heuristic may even lead to preference for RPs with *greater* effort requirement. Their findings suggest that, when the RP goal is far away, consumers tend to base their decisions on effort heuristics (e.g., how achievable is the RP goal?) and may overlook the reward implications of a decision. Such type of information will then make little impact on their decisions.

On the contrary, for individuals who are close to the goal in an RP (i.e., at the late stage of an RP), the subjective value of the RP reward is augmented by the short temporal distance (Kirby, 1997; Kirby & Herrnstein, 1995). The increased subjective value of the reward would lead to high involvement in purchase decisions, in turns, individuals are more likely to attend to and subject information to thorough and systematic processing. Thus, we expect consumers will make more effortful decisions rather than using heuristics. Taken together, we predict that information pertaining to reward value should have a greater impact on purchase decisions when the RP goal is near than far away.

As an initial attempt, we tested this idea by assessing the differential influences of unit value of RP reward on people's purchase decisions across goal proximity. Unit value of RP reward refers to the equivalent reward value earned per purchase. Consider an RP in which participants will be given a \$150 cash coupon for every 10 stamps collected. The unit value of the RP reward is \$15, which equals to \$150 reward value divided by the total number of purchases (i.e., 10). This information informs people the reward implications (i.e., monetary implication of each purchase in terms of the RP reward). In the example, unit value highlights the chance to get \$15 in return for each purchase. Our basic tenet is that the unit value information of an RP should have a greater likelihood in altering purchase decisions when people subject incoming information to deliberate and thorough processing, but not so when the processing appears to be heuristics based (unit value does not have implications on effort heuristic). In short, we predict an interaction between unit value of RP reward and goal proximity that the availability of unit value will have strong impacts on individuals' purchase decisions only when they are close to the goal but not when they are far from the goal.

The above prediction was supported in a study using the RP described above. Participants (180 undergraduate students) were asked to imagine that they joined the reward program of Supermarket A. In the reward program, they would obtain one stamp for every certain amount of purchase at Supermarket A, and would receive HK\$150 cash coupon once they accumulated ten such stamps. Goal proximity was manipulated by the number of stamps (one vs. eight stamps) participants got. Unit value information was manipulated by the information printed on the stamps—" \$15 reward" in the unit value conditions whereas "reward" in the control conditions. Also, a statement "Each stamp is equivalent to \$15 in cash reward!" was included on the stamp cards in the unit value conditions. Participants had to decide whether to do their purchases at Supermarket A or Supermarket B. While Supermarket B did not have any promotional offers, it is more accessible than Supermarket A.

Consistent with our predictions, unit value influenced repurchase intention only when participants were at the late stage of the RP ($M_{\text{absent}}=5.78, M_{\text{present}}=4.71; F(1, 88)=15.12, p<.001$), but not when they were at the early stage ($M_{\text{absent}}=3.73, M_{\text{present}}=3.89; F<1$). We also found that perceived ability to complete the RP (i.e., effort heuristic) influenced purchase decisions only at early stage but not at late stage. One interesting finding of this study is that effort acceleration (Kivetz et al. 2006) is actually reduced by the presence of certain reward information (lower purchase intention when unit value information is available during late stage). It suggests a possible boundary condition of the goal-gradient effect. While physical efforts to attain a goal increase with goal proximity, this study highlights that cognitive efforts increase in a similar fashion. Increased cognitive effort leads to processing of more information and more effortful decision-making.

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The Influence of Consumer Altruism on Complaining Behavior

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Extended Abstract

This paper examines the effects of consumer altruism on complaining behavior in the context of a dissatisfactory marketplace experience. Complaining behavior is conceptualized as consumer voicing directed at the company at fault and negative word-of-mouth communicated to others (Singh 1988). Altruism can be conceptualized as a constellation of actions performed by individuals to assist others that make people performing these acts feel good about themselves. Price, Feick, and Guskey (1995) introduced the concept of *market helping behavior* defined as "acts performed in the marketplace that benefit others in their purchases and consumption." Although market helping behavior was studied in the context of consumers helping each other in shopping tasks and providing marketplace information, this construct also captures altruistic tendencies that might motivate dissatisfied consumers to warn others of negative experiences in the marketplace context. Past research has investigated a number of antecedents of complaining behavior including severity of dissatisfaction leading to complaining (Singh and Wilkes 1996), consumer self-confidence (Bearden and Teel 1980), a psychological need to vent dissatisfaction (Kowalski 1996) and culture (Huang 1994, Keng 1995).

Altruism has been examined in past research in the context of charitable donations (Strahilevitz 1997); however, research has not examined the potential influence that altruism may have on consumer complaining behaviors. The purpose of this study is to examine whether consumer altruism is indeed related to the likelihood for both consumer voicing and negative word-of-mouth. Importantly, research on complaining behavior has demonstrated the impact of the severity of consumer satisfaction. Specifically, Singh and Wilkes (1996) have shown that dissatisfaction intensity affects the consumer complaint response process: the greater the dissatisfaction the more likely the consumer is to engage in a complaint action. Bearden and Oliver (1985) provided evidence that a greater problem cost stimulates both voicing and negative word-of-mouth. Additionally, Richins (1983) has shown that severity of the problem experienced by consumers increases the likelihood of negative word-of-mouth. Thus, severity of dissatisfaction is included as a control variable in this study for both voicing and negative word-of-mouth.

A survey methodology with scenarios manipulating the severity of marketplace encounter failure was used in this study. A mailing of 321 questionnaires to a convenience sample of adult, non-student consumers (25-54 years old) recruited by college students resulted in 280 complete and valid responses (87 percent response rate). Respondents were asked to read a description of a dissatisfactory consumption experience and then indicate their likelihood to engage in voicing (i.e., complaining directly to the company at fault) and negative word-of-mouth (i.e., letting others know about the negative experience). The measure of voicing included two items (Pearson $r=.78$) and the construct of word-of-mouth included three items (Cronbach's $\alpha=.88$). Both measures of consumer complaining were derived from past literature (Day and Bodur 1978, Villarreal-Camacho 1983, Blodgett and Tax 1993). Additionally, a five-item measure of consumer altruism, developed based on the market helping behavior measure (Price, Feick, and Guskey 1995), was included in the survey (Cronbach's $\alpha=.85$).

Two multiple regression equations were used to examine the relationships between consumer altruism, the severity of the dissatisfaction with the encounter and the dependent measures of voicing and negative word-of-mouth. The results indicate that consumer altruism is a statistically significant predictor for both voicing (Adjusted $R^2=.23$, $\beta=.223$, $t=4.24$, $p<.001$) and negative word-of-mouth (Adjusted $R^2=.28$, $\beta=.266$, $t=5.24$, $p<.001$), when controlling for the severity of the encounter failure (also a statistically significant predictor, $\beta=.455$, $t=8.98$, $p<.001$, $\beta=.418$, $t=7.94$, $p<.001$, accordingly).

These results have important implications for marketers and consumer protection agencies. Past research has indicated that, in general, the incidence of consumer voicing is low and this behavior needs to be facilitated (TARP 1986, Vavra 1992). Additionally, past studies have provided ample evidence that consumer voicing can be beneficial to companies in providing negative feedback quickly, improving consumer satisfaction, and preventing negative word-of-mouth among consumers (Fornell and Wernerfelt 1987, Tax et al. 1998, Nyer 2000).

The findings of this research imply that one of the important motivators for consumer complaining is an inclination of consumers to help others by warning them about dissatisfactory marketplace experiences and preventing them from experiencing such negative encounters. It appears that the greater the consumer altruism, the greater the likelihood for voicing the concerns to the company at fault and the greater the propensity to engage in negative word-of-mouth to others. Companies interested in facilitating consumer voicing to find about problems quickly so they can be addressed before a major fallout occurs could use altruism appeals to encourage consumers to voice their concerns by emphasizing the helpfulness of complaining not only for the company at fault but also for the welfare of the current and future consumers. Consumer protection agencies might also consider the use of altruistic appeals in soliciting information about shoddy practices in the marketplace.

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The Impact of Culture Orientation on Consumption Impulsiveness and Beer Consumption

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Beer consumption is an extremely important consumer phenomenon. Given this importance, the lack of research examining the determinants of consumer beer consumption is striking. Further, research has never investigated the role of culture orientation in consumers' beer consumption decision. In this paper, we propose that individualism versus collectivism culture orientation has a systematic impact on beer consumption and consumers' self-construal and the consequent consumption impulsivity are two factors that systematically affect consumers' likelihood of engaging in beer consumption.

Examining the role of self-construal in impulsive consumption decision like beer consumption is a unique contribution of our work. More generally, this research is important for four reasons. First, we fill a conceptual gap in the beer consumption literature by investigating the role of culture orientation. Second, we provide ways to reconcile the seemingly conflicting results in the literature. Our results provide a plausible conceptualization to reconcile the divergent results in the literature. Third, we provide both managerial and public policy implications. Through demonstrating the impact of culture orientation and self-construal on beer consumption, we provide a constructivist view on beer consumption, suggesting that beer consumption is a malleable process and there is ample room for policy makers to exert efforts. Fourth, we offer the first ever experimental evidence on the relationship between self-construal and consumption impulsiveness. Accordingly, we provide the complete causal knowledge among the constructs of culture orientation, self-construal, consumption impulsiveness and beer consumption.

Hypothesis Development

What determines consumers' beer consumption tendency? As reviewed by Hirschman (1992), impulsiveness plays a large role in beer consumption tendency. Given this underlying process, our key argument is that a construct that can systematically affect consumers' impulsive tendency should theoretically affect their beer consumption. We posit self-construal to be one such construct.

Self-construal has been defined as "the relationship between the self and others and, especially, the degree to which they [people] see themselves as *separate* from others or as *connected* with others" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 226). Two prominent dimensions of self-construal include the degree of *independence* and/or *interdependence* of a person.

Research also posits a relationship between self-construal and consumption impulsivity (Kacen & Lee, 2002). Specifically, when an independent self-construal is activated consumers tend to be impulsive. In contrast, when an interdependent self-construal is activated, consumers tend to be less impulsive.

If self-construal systematically affects beer consumption tendency, then consumers from collectivistic cultures should show less beer consumption tendency than those from individualistic cultures. Formally:

H1: Cultural orientation will influence consumers' beer consumption tendency. Specifically, consumers with a collectivist orientation will tend to have lower beer consumption tendency than consumer with an individualistic orientation.

H2: Self-construal will influence consumers' beer consumption tendency. Specifically, consumers with an interdependent self-construal will tend to have lower beer consumption tendency than consumers with an independent self-construal.

H3: Consumption impulsivity will mediate the effect of self-construal on beer consumption tendency.

Next we report results from three studies. Study 1 and 2 are designed to test hypothesis 1, while Study 3—building on Study 1 and 2—tests hypotheses 2 and 3.

Study 1a,b, & 2

Beer consumption per capita data of forty-two countries in 1999 were used to test hypothesis 1. The consumption per capita of liters serves as the measure of central tendency of each specific country's beer consumption.

Country scores on culture orientation are taken from the Hofstede's cultural analysis website (2005). Income data are from United Nation's website.

Hypothesis 1. We ran a regression on per capita beer consumption level. Specifically, the effect of individualism versus collectivism was significant ($t(1, 40)=3.29, p<.05$). Thus, hypothesis 1 was confirmed.

Beer consumption tendency data of fifty states in 2002 were used to test hypothesis 1 in Study 2. State scores on culture orientation are taken from existing study (Vandello and Cohen, 1999). Hypothesis 1 was confirmed through this approach too.

Study 3

A total of 75 undergraduates from a large southwestern U.S. university participated for course credit. We used a 2 (Self-Construal: Interdependent vs. Independent) between-subjects design.

Participants were told that they were taking part in two different studies. The first study consisted of the priming material for activating the self-construal. This approach of priming self-construal was adapted from past studies (Mandel, 2003).

After this, participants were probed on their attitude toward drinking beer on question of "How do you feel about drinking beer at this moment?" They rated drinking beer on bad vs. good and dislike vs. like ($r=0.92$), with higher scores indicate more positive attitude.

Lastly participants were asked their thoughts on the study purpose and then debriefed. No one was correct in guessing the research purpose.

Hypothesis 2. To test hypothesis 2, we ran a regression on the beer consumption attitude scale. We coded the independent self-construal as 1 and interdependent self-construal as -1. Specifically, the effect of self-construal was significant ($t(1, 73)=2.29, p<.05$), indicating that independent tends to hold more positive attitude toward drinking beer than those with interdependent. Thus, hypothesis 2 was supported.

Hypothesis 3. We ran a set of regression analyses based on Baron and Kenny's (1986) suggestions for testing for mediation. We found that consumption impulsivity mediated the effect of self-construal on the beer consumption tendency. These results fully support hypothesis 3.

General Discussion

Our results are consistent with the existing literature on self-construal and impulsiveness. For example, Kacen & Lee (2002) found that consumers with independent self-construals tend to be more impulsive than those consumers with interdependent self-construals. We extend this literature in a number of ways. We provided a stronger test of this connection by manipulating self-construal rather than measuring self-construal only. In addition, we extended the causal linkage between self-construal and consumption impulsiveness to the domain of beer consumption.

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Stinkin' Inconvenience! How Consumers Experience and Respond to Disgust

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Abstract

We explore how consumers deal with feelings of disgust in consumption situations. We look at the common elicitors of disgust, and discover two categories not previously documented in the literature: (1) ignorance, and (2) things that did not work out as planned, desired, or imagined. In Study 2 we use scenarios to look at responses to disgust in consumption situations, and in Study 3 we manipulate scenarios to see if reported responses in study 2 are how people actually behave.

Introduction

What disgusts consumers? How do consumers respond to their feelings of disgust? Disgust can be elicited in response to physical objects, and to social violations (Haidt 1997; Rozin et al. 2000). Several researchers take the view that the disgust emotion grew with human evolution, from a way to guard the human body from bacteria and illness (Haidt 1997; Rozin et al. 2000), to an emotion that helps humans know how to behave in society (Haidt 1997). In other words the emotion disgust serves an important function in society.

Disgust, as it is researched now, is divided into two major categories, core disgust and socio-moral disgust. Core disgust elicitors include food, animals, body bi-products, sexual deviance, poor hygiene, and contact with death (Haidt 1997). Socio-moral disgust is elicited by contact with evil, or objects that are associated with evil or dirt (i.e., a shirt worn by an evil person). According to Haidt et al (1997), the following are often categorized as disgusting: "racism, brutality, hypocrisy, political attitudes, and violations of important social relationships."

Linked to social wellbeing and social interests, disgust is considered a moral emotion (Rozin et al. 2000). It motivates people to act in a particular ways, and to avoid certain actions.

Disgust has been identified as an emotion with relevant implications for advertising (Batra and Holbrook 1990; Holbrook and Batra 1987). Thus, it is curious that more research on the relationship between disgust and consumer behavior has not been conducted.

In the current study we are interested in how consumers deal with feelings of disgust that arise in consumption situations, and how feelings of disgust influence future perceptions, behaviors, and intentions in similar situations.

Study 1

Methodology. We gave questionnaires to 108 undergraduate students at a northeastern university. Because disgust is a little-studied topic in the marketing literature, our first goal was to verify the meanings of disgust that have been found in the psychology literature. We asked participants to define disgust, to give examples of times when they felt disgusted, or experienced disgust, and to describe what they did in these situations.

Results. Our participants' definitions of disgust overlapped with previous definitions of core and socio-moral disgust. When asked to list what disgusted them, core and social disgust elicitors were equally prevalent. 91.7% and 90.7% respectively.

In line with existing disgust research, our respondents indicated that disgust, or a disgusting object or situation made them angry (20.4%), annoyed them (22.2%), and upset them (22.2%).

Taking existing research further our study revealed that the objects and situations that cause disgust, as well as emotions facilitated by disgust have broadened. The participants included two categories of disgust not previously documented in the literature. These two categories are (1) ignorance, and (2) inconvenience, things that did not work out as planned, desired, or imagined. 19.4% of our respondents stated that they are disgusted by situations that are inconvenient to them (i.e. waiting in a line; going to an early morning class; walking in the cold, etc.), and that these situations are disappointing (23.1%) and frustrating (10.2%).

According to Nabi (2002) there is a difference between the theoretical definition of disgust, which refers to core disgust, and the common use of the word, which takes on a broader meaning including irritation, annoyance, or anger. It is our observation that the experience of disgust has gone beyond physical or social survival situations, to include perceptions of inconvenience, and interruptions to individual comfort. Perhaps this is a by-product of today's high-technology and web-based world, in which individuals are increasingly isolated.

Based on this observation, we see a need to look more closely at a definition for disgust in the consumption context. Our first goal is to create a current definition of disgust, and to describe its elicitors and how people respond to it. We propose that in addition to current definitions of disgust, feelings of disgust are also felt any time an individual's personal space and "ways-of-being" are invaded.

Proposed Studies

Consumer responses to feelings of disgust in consumption situations are not well understood. According to past research, and verified by our participants, disgust yields a passive response.

We are curious about how individuals respond to disgust in consumption situations, where the consumer has more control. Do disgusted consumers try to escape situations, or do they take corrective action? Does the response vary by the nature of the disgust elicitor? Do customers try to avoid socio-morally disgusting situations (i.e. avoid a store in which employees are not treated fairly) and inconveniences while taking action to have a core disgust elicitor fixed (i.e. have the dirty table top at a restaurant cleaned)? We propose two additional studies to investigate these questions.

Study 2

In Study 2 participants will read scenarios about situations that evoke either socio-moral or core disgust. Participants will complete a questionnaire about each situation to indicate the emotions they would feel in each situation, and how they believe they would respond.

In this study our goal is to clarify how different situations that elicit disgust are emotionally experienced by individuals. We aim to test the disgust elicitors that we uncovered in study 1 and verify that the elicitors of disgust have broadened. We are currently pre-testing our scenarios.

Study 3

Study 3 will manipulate similar scenarios to those used in Study 2 in a lab, to see if the reported responses in study 2 are in fact how people behave in the actual situation. The purpose of this study is to understand the passive nature of the responses to feelings of disgust.

Conclusion

Disgust is a core emotion that has known importance in marketing, but has not received much attention in the literature. With known effects on perceptions of advertisements, we believe that feelings of disgust also affect individuals in consumption situations. Disgust is an important, but understudied emotion in consumer behavior research. We hope to shed light on how this emotion functions in consumption situations. How often are you disgusted, and what do you do when you're a disgusted consumer?

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How and When Alphanumeric and Suggestive Brand Names Affect Consumer Preferences

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Abstract

Firms often use alphanumeric and suggestive brand names to influence consumers' preferences, yet how these influences occur has received limited attention. In two experiments, authors show that alphanumeric and suggestive brands can both mislead or guide consumer choices. Brand name effects on choice are moderated by information availability and need for cognition. Suggestive brands cue the attribute levels consumers ascribe to brands with missing information. Consumers use alphanumeric brands heuristically; higher numbers are perceived as associated with better products. High need for cognition consumers are less affected by misleading brands and attend more to guiding brands.

"Alphanumeric brand names include referential or nonsense mixtures of letters and digits, mixtures of words and digits, or any of the preceding where the figure is written out in word form." (Pavia and Costa 1993, pg. 85). There are millions of registered and unregistered alphanumeric trademarks in use (USPTO 2006). For some brands it is fairly simple to draw inferences about the product. For instance, BMW 3.25 refers to a 2.5 liter engine volume for 3 series and you can easily tell that 3.30 is a relatively better product due to its larger engine (3.0 liters). Correspondingly, Audi A8 and A6 indicate larger size and higher luxury level than A4 and A3. However, it is not always so easy to understand brand names. Mercedes has over ten letter classes resulting in a rather complicated set of some forty alphanumeric brand names and not many people can tell the difference among C, S or M class cars. Contrary to intuition, Nokia 6110 is inferior to Nokia 6102 and the average consumer has no idea what 6110 refers to.

Alignable difference is a piece of information for a choice option that has correspondence for other options (Markman and Medin 1995). It is usually weighted more heavily and is more likely to be used for justification of decisions. Alignable attributes tend to be comparable and quantitative (Nowlis and Simonson 1997). Most brand names do not fall into this category due to their qualitative nature. However, alphanumeric brand names may be considered as alignable, semi-quantitative and comparable due to their numerical features and their tendency to follow sequences. Consumers believe that number portions of alphanumeric brands have something to do with measurement of features or signify the product's relative placement in a sequence of products. Therefore, they favor large numbers inferring greater sophistication from them and believing that a product with a large model number in sequence is more recent (Pavia and Costa 1993). However, alphanumeric brands may have no meaning or they may be referring to internal design codes assigned at the discretion of the marketers (Boyd 1985). Depending on the branding strategy, alphanumeric brands may both guide or mislead consumer choices.

Another common type of brand name is suggestive brand names, which convey relevant attribute or benefit information in a particular product context (Keller et al. 1998). Suggestive brands are commonly meaningful words related in some way to product attributes or the problem to be solved (e.g. EverReady or DieHard batteries) (Folkes 2003). Various studies have shown that consumers make inferences

about product attributes using these brands (Peterson and Ross 1972). Firms may also assign suggestive brand names contradicting with their products or referring to an irrelevant attribute. If the suggested product benefit is difficult to observe before product trial, the negative effect on brand image will be delayed until after product experience (e.g. HeavyDuty brand aluminum foil tearing easily during use). In summary, we observe that suggestive brand names may help customers focus on various product attributes and help them make more accurate choices; they may also misdirect consumers to choose inferior products based on fanciful brand names.

In two experiments, we show that on average consumers picked the alphanumeric brands with larger numeric portions whether or not they were the best options. Therefore, alphanumeric brands guided (*misdirected*) choices when the number portions of brands were (*not*) actually related to product attributes or product advancements. On the other hand, suggestive brands guided (*misdirected*) choices when they referred to superior (*irrelevant or essentially inferior*) product attributes. In general, missing attribute information increased the effects of brand name on choice.

Need for cognition moderated the effects of these brand names. When a suggestive brand was misleading, it was incongruent with the general perception of the product or with the attribute it was suggesting (e.g. an *AbsoluteNoFee* calling card with a high fee). High NFCs were more likely to note the discrepancy whereas NFCs were more likely to get misdirected. For guiding suggestive brands, attribute information was congruent with the suggestions, and high NFCs were more likely to scrutinize this match and make more accurate choices. Alphanumeric brands equally guided and misled subjects with both high and low need for cognition. Low NFCs used the *the higher the better* heuristic, whereas high NFCs processed all the information and formed illusory correlations among alphanumeric brands and product attributes.

This research is an important attempt to discover the important effects of brand names on consumer choices. Despite their domination in technical product categories, alphanumeric brands have been largely neglected in past studies. Exploring the guidance roles and manipulative powers of brands will help us understand the underlying mechanism of consumer choices and especially inference making under incomplete information. With the increasing importance of technology nowadays, numerous electronics products are purchased over the internet by viewing product-attribute matrices on portals or e-merchants' websites that seldom have complete information (see Kivetz and Simonson 2000). The systematic effects of brand names on choice indicate potential problems for consumers and opportunities for marketers to manipulate choice sets.

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Choice With Inference is Different from Choice without Inference

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Abstract

Some researchers argued that consumers rarely form inferences. Others proposed ways for inference formation using: within-brand attribute information; other brands in the choice set (across-brand information); or average values. The authors found that choices made with and without inferences were significantly different from each other. Making inferences reduced choice difficulty and indecisiveness (choosing none of the options) and increased the attractiveness of chosen options. Contrary to the averaging hypothesis, inferences were different from mean attribute values. Supporting across-brand processing, inferences made for different attributes of multiple brands were significantly correlated. Need for cognition played a moderating role in inference making.

Products and services are seldom described completely, therefore, consumers often need to form inferences that go beyond the information given (Kardes et al 2004). Some researchers argued that consumers rarely form inferences (Simmons and Lynch 1991). Others found that inferences for non-visible attributes occur on the basis of available attributes or via various rules of thumb (e.g. adding or averaging). Most found that inferred value of a missing value is often discounted (Huber & McCann 1982; Ford & Smith, 1987; Johnson & Levin, 1985). A comparative judgment context increases the salience of the missing information resulting in more spontaneous inference formation (Sanbonmatsu et al., 1997). In a recent study of choice under incomplete information, subjects faced with binary choice task with missing information reported making spontaneous inferences. Kivetz and Simonson (2000) argued that consumers might treat

missing values in a way that supports their preferences or tentative hypotheses. Following the motivated reasoning and motivated inference theories (Kunda 1990; and Pyszczynski & Greenberg 1987), authors explained that people who are motivated to arrive at a conclusion construct a justification, a rationale for it and they search for evidence to support it.

Linear aggregation models (Fiedler 1966) predict illusory correlation as an inferential bias that arises even in the absence of motivational or memory-based mechanisms (Kardes et al. 2004). Correlation-based inferences for missing attribute information may be heavily based on known information about other attributes of the focal brand (known as same-brand, within-brand or attribute-based processing-e.g. Ford & Smith, 1987; Johnson & Levin, 1985); on other brands in the product category or choice set (known as other-brand, across-brand or alternative-based processing-e.g. Huber & McCann, 1982; Ross & Creyer, 1992) or on both (e.g. Lee and Olshavsky 1997). We propose that when consumers are explicitly asked to make inferences, they will engage in a different process and their choices will be affected by the values they infer. Choices made after inferences will be different compared to choices made without inferences.

In study 1, missing attribute information and inference making were manipulated. The choice sets consisted of product-attribute matrices for three product/service categories. A different attribute was missing for each of the three options in all product categories. Participants were randomly assigned to two conditions. Those in the *No Inference* condition were simply asked to make choices, whereas the ones in the *Inference* condition were asked to make inferences for missing attribute values before making choices. Results indicated that making inferences changed the nature of decisions. Choices made after inferences were significantly different from choices made without inferences. Assigning different values to missing attributes significantly decreased perceived choice difficulty and increased attractiveness of chosen options. In addition, inferences made across brands for different attributes were significantly correlated with each other. This finding was in support of the alternative-based correlation inducement (also known as cross-brand or other-brand processing) earlier proposed by Huber & McCann (1982) and Ross & Creyer (1992).

In study 2, an identical design was used with one exception. Besides the three options in each choice set, a “no choice option” was added, such that participants also had the alternative of not choosing any of the options as in real purchase situations. In addition to the replication of results from study 1, analysis showed that making inferences significantly decreased the selection of the “no choice option” (indecisiveness) as well as reducing perceived difficulty and risks of decisions. This effect was prevalent for all product categories.

It has been shown that at least a moderate level of cognition is typically required for correlation-based inference formation (Lee & Olshavsky, 1997) and when cognitive resources are required, spontaneous inference formation is more likely, if the motivation and the ability to deliberate are high (Kardes et al. 2004). Another important finding was that inferences were significantly moderated by need for cognition (NFC). High NFCs made more conservative assumptions regardless of product or attribute types.

While some researchers have argued that consumers do not make inferences, there have been numerous attempts to explain the underlying mechanism and heuristics for making inferences. Past studies have forced participants to make inferences about single attributes for one of the options in the choice set. Our research expanded these by including different missing attributes for multiple options; exploring the effects of multiple inferences; increasing the realism by including a no choice option; and demonstrating the differences in choices made with and without inferences.

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Mental Visual Imagery, Authenticity and Consumers' Attitude Formation towards Licensed Brands

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Licensing is no longer viewed merely as technology transfer or modes of entry. Firms are now licensing assets in forms of brands, designs, trademarks and etc. Many researchers (e.g. Holt 2002; Kozinets 2002; Thompson et al. 2006) have noted that such commercialization undermines the value of the brands. However some examples suggest differently. Haier, China's largest home electronics manufacturer began its ascent by licensing refrigerator technology and the brand from German Liebherr Corp. in 1985 with the original brand name of "Liebherr". Sanyo Fashion House Inc., a subsidiary of Sanyo Shokai in Japan, is licensed to manufacture and distribute "blue label" Burberry products in Japan since 1980. Despite their licensee image, they have both generated strong domestic sales and built strong and positive awareness internationally.

In this paper, we ask the question "when and how licensed brands achieve the same or even higher value than original brands?" and we reason that consumers' assessment of authenticity may hold the key to this question. Most researchers agree that authenticity is not an attribute inherent in an object and is better understood and assessed by a particular evaluator in its particular context (Grayson and Martinec 2004). However, little research has studied the antecedents and consequences of authenticity. This is particularly relevant in brand licensing, as the cues for communicating authenticity of a licensed brand will help consumers' assessment of the value of the licensed brand, and these cues may or may not be related to the attributes of the original brands. Thus this research proposes that there exist multiple dimensions of authenticity as perceived by consumers in the context of brand licensing.

Next, we examine literature in mental visual imagery as one of the mental processes that consumers use to make sense of cues (Richardson, 1999). Assessment of authenticity involves a complex perceptual process (Belk and Costa 1998; Pen˜aloza 2001). A person construes the cues via the formation of mental visual image before further deriving his/her perception about the authenticity of a licensed brand. Finally, we examine consumers' attitude formation toward the licensed brands as consequences of their perception of authenticity.

Indexical and Iconic Authenticity

Grayson and Martinec (2004) identified two dimensions of authenticity based on the semiotic model developed by Peirce (1998): the *indexical authenticity* and *iconic authenticity*. Indexical authenticity refers to the physical or psychological link which distinguishes the "real thing" from its copies (Grayson and Shulman 2000). Iconic authenticity refers to the preexisting knowledge or expectations which a person perceives something being similar to something else (Grayson and Martinec 2004). In order for the licensed brand to be perceived as authentic, the cues for communicating authenticity are crucial, and this process of understanding and specifying these cues is called the negotiation of meaning (Grayson and Martinec, 2004).

Mental Visual Imagery

Past research (e.g. Adeyemo, 1990; Dahl and Chattopadhyay, 1999; MacInnis and Price, 1987) has shown that mental visual imagery is one of the mental processes which one uses to make sense of cues. Mental imagery is a form of internal representation in which information about the appearance of physical objects, events and scenes can be depicted and manipulated (Richardson 1999, P. 3). Research in marketing has distinguished different types of visual mental imagery: the image based on *memory* and *imagination* (Dahl and Chattopadhyay, 1999; MacInnis and Price 1987). These authors define memory image as the event or occasion that a person has personally experienced or observed whereas imagination imagery is a new, never-before-experienced event.

The Link between Authenticity and Mental Visual Imagery

Peirce (1998) explains that to view something as an icon, one usually creates a "composite photograph" (Grayson and Martinec 2004). For instance, to view something as iconically authentic, a perceiver must have some preexisting knowledge or expectations of something being similar to something else. Thus, memory imagery can be interpreted as the cue which links consumers preexisting knowledge toward the perception of iconic authenticity about the licensed brand. For example, when consumers encounter a licensed brand, they form image (i.e. original brand) from memory based on their existing knowledge or previous experience of the brand. Iconic authenticity may be achieved when cues are congruent with their memory. Therefore:

H1: Consumers' memory imagery is positively correlated with perceived iconic authenticity.

Imagination imagery involves the creation of previously unseen image and the capacity of imagination imagery determines one's ability to negotiate meaning out of novel information (Adeyemo 1990). To view something as an index, a perceiver must believe it actually has the "factual" and "spatio-temporal link" that is claimed (Grayson and Shulman 2000). Imagination imagery can be interpreted as acceptance of marketing communications from the licensee toward the perception of indexical authenticity by consumers. Therefore:

H2: Consumers' imagination imagery is positively correlated with perceived indexical authenticity.

H3: The more the licensed brand is perceived with iconic cues, the more licensed brand will be perceived as authentic.

H4: The more the licensed brand is perceived with indexical cues, the more licensed brand will be perceived as authentic.

Although both iconic and indexical cues are likely to encourage consumers to believe that a licensed brand is authentic, iconic cues are likely to be more powerful because consumers possess some preexisting knowledge about the licensed brand or perceive similarities with something they are familiar with. Therefore:

H5: Iconic authenticity has greater influence than indexical authenticity for consumers' assessment of authenticity.

Finally we examine whether assessment of authenticity will in turn influence consumers' attitude toward the licensed brand. Attitude towards a brand can be defined as consumer's overall brand evaluation (Aaker and Keller, 1990). Cognition is part of the belief formation and the salience of beliefs in turn form attitude (Ajzen, 2002). Assessment of authenticity is one type of cognitive associations assisting consumers to negotiate the meaning of brand licensing. Therefore:

H6: Perceived authenticity is positively correlated with consumers' attitude formation toward licensed brands.

Methods and Measures

There are three stages of data collection in this research: exploratory focus group studies, controlled experiments and survey. The focus group studies were completed. The purpose of the focus group studies is twofold. Firstly, we hoped to gain deeper understanding about how consumers perceive the connections among our three focal concepts and to develop a set of hypotheses. Secondly, it would help with the development of relevant measures to be used in the controlled experiments.

Exploratory Focus Group studies

The focus group interviews were carried out to ensure that the dimensionality of the concepts can be discovered as exhaustive as possible. Three focus group interviews were designed and conducted based on the guideline from Krueger (1994) and Yin (1984). Twenty-six informants (20 to 35 years of age) were recruited from both undergraduate and postgraduate students in a west midland university in the United Kingdom. Each focus group lasted around 60 minutes. The informants, 51% of which are female, have Chinese origin. These informants were recruited for the consistency with second stage of data collection in China.

The focus group results were content analyzed according to the guideline of Yin (1984). The preliminary results are the following:

- (a) 22 of our informants pointed out that brand licensing activities were well covered in the Chinese media and were aware of the amount of brand licensing activities in the Chinese market.
- (b) 20 of them stressed that authenticity was an important issue when facing licensed brands.
- (c) 21 informants agreed that when facing licensed brand, they drew inferences from both their past experiences (memory) and their assessment based on the actual licensed brand product they encountered (imagination).
- (d) Based on their past experience with the original brand, majority our informants indicated that quality, country of origin, and trademark were first to come through their mind.
- (e) The novelty of the licensed product, level of involvement of the brand owner, and the distribution channel of the product helped with their assessment of authenticity of the licensed brand.

The focus group results shown that, firstly, the distinction between the use of memory and imagination imagery is important to assess authenticity of licensed brands. Secondly, there exist different antecedents for the two dimensions of authenticity. Two 7-point authenticity measures were developed based on focus group findings:

- (a) Indexical authenticity in brand licensing: novelty, level of involvement of the brand owner, and perception about distribution.
- (b) Iconic authenticity in brand licensing: quality, country of origin, and trademark.

Control Experiments

To examine the use of different imagery types upon the perceptions of authenticity (H1 and H2), the two experimental factors (memory and imagination imagery) will be manipulated in a between subjects design. One hundred and fifty students participated in the study are to be Chinese –origin from an UK university. Chinese market is chosen because of its market size and rapid growth in licensing activities (LIMA 2005).

The independent Variables will be the visual mental imagery types which will be manipulated by instructing participants to rely on images based on either memory or imagination during the experiments. Experimental design will consist of a 2 (imagery type) x 2 (authenticity type) + 1 control mixed model. Imagery types are between-subjects variables, with subjects exposed to a set of either memory or imagination stimuli. In the memory imagery condition, participants will be given a booklet containing a brief description of memory imagery and information regarding the fictitious brand. Participants will be asked to "dig" into their memory and visualize similar brand and product in their daily life when filling out questionnaire on the perception of authenticity. In the imagination imagery condition, participants will be given a booklet containing a brief description of imagination imagery and the same information as in the memory condition regarding the fictitious brand. Participants will be asked to visualize the fictitious brand based on the information provided in the booklet when filling out questionnaire on the perception of authenticity. The measurements for manipulation check will be adopted from Dahl and Chattopadhyay's (1999) 7-point scale. Two 7-point authenticity measures were developed based on focus group findings: (a) Indexical authenticity in brand licensing: novelty, level of involvement of the brand owner, and perception about distribution. (b) Iconic authenticity in brand licensing: quality, country of origin, and trademark. The dependent variable is attitude toward the licensed brand. To measure attitude toward licensed brand, we will adopt Kind and Smith's (2001) 7-point semantic differential scale.

Survey

To examine the effect of perceived authenticity on consumers' attitude formation (H3, H4, H5, and H6), a set of questionnaire will be administrated on-line. Real licensed brands instead of fictitious brands will be employed as subject of study. The original brands will

be selected based on Aaker and Keller's (1990) criteria for parent brand selection. Brands will be selected of being relevant to the subjects, generally perceived as high quality, able to elicit relatively specific associations. Specifically, the chosen brands should have not been largely licensed yet, so that it can avoid the impact of over-licensed situations (i.e. noise generated by multiple licensees). Also, the product category should be new for a given brand. A total of four brands from the same product category (to control for the effect of product heterogeneity on the results) will be selected and each of the two brands maintaining distinct indexical or iconic elements. The questionnaire will contain measures of perceived authenticity developed in control experimental study. To measure attitude toward licensed brand, we adopt the scale recommended by Kind and Smith (2001). All measurement items in this research will be using a 7-point semantic differential scale.

Concluding Remarks

This research intends to make three related contributions. Firstly, we attempt to develop measures for authenticity in brand licensing. Secondly, we will empirically test whether mental visual imagery influence consumers' perception of authenticity. Thirdly, we are to test which types of authenticity determines consumers' attitude formation of licensed brands.

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Ambivalence as an Inoculating Agent: A Built-In Defense Against Attitude Change

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Overview

The researchers conducted a multi-phase experiment to analyze the effect of initial attitude ambivalence on subsequent attitude change. Regression analyses revealed that subjects were less likely to change their attitude after reading new counter-attitudinal information when their initial attitudes were characterized by high levels of ambivalence ($\beta = -.154$; $p < .05$) indicating the presence of inoculation. These results suggest that ambivalence does not always lead to attitude change, and ambivalent consumer attitudes are actually more resistant to new, potentially biasing information.

Conceptual Background

An ambivalent attitude is an attitude fed by competing inputs that influence overall evaluation in opposite directions. Previous research on attitude ambivalence suggests that it is an aversive condition that people attempt to ameliorate (Lavine, Thomsen, Zanna and Borgida 1998, Nordgren, van Harreveld and van der Pligt 2006) and that it has a negative effect on customer satisfaction (Olsen, Wilcox and Olsson 2005). Indeed, most research on ambivalence has studied the effects of attitudinal ambivalence toward ego-involving socio-political issues, situations in which ambivalence is often aversive (Harreveld and van der Pligt 2006; Hass, Katz, Rizzo, Bailey and Moore 1992). However, in consumer contexts, it is not clear that ambivalence necessarily produces an aversive state. For example, people may possess positive beliefs about Gucci products, negative beliefs about Gucci users, and both positive and negative overall beliefs about the Gucci brand. Although this creates ambivalence about Gucci, many consumers will not have enough of a personal stake in Gucci for this ambivalence to produce cognitive discomfort. We argue that when ambivalence is not aversive, it may actually inoculate a person from change, by providing the consumer with enough data, positive or negative, to refute any presentation of counter-attitudinal information (McGuire, 1961).

One can characterize ambivalence as a self-generated two-sided argument, similar to the research on “inoculation” developed by McGuire (1961, 1985 and Watts and McGuire 1964). In an inoculation procedure, relatively weak content that refutes a held argument is presented and this causes the recipient to strengthen defensive arguments supporting his or her previous attitude. In turn, these new defensive arguments bolster the attitude against subsequent refutational content that is stronger than the initial material. This basic inoculation effect has been demonstrated in response to comparative advertising, especially when the subject is highly involved in the decision process (Pfau, Parrott and Lindquist 1992.) Previous research suggests that a two-sided argument is more likely to trigger the defenses of the recipient than a one-sided message (Hass and Linder 1972; Kamins and Asseal 1987; Burgoon and Pfau 1995). Instead of presenting an ambivalent argument, our subjects will be working with a pre-existing ambivalent attitude and we anticipate that this will work as a similar defense to attitude change.

Method

Participants evaluated six real brands in a multi-phase experiment. In the initial phase, brand attitude ambivalence was assessed and initial brand attitude was collected. Attitude ambivalence was collected using a Griffin measure and brand attitude was collected with an 11-point scale ranging from -5 to $+5$. In the final phase, participants read scenarios that presented new negative information about three of the brands and new positive information about the other three brands. The order of the scenarios, the valence of the scenarios and the order of the brands were fully counterbalanced.

After reading the scenario for each brand, participants responded to five measures, influence of the scenario, attitude change, purchase intention change, attitude toward the brand and purchase intentions.

Analysis and Results

Separate analyses were conducted for observations in which scenario information was consistent or inconsistent with the initial brand evaluation on the 11-point scale (-5 to $+5$). Scores from -5 to -1 were coded as negative, 1 to 5 were positive, and scores of zero (222 cases) were not used in the analysis.

To test the effect of inconsistent information on brand attitudes, regression analysis was used, with the influence of the scenario as the dependent variable. In addition to ambivalence, independent variables included dummy variables for the type of scenario and brand, individual difference measures including need for cognition, advertising skepticism, and need for attitude consistency.

When exposed to counter-attitudinal information, participants reported less attitude change when their initial attitude was characterized by greater levels of ambivalence ($\beta = -.154$, p -value = .013). This finding stands in contrast to prior research that has argued that an increase in the level of ambivalence would lead to a greater change in attitude.

Discussion

Ambivalence is a common occurrence among consumers. Often the best product experiences are attenuated by some flaw. This research suggests that we, as consumer, have accepted ambivalence and do not allow it to sway our opinions in a more univalent direction. By already possessing counter-factual knowledge, ambivalence creates an inoculation against any new information. Further research could review the effect of visceral brand identification (Apple Computers, Harley-Davidson) on consumer ambivalence.

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Sacred Songs, Secular Words: Discourse on the Consumption of Religious Music

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Extended Abstract

The long withstanding debates between sacred and profane have been documented (Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry 1989; O'Guinn and Belk 1989; Arnould and Price 2004), although the sacred in consumer research has been predominantly studied as a metaphoric stance rather than specifically about the 'Sacred' per se (Iacobucci 2001). Secularisation theory argues for the decline in sacredness and religion amidst the backdrop of modernity and progress (Martin 2005), while attributing its replacement with secular, material and spiritual pursuits. This theory neither concurs with the continued popularity of Pentecostal (Charismatic) churches (Anderson 2004), nor the growth of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM, Powell 2002). In an attempt to study the inter-relationships between sacred (expressed through religious music) and secular (expressed through consumer culture), a discourse analysis into Christian music is conducted in this research.

Music, like advertisement, is a cultural text which is an important medium in reading the audience (O'Donohoe 2000). Through the language of songs, music like an advertisement text informs and expresses meanings that are not only in alignment with the targeted audience but the socio-historic conditions of a society. As a religious product, it is a site where ideology circulates as well as a mirror to represent the sacred which is highly visible, audible, saleable and malleable to socio-cultural forces. Music style is never neutral, but is organically wed to the socio-cultural setting in which the music is created and developed (Romanowski 1992) to convey certain meanings to a particular audience.

Studies that relate music and discourse include a reading of Madonna, by Bradby (1992) where her songs, music video clips and news about her as reported in the media, were analysed. Through the song 'Material Girl', discourses of materialism and maternalism, were expressed as advancement in female liberation. Liederman (2004) in a study of 'The Free Monks', a Greek rock band of black-robed Orthodox monks and ordained priests was analysed against the backdrop of the social, cultural and political role of the Orthodox Church in Greece. The 'singers' perform in an MTV-style video, singing modern rock music accompanied by live concerts and initial albums that reached gold and platinum status in sales in Greek pop charts. This phenomenon of 'sacred songs with a secular beat' can be seen as one example of a mutation that has occurred in the Christian discourse as a result of alignment with changes in the macro-societal shifts, but more is needed to understand the intricacies of this alignment in another setting.

A cross section of Pentecostal and Anglican songs dating from 1990–2005 was selected, including traditional hymns. I used close reading (Scott 1994; Stern 1989) to study the lyrics and explored the meaning expressed through the language of songs. Music as an expression of worship has a visual representation in the way it is played, performed and consumed. This produces an assortment of representations and discourses which requires a marriage of visual, audio, and textual data. The visual materials included pictures of the music performance, the congregation, the architectural space, images of the people (audience, song performers, and church leaders), pictures of artefacts produced by the church, and video recordings of services and music events.

Discourse analysis of the data suggests four dominant themes or discourses: 'Empowerment', 'Tradition', 'Today' and 'Individualisation'. There is a theme of the empowered self in the Pentecostal songs as the 'I' is empowered to 'change the world today', to 'move mountains', and to believe that 'life could be all that you want it to be'. Both the 'can be' and 'can do' attitude is an attractive appeal that aligns not only with the so-called 'Prosperity Gospel' Pentecostal churches tend to preach, but blurs with new age spirituality that focuses on potential of the 'self' (Rindfleish 2005). Empowerment is also expressed in the form of blessings, favour, miracles and an answer to dreams.

The discourse on tradition is apparent in Anglican songs and hymns. Expressed in the form of worship, reverence to God, collective nature of the church family, humility, obedience, reference to sin and heaven provide the language in constructing what appears to be a traditional Christian discourse on the sacred. This is in contrast to the 'Today' discourse which construct sacred meanings to a present day context framed in a 'here and now' (as opposed to heaven/after life/eternal) timeframe situating the blessings, dreams coming true, favour and miracles to happen today. This suggests a reconciling of sacred constructions with the secular existence of people in the current world. There is no focus on 'suffering' in the present and reaping joy in the future but it's about harvesting and living to the full *now*. The sacred gets expressed to a 'present help in my time of need' which clearly is situated in the secular.

The 'individuation' discourse express the self (I, me, my) in the songs, especially prominent in Pentecostal songs. Moreover, these words outnumbered those that feature God (Lord, God, Jesus, Father). The word 'you' was evident, although it is not always directed to God but the audience. This different usage of the pronoun 'you' to refer to the one who is being addressed illustrate a language that is couched in a personal relationship as opposed to 'thou' in a traditional hymn. This difference illuminates interesting points of departures between Pentecostal songs and hymns. The intimacy of 'you and I' introduces a spirit of closeness, warmth, and approachability that is more couched in newer forms of spirituality rather than religion. Also, this is interesting to have emerged out of this genre of music as typically hymns are *about* God, while this is directed *to* God or the audience. The notion of ownership ('my God', 'my Saviour') is also evident.

Whilst sacred discourses to do with Christianity are apparent, this is mixed with other secular discourses in the case of contemporary Pentecostal songs. If music is a mirror to meaning and audience values, self-empowerment and individuation of religion framed in the context of 'today' are discourses that reflect the shift in socio-cultural conditions of a modern society. This can be aligned to Inglehart's (1997) post-materialist values which highlight self expression and self empowerment as prevalent in highly developed societies where existential security already exists. Because physical security is already adequate in highly developed societies, the discourse on the sacred appears to play a more self-serving role framed in current consumer culture. Whilst secularisation theory posits a decline in religion at the macro level, the popularity of a certain 'version' of religious form and products suggest at the meso level a resurgence of 'sacred interest'. It appears that a process of appropriation (Thompson and Haytko 1997; Cova and Cova 2000) has taken place whereby religious music is able to align itself to changing socio-cultural shifts to incorporate both sacred and secular discourses into its contents and meaning. This appears to be the version that resonates with current religious consumers. Through analysing the genre, lyrics and aesthetic appeal of a religious song, layers of meaning are 'deconstructed' to reveal an 'acculturation of discourses'. Sacred songs with secular discourses offer the other face to the sacralisation process (Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry 1989), which arguably implies the possible existence of sacred and secular as *yin and yang*.

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An Examination of Recall Measures of Sponsorship Awareness

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Extended Abstract

With growth in sponsorship-linked marketing expenditure continuing to increase each year (IEG 2003), consumers are exposed to an ever larger number of brand names in association with various events. In many cases there may be a number of brands linked with a single event, and in some cases several of these brands may be from a single brand category. In addition, many brands may be linked with multiple events. What must be considered when seeking to measure sponsorship awareness in these situations is how the method of measurement may influence results, particularly with regard to the direction of cueing in cued recall.

Due to the nature of memory associations, the associative strength from a brand to an event may not always be the same as the associative strength from an event to a brand. To illustrate, consider a situation where a brand such as Gatorade sponsors an event like the *International Relay Run*. Asking which brand is the sponsor of the International Relay Run as opposed to which event did Gatorade sponsor, may not produce the same proportion of correct responses. This may particularly be the case when a similar competitor brand (e.g., Powerade) is also salient in the mind of the consumer, and when the event name is given as the recall cue. Not all awareness measures provide consistent access to memory, and deciding which measure to use may depend largely on the situation, and what information is sought by the researcher.

Tripodi et al. (2003) have suggested that variation in memory prompts can affect sponsorship awareness responses. Using a telephone survey they reported that the sequence in which memory prompts (event name, brand name, category label) are given to respondents can affect overall awareness measurements. Specifically, in their study respondents prompted with the event name had the highest level of initial recall, but the lowest overall recall after follow-up prompts (including a recognition-type prompt).

In four experiments we examined the nature of recall in measuring sponsorship awareness. We varied recall methods by cueing with the event name, the brand name, the brand category, and we also considered responses using a free recall method. Participants received exposure to sponsorship stimuli using Johar and Pham's (1999) press release paradigm, where brands were real and events were fictitious. All press releases involved congruent sponsor-event relationships and all contained a statement articulating the sponsor's reason for undertaking the sponsorship. Additionally, as a within subjects variable, half of the press release statements mentioned a competitor within the same brand category while half made no such mention. Participants in each experiment were presented with 12 press releases and completed a 10 minute distracter puzzle before beginning the memory task.

Results showed recall differences depending on the cue utilized. In the first experiment, when cueing with the event name, results showed that recall of the sponsoring brand was similar both when a competitor was mentioned in the press release and when no competitor was mentioned ($M_s = .708$ and $.767$ respectively). Overall recall here was 73.8%. In the second experiment however, when cueing with the brand category, recall of the sponsoring brand was adversely impacted by the presence of a competitor. Here there was a marginally significant difference between the competitor present and competitor absent conditions, $F(1, 19) = 4.061$, $p = .058$ ($M_s = .775$ and $.850$ respectively), with overall brand recall at 81.25%.

In the third experiment which used brand cues, we provided participants with either the sponsor or competitor name and examined event recall responses. This was done for both competitor present and competitor absent conditions. Here, as might be expected, there was a main effect of cue, $F(1, 39) = 72.335$, $p < .001$, such that sponsor cues ($M = .538$) were more effective in eliciting the event name than were the competitor cues ($M = .146$). There was no overall main effect of competitor presence, but there was a significant interaction between cue and competitor presence, $F(1, 39) = 5.906$, $p = .020$. Marginal means indicated that event recall was lower in the competitor present condition than in the competitor absent condition for the sponsor cue ($M_s = .483$ and $.591$ respectively), but event recall was higher in the competitor present condition than the competitor absent condition for the competitor cue ($M_s = .183$ and $.108$ respectively). This indicates that interference occurred in the competitor present condition using the sponsor cue, and that cueing with a mentioned competitor can elicit event recall. Interestingly, this result also shows that even if no competitor is mentioned, cueing with a market rival of the sponsor can nonetheless elicit memory for the event.

In contrast to the cued recall experiments, in the fourth experiment where free recall was used, a greater number of events were recalled from the competitor present as opposed to the competitor absent condition, $F(1, 19) = 5.431$, $p = .031$ ($M_s = .650$ and $.508$ respectively). Similarly, a marginally greater number of sponsors were recalled from the competitor present as opposed to the competitor absent condition, $F(1, 19) = 4.108$, $p = .057$, ($M_s = .700$ and $.567$ respectively). There was no significant difference between the level of recall of events as opposed to the level of recall of sponsors ($M_s = .579$ and $.633$ respectively).

With sponsorship-linked marketing expenditure rising each year, it is becoming increasingly important to have a clear understanding of whether the techniques used to measure sponsorship effectiveness are appropriate. For those interested in measuring sponsorship awareness effects, what this study shows is that knowing a brand name can prompt memory for an event, and knowing that an event name can prompt memory for a brand, are not necessarily the same thing. In attempting to assess sponsorship awareness, researchers must first consider the nature of what they want to know in order to be able to ask the right question.

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Developing a Deeper Understanding of Scarcity: Contextual and Individual Influences on Demand Scarcity

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Abstract

In this paper, we investigate mechanisms associated with scarcity resulting from public demand not met by supply: demand scarcity. We examine individual and contextual influences on demand scarcity. In four studies we find: 1) Consumers use visual scarcity cues to infer information about products; 2) Consumers' dependence on demand scarcity as a heuristic is particularly effective in low-involvement choices; 3) "Need for uniqueness" independently influences subjects' use of scarcity information and their choices about scarce products, and 4) The effect of uniqueness decreases as the ubiquity of demand scarce products is made salient.

Aristotle summarized the underpinnings of scarcity when he stated, "What is rare is a greater good than what is plentiful." This phrase captures the fundamental elements of commodity theory (Brock 1968) and expresses the robust effect that scarcity has on human behavior. Marketers, having reached the same conclusion (albeit more recently), leverage consumers' desire for scarce products by implying that access to them is limited. Implications of scarcity embedded in advertising language like "time's running out," "limited edition," or "while supplies last" impel consumer action.

Though well-known and intuitive, scarcity is not a simple construct; research in consumer behavior has highlighted a variety of psychological mechanisms that give rise to scarcity effects (see Lynn 1992). A few examples include reactance, whereby people resist restrictions on their choice (Brehm 1966), social proof (coined "bandwagon reasoning") in which consumers rely on others' opinions as a cue for the value of a product or service (Worschel, 1975), and uniqueness, the innate human drive to attain social status by possessing a largely unavailable resource (Veblen 1904).

Though the literature effectively demonstrates types of scarcity and underlying mechanisms, to date there is no overall framework that discusses which mechanisms correlate to specific scarcity appeals. We are initiating the formulation of such a framework with such questions such as: What are the relative effects of reactance and uniqueness for time scarcity appeals (e.g., "time's running out")? And, to what extent, if any, does social proof influence supply-generated scarcity (e.g., "limited edition")? In this paper, we focus our attention on mechanisms associated with scarcity resulting from public demand not met by supply: demand scarcity.

While it has been assumed that people typically use scarcity information as a heuristic cue for value, recent research challenges that assumption (Brannon and Brock 2001). We contend that consumers *do* use demand scarcity information as a heuristic. We further argue that a social-proof mechanism drives the effect of demand-scarce information, and test Worshel et al. (1975) "bandwagon reasoning" which predicts that scarcity resulting from public demand informs the value of the product. In other words, consumers use relative demand to assess a product's worth by inferring that fellow consumers' demand implies value.

We also examine how presumptions of uniqueness influence the effects of demand scarcity. Consumer need for uniqueness is defined as "an individual's pursuit of 'different-ness' relative to others... achieved through the acquisition, utilization, and disposition of consumer goods for the purpose of developing and enhancing one's personal and social identity" (Tian et al. 2001). Since demand-scarce products endow their possessor with uniqueness, we hypothesize that consumers who desire such personal uniqueness will be more likely to desire products that are highly desired by others (and thus scarce). However, the reality of scarcity is realistically moderated by how much of the product already has been sold in the marketplace. When a product already is owned by many others, those concerned with uniqueness should no longer desire it.

Our initial study establishes that people use visual scarcity cues to infer information about products. We presented participants with a hypothetical shopping scenario in which they were asked to choose between two clocks. One clock (the target) was pictured as either scarce or abundant. The comparison clock was always pictured as abundant. We crossed scarcity with the manner of display. In display conditions, clocks were arranged like a typical display of merchandise; in inventory, clocks were arranged like "backstock" (i.e. inventory a store holds of a product). We found that scarce clocks were preferred to abundant clocks, but only when clocks were shown as "inventory". We surmised that participants were using inventory information coupled with scarcity as a cue for public demand.

Study 2 supports the idea that people use scarcity information as a heuristic. We used the "scarce inventory" condition from Study 1 and gave participants either information that the clock was selling quickly (demand manipulation) *or* no information (control). We crossed the manipulation of information with level of involvement, where participants were either highly involved in the choice (they could receive the clock as a prize) or less involved (the choice was hypothetical). We found participants who were highly involved in the choice use demand information significantly less than those who were less involved. In short, we show that consumers' dependence on scarcity as a heuristic is particularly effective in low-involvement choices.

In Study 3 we test how a need for uniqueness influences preferences for scarce items. We primed participants with either uniqueness-related or conformity-related information. Then we showed participants the "scarce inventory" condition from Study 2, again mentioning that the clocks were selling quickly, and asked respondents which clock they preferred. We found the uniqueness prime increased preferences for a demand-scarce clock. The results indicate that consumers predisposed to maintain their sense of uniqueness were more susceptible to social proof cues.

Finally, in Study 4 we tested the prediction that the influence of uniqueness found in Study 3 could be attenuated with the ubiquity of product ownership. We replicated Study 3's effect of uniqueness on the (demand) condition which stated that the clocks were selling quickly. We also added a condition that told participants that the clocks were selling quickly and *many have already been sold* (demand ubiquity condition). Our results indicated that the preference for the demand scarce clock was diminished when the clock had already been sold to many others. Similarly, participants primed with conformity showed an increase in their preference for the clock that was owned by many.

We present contextual and individual factors that contribute to consumers' responses to demand scarcity cues. The results corroborate the notion that consumers use visual scarcity to infer product worth and by extension choose scarce products. Moreover, consumers

motivated to maintain their uniqueness are more susceptible to social proof cues. Finally, the results confirm that demand scarcity is moderated (for participants who are motivated to maintain uniqueness) by whether subjects have information confirming that the product is scarce because many have units already been sold thus implying the ubiquity of the product.

How Consumers Are Affected by the Framing of Numerical Information

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Studies on consumer judgments have demonstrated that consumers may consider two options with different attribute levels (e.g., apartments that are 20 minutes versus 15 minutes away from campus) to be vastly different or vastly similar depending on contexts. In particular, research has thus far shown that contextual factors such as the range of the attribute levels (e.g., Gravetter & Lockhead, 1973; Janiszewski & Lichtenstein, 1999; Mellers & Cooke, 1994; Yeung & Soman, 2005), the frequency of the attribute levels (e.g., Niedrich, Sharma, & Wedell, 2001; Parducci, 1965), and their relative spacing (e.g., Cooke & Mellers, 1998; Mellers & Birnbaum, 1982; Wedell, 1994) can influence our perceptions. While these studies noted how the comparisons of two options are altered by changing their peripheral context—that is, what other options are presented in addition to the two target alternatives for comparison—few have attempted to address how our perceptions are shaped by the focal context—that is, the presentation of the two target alternatives themselves.

We proposed that for attribute dimensions that can be described in two equivalent frames (e.g., printing reliability vs. failure rate), the different attribute values associated with each frame (e.g., 97% reliability vs. 3% failure rate) could affect how we compare two options. Our hypothesis is that the presentation format of attribute information can affect the perceived difference between two options. That is, the perceived difference is amplified when the attribute is described in a large ratio frame than when it is described in a small ratio frame.

Two experiments were designed to test our hypothesis. In the experiments, the undergraduate students participated on a voluntary basis and were randomly assigned to one of the two presentation formats (small vs. large ratio). They were given a scenario that described two options differing on two attributes with a trade-off. The scenarios were essentially identical between the two conditions, except that the label and the numerical values of one of the attributes changed according to the presentation manipulations. After reviewing the information, the participants reported their evaluations of each option on each attribute dimension and their preferences for the two options.

In Experiment 1, we showed that when a pair of options are presented in a frame with attribute values in large ratio (e.g., printer A has a failure rate of 3% vs. printer B has a failure rate of 9%), consumers report greater differences in their attribute judgments than when the same pair of options are cast in a frame with attribute values in small ratio (e.g., printer A has printing reliability of 97% vs. printer B has printing reliability of 91%). Moreover, we also found that the preference between two options with trade-offs is altered by the ways the attribute information are presented. Generally speaking, we found that an option is more likely to be chosen when its superior attribute is presented in a large ratio format than when it is presented in a small ratio format.

In Experiment 2, we ruled out an alternative explanation of negativity bias. That is, the effects of presentation format on attribute perceptions are replicated even when positive attribute label is paired with large ratio frame and negative attribute label is paired with small ratio frame. Therefore, our findings cannot be explained by the valence of the attribute label.

In sum, we demonstrated that the same pair of options may appear similar or different depending on how their attribute information is presented. This contextual effect differs from others in that it does not require alternation in the options involved in the evaluation environment.

Contribution of the Concept of Identity to the Understanding of Responsible Consumer Behavior: Application to the Consumption of Fair Trade Products

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The responsible consumption is not easy to understand: it is a complex phenomenon and characterized by a large diversity of practices (Shaw, 2000; Newholm, 1999). Thus, I find it necessary to propose my own definition of responsible consumption as being '*the set of voluntary acts, situated in the sphere of consumption, achieved from the awareness of consequences judged as negatives of consumption on the outside world to oneself, these consequences raising therefore not from the functionality of the purchases nor from immediate personal interest*' (Ozcaglar-Toulouse, 2005). The originality of responsible consumption as a research area, besides being various and sometimes surprising, is that it assigns to the consumption a significance that passes the only utilitarian aspects of the purchase. Yet, little research has been given in depth to understand the meaning consumers who declare themselves to be 'responsible' give to their consumption (Cherrier, 2005; Connolly and Prothero, 2003; Moisander and Pesonen, 2002).

Fair trade consumption can provide a rich analysis land. According to Foucauldian approach, fair trade products purchase associated with a political project (changing the current economic system) is a 'politics of self' (Foucault, 1978, 1980). It becomes therefore a way to affirm one's own ideas and engagements but also a means to re-construct one's identity. Instead of postulating a 'fair trade purchase' based on self-expression, the responsible consumption may be viewed as an existential choice. Focusing on the purchase of fair trade products as an illustration, this research studies how current social and environmental concerns about consumption are reviving the topic of meaning in consumption practices, through their contribution to identity construction processes among consumers who declare themselves to be responsible.

The notion of identity is considered in this research broader than the classic features used in traditional studies of segmentation—gender, age, social category, incomes... -; it allows to touch the way the consumer interprets himself/herself and on the role that his/her

ethical consumption plays (or his/her/ voluntary no consumption). For a good part of two decades, the term of 'identity' has occupied a fundamental place in the social sciences and humanities. Its uses-in vogue-also refer to the actual feeling for numerous people to find it difficult to carry through their own identity research, as suggested by the literature on the 'post-modern individual'. The Modernity used to possess the capacity 'to evacuate' easily some individuals' anguishes-exit of the micro and macro social risks-and to assure the continuity of a philosophy turned to the future (Giddens, 1990). But the present context is characterized by the end of the 'meta-narrations' and by a process of 'individuation of the social risks' (Beck, 1986). Generally called a 'crisis of meanings', this phenomenon is felt by some individuals as the necessity of a sense research and it seems to encourage the emergency of new behaviors in everyday life, such as responsible consumption.

An interpretative research method and a hermeneutic approach have been chosen in this research. The generation of data from a qualitative approach is based on the propensity of people to talk about their social experiences in their daily lives and the significance of their consumption. Consumers are not used in general to wonder about the meaning of consumption or the existing links between their acts of purchase and their life trajectory. It seems necessary to 'provoke' consumers to make an in-depth look at their consumption story. Such a way of gathering information is known as the method of 'narratives'.

Fourteen narratives of highly practicing responsible consumers, based on individual interviews, have then been studied using a semantic analysis. The individual and comparative results enable us to enter into the details of the meanings these consumers grant to their consumption and the way the concept of identity can be helpful. A responsible consumption typology, based on the meanings given by the narrators to their acts of purchase, is suggested; it distinguishes the acts of 'moral conformity' from the deep critical postures, the latter of which derive either from political intention or from a wish to get free from the actual consumption 'system'. Moreover, a set of common features has been observed among the 'critical consumers' interviewed. Three of them have already been identified by Cherrier (2005): the quest for 'authenticity', the 'social integration' and the 'control'; they are confirmed and deepened here. Two other features appear: the 'suffering' (related to the upstream feelings of the consumer) and the 'compromise' (related to his practices downstream).

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It Doesn't Happen to Mine: A Study of the My-Own-Product Positivity Bias for a Defective Product Management

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Abstract

This paper suggests that self-positivity bias also can occur at product-level and explores how the bias will be reduced. As a follow up study of previous research on self-positivity bias, this study assumes that consumers perceive those products they possess to be better than those possessed by others or than other same product. Also we demonstrated that this bias which highly cost both consumers and companies is moderated by familiarity with a product. Two experiments were employed to demonstrate the bias and to find the effective moderators which increase my-own-product risk perception. Future study and its applications are discussed.

According to previous studies, people are often overestimators of risk (Slovic, Fishhoff and Lichtenstein 1981) and tend to believe that negative events are less likely to happen to themselves than to other people (Perloff and Fetzer, 1986; Weinstein, 1980). The self-positivity bias which results from "unrealistic optimism" (Weinstein, 1980) was well documented in many areas including car accident and various health problems like AIDS, heart attack, cancer, etc (e.g. Raghuram and Menon, 1998; Perloff and Fetzer, 1986; Kemeny and Hammen, 1991).

At the one end of the continuum, this bias often misleads consumers into nonoptimal decisions like ignoring a likelihood of defective in a product or neglecting a recall alarm which often results from disregarding little notices or policies. For example, consumers believe

that their new notebook has no bad pixel, or their chances of defective sheet of paper in a new textbook are lower than those of others. These phenomena can be widely observed from trivial goods to costly service such as lasik or plastic surgery.

However this bias causes many problems for both companies and consumers. Despite companies' efforts to make consumers' attention to possible risks associated with the products, consumers seldom think a problem ever happens to themselves. Because of this bias, the cost which both consumers and companies should pay increases. Consumers may have to visit a store again. Or they may face a fatal accident without replacing a defective product with new one (e.g. ignoring expiration date in daily products). Automakers may lose their chance of early recall and even face a fatal lawsuit together with bad brand image.

As a follow up study of previous research on self-positivity bias, this study assumes that consumers perceive those products they possess to be better than those possessed by others, and other same products. They think that the chance of negative outcome associated with their possessions will be less likely than that associated with products owned by others.

Because self-positivity bias originated from the wrong perception of self-risk, we can seemingly assume that this kind of bias will be related to products we have. In addition previous studies on the cause of self-positivity bias show that the bias also occurs in case of products. That is, the product-level bias can also make people deny possible risk (Raghuir and Menon, 1998), reduce anxiety associated with uncertainty of outcome (Taylor and Brown, 1988) and make self-esteem maintenance (Weinstein, 1980). Moreover many studies of both psychological and qualitative studies in consumer behavior indicated that much of our psychological mechanism has carryover to our product by possession. McClelland (1951) suggested that external object become viewed as part of self when we are able to control over them. And Belk (1988) argued that possessions give us magical psychological identification. With Weinstein's view, self-concept theory and identity theory can also be applied to our hypothesis that the more people own familiarity with self-allied product, the more they may have a psychological bias associated with their products. Therefore we can also hypothesize that the more familiar or self-closer product which satisfies higher self-esteem maintenance has more bias similar to ours. If consumers consider their own product is more familiar, they believe their possessions will not be associated with negative events.

Experiments were employed to demonstrate the bias and to find the effective moderators of this increasing my-own-product risk perception. In the first experiment which was disguised as a blinded test, we used 3(target owner)*3(products by familiarity rating) design to test that people judge (a) their possessions as being at lower risk than other's and (b) possessions they consider to be more familiar to them to be at lower risk than those less familiar to them. Our new familiarity rating was designed by scales used in previous studies of familiarity scale, self score and intimacy scale, including expected use time and perceived closeness, etc. After offering a newspaper article of a rare but critical error about a product, we gave them a sample and asked them to write down the chance of error of their own. Other groups were offered the same article but asked to write down the chance of error before getting product.

The results of this study indicated that people who had his own product estimate the chance of defectives to be lower than those who didn't. A product highly scored in familiarity rating was perceived to have lower risk. These results supported our hypothesis that consumers project some biases to their owned product.

The subsequent experiment in progress focuses on how to develop an effective "notice" for reducing the product positivity bias. In a pilot study using a new textbook ("Consumer Behavior") in our class, we found that noticing a negative event which occurred to a similar group member reduced the bias and eventually increase risk-perception.

From the view of Lin and his colleagues (2003), perceived controllability will be considered to be designed. By showing the notice which says that the end of refund period is coming soon, controllability condition will be manipulated. The effects of some moderators, framing message cue (Chandran and Menon, 2004), information accessibility (Raghuir and Menon, 1998) - will be examined in the experiments.

This paper suggests that self-positivity bias can also occur in case of products and explores how the bias will be reduced. Future study will focus on what and how biases of consumer are carried over to product and its effective method to reduce it.

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Consumers Tripping Over Their Roots

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"I really did the tour as a 'roots' exercise and to fit many parts of the jigsaw puzzle that is my heritage, the considerable reading and conceptual development of a lifetime of being New Zealand / British in outlook, and to enjoy the 'green, green grass of my ancestral home' so to speak." (Male, 60, New Zealand)

The growth in global tourism is fueled in part by retirees, primarily from developed countries, born immediately following World War II and now entering retirement age. The premise of this research is that these consumers are using their savings to not only explore

the world, but also to seek a sense of self by returning to the lands of their ancestors, a phenomenon we call ancestral tourism. Where hedonic tourism has been deemed a “nonrational” expenditure as it provides only pleasure to the tourist, ancestral tourism can provide a sense of self by glimpsing at one’s ancestral past (MacCannell 2002, 150).

This research documents the phenomenon of ancestral tourism using a multi-method approach and tests a conceptual model that integrates the extant research on aging, the consumption of authenticity and satisfaction. As consumers grow older, they become reflective on life and develop a need of personal fulfillment that cannot be satisfied by tangible goods. Older consumers often enter a phase whereby they look to dispose of their possessions, which have both sentimental and monetary value, while seeking satisfaction from intangibles (Price, Arnould and Curasi 2000), a process likely to be reflected in the consumption of ancestral touristic experiences. Previous research has attributed a consumer’s search for authenticity as a trek for fulfillment, comparable to that of a religious pilgrim seeking enlightenment (Goulding 2000). This is even more salient for cultural tourists, especially those from western cultures, whose desire to partake in authentic cultural experiences is often the primary objective of their trip (Grayson and Martinec 2004; MacCannell 2002; 1999).

The research was conducted in the context of a 25-day guided bus tour of the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland; a tour selected because nearly all customers who bought this package in the past were of British or Irish descent and generally resided in former colonies. Therefore, this group of consumers would most likely seek ancestral cultural experiences. The methodological approach was threefold, comprising interviews, observations, and surveys. The triangulation of data served as a validity check while also adding a better understanding to the social behaviors and meanings invoked from the experience (Grayson and Martinec 2005; Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Arnould and Wallendorf 1994). In an effort to better observe the tour phenomenon, the author actively partook in the tour and optional excursions. The researcher’s direct participation in the tour allowed for better understanding and appreciation of the ancestral tourism phenomenon, as well as detailed observations (Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry 1989).

The tour was designed to expose participants to as much of the UK and Ireland as possible in a short period of time. It was led by a professional tour guide with nearly 20 years of experience. The group consisted of 39 people (18 males / 21 females, mean age of 59), all of them from former British colonies, namely Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the US. The interviews were conducted individually, at the onset of the tour. Exploratory in nature, they sought information regarding the pre-trip planning process, tour expectations, and general background and demographic data. The contents of interviews were then assessed to identify themes to develop a survey instrument. Participant observation was conducted throughout the tour with the researcher maintaining an unobtrusive profile as not to detract from the natural tour experience or bias later survey responses and to maintain the ability to observe from the distance (Palmer 2001; Arnould and Wallendorf 1994). The researcher was able to take detailed notes and pictures of events without drawing attention as such activities are normal for tourists. The survey was administered on the final day of the tour to all participants. The constructs captured the themes identified during the interviews and items to measure them were intermixed. The constructs in the model included: pre-trip expectations, perception of tour as ancestral pilgrimage, perception of tour experience as authentic, cultural experience satisfaction, overall tour satisfaction and likelihood to recommend tour. The last series of questions captured the number of optional tours, the number of souvenirs bought for oneself and the number of those bought for someone else. Finally, demographic information was collected, including age, gender, country-of-origin, country-of-residence, and whether the ancestors emanated from the UK or Ireland.

The survey data along with the qualitative interviews and observations provided rich insights into the phenomenon of ancestral tourism. All participants whose ancestors hailed from the UK or Ireland reported that they considered the trip as a pilgrimage, as the opening quote illustrates. Correlational analysis supported the relationships proposed in the conceptual model. For instance, age was significantly and positively related to the overall number of tours options purchased but negatively related to the number of souvenirs purchased for oneself while positively related to the number of souvenirs purchased for other people. Many participants’ comments reflected a detachment from material possessions at the approach of death, some with a humorous view, others with a more pragmatic one. In turn, the consumption of intangible experiences, such as the optional tours, positively affected perceptions of authenticity and, in turn, overall cultural satisfaction. Among the most important findings was the crucial role that perceptions of authenticity and cultural experiences play in assessing the value of the ancestral tourism experience. Albeit limited by the relatively small size of the group studied, this research provides insights into consumers in search of authentic ancestral experiences.

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Affect Without Cognition

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Do you find young fellows emotional? Do you think that their decisions are often whimsical? Have you noticed that they often buy brands and products that they have no idea of? Then why do they buy? These are the questions regarding brand attitude formation mechanism that is universally accepted as a concept model: cognition-affect-conation. This study tests the model using Chinese young consumers as a sample.

Hypotheses

One question this study seeks to answer is whether brand personality identification, as an affective factor, significantly influences brand buying intention, a conation factor. Nowadays Chinese young generation's value system has changed dramatically. Traditional Chinese notions, such as "Restraint and Obedience" and "Connotation and Introversion" have been replaced by "Do what you like" and "Show your own personality". As a result, the consumption notion of Chinese young generation has also changed. Young consumers pay much attention to products that can show their own personality and demonstrate their own life styles. Then our first hypothesis is: For Chinese young consumers, brand personality identification significantly influences their brand buying intention.

The second question this study seeks to answer is whether Chinese young consumers' buying intention of foreign brands is influenced by brand personality cognition. Since late 1970's, Chinese have more contacts with the west and therefore known more about western world. Chinese young generation has grown up with western products and values. As frequently pointed out by both media and academia, foreign brand personality cognition significantly influences Chinese consumers' brand buying intention. Therefore our second hypothesis is: Chinese young consumers' cognition of foreign brands personality significantly influences their foreign brand buying intention.

Method

Thirty college students enrolled in a well-known university located in Beijing were randomly chosen as participants. In-depth interviews were conducted before a questionnaire was developed. The purpose of the interviews was to identify a pair of brands that could best reflect American culture and Chinese culture respectively. Questions were asked for each of the interviewees: 1) Which American drink/restaurant/apparel brand do you think that can best reflect American culture? 2) Which Chinese drink/restaurant/apparel brand do you think that can best reflect Chinese culture? Results showed that Coca Cola (90% responses) and Xihulongjing tea (70% responses) were thought to best reflect the two distinct cultures by the interviewees. Thus Coca Cola and Xihulongjing tea were finalized as the stimulators for the following survey.

A draft questionnaire was developed based on the interviews and relevant literatures. A pilot test was conducted to check the wording and time span for filling up the draft questionnaire. A questionnaire was then finalized. It comprises measurements of brand personality cognitive strength, brand personality distinctiveness and brand personality identification of both Coca Cola and Xihulongjing tea (independent variables), and measurements of buying intention of both Coca Cola and Xihulongjing tea (dependent variables).

Questionnaire survey was conducted in six major universities located in Beijing. A total of 1,000 questionnaires were distributed and 932 usable ones were returned, with a response rate of 93.2%.

Results

Our first hypothesis is supported. The regression results show that brand personality identification significantly influences buying intention of both Coca Cola and Xihulongjing tea. Young consumers would like to buy the brands that can reflect their personality. This result is consistent with many psychology and marketing theories and research findings. Meanwhile it reveals that popular values of Chinese young generation such as showing their own personality, having their own life styles and expressing themselves influence their buying intention significantly.

Our second hypothesis is rejected. Results show that brand personality cognitive strength and brand personality distinctiveness, as cognitive variables, do not have significant influence on buying intention of foreign brand Coca Cola. It is generally accepted by the academia that cognition is the premise of affect and cognition and affect influence conation. However, buying intention of Coca Cola is only influenced by the affective factor, brand personality identification, not by cognitive factors. Here affect functions independent of cognition. On the contrary, buying intention of Xihulongjing tea is significantly influenced by both cognitive and affective factors, fitting the cognition-affect-conation model perfectly.

Discussion

This research comes up with two very interesting findings: brand buying intention of Chinese young consumers is significantly influenced by their brand personality identification, no matter whether the brand is foreign or domestic. However their brand buying intention is significantly influenced by their cognition of the domestic brand but not the foreign brand. The findings suggest that for Chinese young consumers, the impacts of brand cognition and affect on buying intention may vary between domestic and foreign brands. In the discussion section we will explore the underlying reasons of these findings and the conditions under which they happen. We will also discuss theoretical and managerial implications of this research for consumer behavior and marketing strategies. .

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Compulsive Buying Questionnaire and Repression: The Impact of Hot vs Cold Data on General and Gender Scoring

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Mall intercept has been conjectured to be more precise and reliable than other methodologies such as phone surveys (Bush and Hair, 1985) in that less questions were eluded in the former, and the latter was usually yielding more "socially acceptable" answers. This could be caused by a memory priming effect (Bower, 1981) when respondents are answering in a "cold" situation (e.g. inside their homes) rather than in a "hot" situation. In other words, their cognitions could be affected by their affect at the moment when they are filling the questionnaire

Despite a relatively important number of studies related to the measurement of Compulsive buying, the use of questionnaires through mail surveys seems to have exclusively prevailed over the use of mall intercept procedures (e.g. Faber and O'Guinn, 1992; Valence et al., 1988), and most of these studies found a significant difference in self-reported compulsive score between males and females respondents.

In a small recent study involving 49 participants in a mall intercept, self-assessing their compulsivity by answering a Lejoyeux questionnaire (Lejoyeux et al., 1996; Lejoyeux et al., 1997), we were however unable to find any significant difference in genders, even though some other elements of reliability and nomological validity with the hedonic/utilitarian value in shopping (Babbin et al, 1993) were congruent with previous studies.

We thought that the main difference between our study and the previous studies on compulsive buying was the methodology (a "mall intercept" vs mail survey) could explain the lack of significant difference between genders in respect of their scores.

We therefore undertook an exploratory meta-analysis with 4 previous studies using the same Lejoyeux questionnaire (Lejoyeux et al, 1996; Lejoyeux et al., 1997) with different methodologies (2 studies in a mall intercept condition, and 2 studies in a "cold" condition, where the interviewing process was done in the respondents' home), totalling 490 respondents (290 in "hot" condition, and 200 in "cold" condition; 218 male respondents, and 272 female respondents).

The studies included the 20 items likert scales of the Lejoyeux test of compulsive shopping and the shopping value questionnaire (Babbin et al, 1993) was included in order to test the nomological validity of the test (Peter, 1981). The internal reliability for both of the questionnaires was very good overall, and consistent with previous literature findings ($r(\text{lejoyeux})=0.78$; $r(\text{hedonic})=0.93$). Nomological validity was achieved, consistent with previous literature findings (Faber and O'Guinn, 1992) through an established correlation between hedonic value in shopping and the compulsive score ($r=0.364$; $p<0.01$)

Although we found a significant effect of gender over the variance of the compulsive score ($F(1,438)=31.486$; $p<0.0001$; males=3.1; females=4.5), showing that female respondents tend to score higher than males overall in these 4 experiments, we also found a significant effect, at the highest level, of the "heat" condition ($F(1,438)=18.56$; $p<0.0001$; hot=3.3; cold=4.3), showing that the overall levels of compulsivity are slightly higher in "cold" condition than in a "hot" one; it can also be noticed that the interaction of gender and heat is also significant ($F(1, 438)=4.312$; $p<0.05$; male-hot=2.8, male-cold=3.4, female-hot=3.7, female-cold=5.3), showing a possible effect of affect priming in female respondents.

It should be noted that the hedonic score stemming from the shopping value questionnaire are showing a small evolution that is consistent with respect to genders ($F(1,486)=64.28$; $p<0.0001$, male=2.57; female=3.33) and reverse with respect to the heat of the test ($F(1, 486)=11$; $p<0.0025$; hot=3.13; cold=2.79).

It is interesting to note that, contrary to what Bush and Hair's (1985) findings could hint at, we do not find a higher mean score of compulsivity in the mall intercept procedure than in the "cold" procedure, but rather the contrary (albeit the overall difference is fairly small).

It is however interesting to note that females seem to be much more sensitive to the change of methodology than men, whose variation does not seem to change much. We can therefore suspect that this variation could indicate the process by which one tends to get a higher difference in compulsive scores between genders in mall intercepts. It could be possible that the females experience a better mood during shopping than at home, thus inducing an affect priming phenomenon that leads them to appraise differently the consequences of their shopping when they have been shopping and when they are in a different condition. Conversely, men could just appraise their shopping experience less emotionally, therefore leading to a more "consistent" evaluation between a "hot" and "cold" condition.

This meta-analysis should however be viewed as an exploratory study, where the results are subject to confirmation in a further study that can truly compare the two conditions in strictly similar methodological settings. We feel however that the results contained herein may foster some reflections on the overall validity of mail surveys with respect to mall intercept, as far as compulsive buying is concerned. A second potential implication of this study is that there may be more explanations to the difference in results between mall intercept methodologies and "cold" surveys than just more involved and expert shoppers in the former methodology.

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CAM: A Spreading Activation Network Model of Subcategory Construction

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Extended Abstract

Considerable research has demonstrated that people create mental categories to process and access the information that they receive (Barsalou 1992), and that these mental categories may be arranged in hierarchical structures (Collins and Loftus 1975). People add new categories, or subcategories, to these structures when they encounter novel objects or experiences, such as new products, that do not fit within existing categories (Sujan 1985; Sujan and Bettman 1989). An underlying assumption of previous studies is that the general category within which people will locate a novel entity, and hence a new subcategory created for it, is known. However, some entities, such as innovative new products, could be assigned to multiple categories (Keller, Sternthal, and Tybout 2002; Moreau, Markman, and Lehmann 2001). It is here that managers and marketers could benefit from a deeper understanding of how mental categorization works.

In this paper, we develop a spreading activation model of the process by which individuals construct new mental categories. In an experiment and an empirical study, we show that the Category Activation Model (CAM) reliably predicts where individuals will locate a new subcategory within an existing category structure.

The ways in which consumers categorize products have important implications for firms. For example, previous research has shown that the category to which consumers assign a new product can affect the inferences that they draw about it (Moreau, Markman, and Lehmann 2001), their evaluation of and willingness to pay for it (Sujan 1985), and their likelihood of retrieving it in memory-based choice (Nedungadi 1990; Nedungadi, Chattopadhyay, and Muthukrishnan 2001). Thus, being able to predict and influence how consumers construct and locate subcategories for entire classes of products, especially radically innovative new products, could benefit firms substantially. For example, when Motorola introduced the Envoy, the first personal digital assistant, consumers had to create a new mental subcategory because, although the Envoy shared many features with existing portable computers, pagers, and organizers, it was distinctly different from products in these categories (Keller, Sternthal, and Tybout 2002). Knowing where consumers were most likely to locate the new personal digital assistant subcategory could have helped Motorola design and market the Envoy to better satisfy their expectations.

Whereas previous research has examined how people access information in hierarchical category structures and the general rules that govern how these category structures grow and develop (Freyd 1983; Murphy and Medin 1985; Rosch 1978), the ways in which people construct individual new categories have not yet been investigated. We develop the CAM to predict where people are most likely to locate a new subcategory within an existing category structure.

We build on previous research that shows that priming a category increases its accessibility and subsequent use (Herr 1989; Higgins and King 1981). Consistent with this research, we assume that when a category is accessed some of the resulting activation remains with the category and the rest spreads through the entire network, or category tree. Further, we assume that when a category is more activated, the probability that a new subcategory will be constructed under it is increased. Combining these two assumptions, it follows that by accurately describing the process by which activation spreads through the network, we are able to predict the probability that a new subcategory will be constructed at any given location within it. In the paper, we show that these probabilities depend on the network's link structure, which determines how activation spreads. Specifically, the CAM predicts that the locus of a new subcategory is strongly influenced by the number of subcategories already connected to each category within the existing structure.

We tested the CAM's predictive ability in an experiment involving an innovative new exercise product that shares attributes with existing products in the health and entertainment categories. In the experiment, we first familiarized 91 participants with a category structure for health and entertainment products. Then we presented them with a description of the new product, and gave them the opportunity to create a new subcategory for it under either the health or entertainment category. We manipulated the number of subcategories already existing under these categories, and also manipulated the priming of these categories using an unrelated proof-reading task. The results support our hypothesis that the probability that a person will construct a new category as a subordinate of a particular category i is proportional to the relative number of categories that are already subordinate to i . Furthermore, the results suggest that people are more likely to locate new subcategories within categories that already contain many subordinates precisely because such categories are more activated and accessible than those that contain fewer subordinates.

In a second study, we further tested the CAM's predictive ability by analyzing how computer users create new file folders within their directory trees. In this study, we analyzed data on nearly 70,000 directories created by more than 1,600 users on internet servers at two universities and a high school. We wrote a program to collect data from these servers and provide a snapshot of each user's directory tree, including the exact time at which each file folder within the tree was created. We then showed that the structure of these directory trees and the process by which they developed are consistent with the CAM's predictions. These results provide support for the CAM in an externally valid context.

In addition to categorizing products, consumers also categorize their expenditures by placing them into mental accounts (Thaler 1999). Since consumers utilize these accounts to track their expenses, it follows that the category to which consumers assign an expenditure may affect their willingness to incur additional expenditures that are either similar or different (Cheema and Soman 2006; Heath and Soll 1996). In two extension studies, we show that the CAM can be used to both predict and influence the location of new mental accounts. Thus, the CAM has implications not only for how new products should be positioned, but also for how they should be priced. Influencing category construction is an exciting area that additional research should examine.

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The Appeal of Others: How to Avoid the Self-Positivity Bias

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Nearly 50 years of research and numerous articles on fear appeals have attempted to illustrate the behavioral motivation such appeals may generate (Witte and Allen 2000). The logical reasoning of using fear appeals in persuasion links back to the "drive-reduction model" (Hovland, Jains and Kelley 1953). The model suggests that a message becomes successful in persuasion only when it is sufficiently intense to create a drive and present recommendations capable of mitigating the fear (Keller 1999). Keller (1999) found that people engaging in risky behavior were persuaded more by lower fear appeals than those who were already adhering to healthier lifestyle/avoiding those risky behaviors. Such findings can be explained by the fact that people who practice risky behavior become more defensive in response to high fear appeals as they find themselves more vulnerable when exposed to such fear inducing messages. This is consistent with defense motivated processing, which is a fairly close-minded form, that leads to individuals' desire to hold attitudes or beliefs congruent with positive self-concept (Chen and Chaiken 1999). Perceptions of risk for certain health conditions are not congruent with this desire to maintain a positive self-concept. This defensiveness leads to a lower capacity to process the recommendations presented in the message and thereby a higher inclination to discount the message all together with no appreciable influence on risk perceptions (Kunda 1990, Keller and Block 1997, Keller 1999).

This literature demonstrates the importance of understanding how health communications involving fear appeals may or may not influence consumer perceptions. Ideally, health messages should arouse fear only to the extent that the audience perceives increased risk for themselves leading them to adhere to the prescribed behavior. One critical concern of health communications relates to the "self-positivity bias" of the target audience. This bias demonstrates that people have a general tendency to assume themselves as impervious to the threat of being exposed to diseases (Raghubir and Menon 1998) and they do not feel the need or urgency to adhere to the preventative behaviors presented. This self-positivity bias leads people to discount health related messages in order to maintain their self-esteem (Taylor and Brown 1988). This bias does not occur when people are asked to estimate the risk of unpleasant things happening to another person (Perloff and Fetzer 1986, Raghubir and Menon 1998). This opens a new frontier of research studying how self vs. other related appeals can impact on subsequent persuasion.

Recent work on the self-positivity bias has explored how the compatibility between self vs. other-related emotions of the audience and the referent in the message influences perceptions of risk (Agarwal, Menon and Aaker 2006). However, it is yet to be explored how the referent (self vs. other) in a fear appeal message would influence perceptions of risk and behavioral intentions. The current research attempts to fill this gap by manipulating the referent (self vs. other) in the message using a fear appeal and exploring how the perceptions of risk and intention to adopt the recommended behavior changes accordingly. In this case, we anticipate that when a message is self-referent, it will generate more defensive processing and result in self-positivity bias (i.e. lower perceptions of risk). On the contrary, when the referent is someone else, it is not expected to generate the same defensiveness, and the result will be higher perceptions of risk for themselves.

A one-way ANOVA was designed to manipulate the message referent (self vs. other) and measure subsequent influence on risk perceptions and behavioral intentions. A print advertisement for skin cancer was developed for the study. All groups were exposed to the same advertisement that listed the factors leading to skin cancer and preventative steps that could be taken. The only difference in the ads was the first line, which prompted respondents to think of either themselves or someone else while they read the ad. In total, 57 undergraduate business students at a large eastern university participated in exchange for partial course credit. Post exposure measures on risk perceptions and behavioral intentions were collected. Risk perceptions were measured with a single item asking participants if they felt they were at risk for skin cancer and behavioral intentions were measured with 2 items that were mentioned in the advertisements as ways to avoid getting skin cancer (e.g. how likely are you to wear sunscreen and how likely are you to have a doctor check your skin for damage, $r=.50$, $p<.001$).

Results of the one-way ANOVA showed a significant influence on perceptions of risk ($F(1,55)=5.99$, $p<.01$). A comparison of the means indicated that the other-referent message generated higher perceptions of risk among the respondents ($M=4.43$) as opposed to the

self-referent message ($M=3.28$). The behavioral intentions measure demonstrated the same pattern of results ($F(1,55)=7.31, p<.01$) where those reviewing other referent measure had greater behavioral intentions ($M=4.07$) than those reviewing self-referent message ($M=2.91$).

As expected, results demonstrated the effectiveness of other-referent messages in avoiding the self-positivity bias. Participants who reviewed the other-referent messages were significantly more likely to have higher perceptions of risk for themselves of developing skin cancer. Further, these participants were also more likely to indicate intentions to follow the advice from the advertisement regarding wearing sunscreen and seeing a doctor to avoiding the disease. Future research will need to explore more fully/comprehensively the processing involved in risk perceptions to determine the exact influence of defensive response and its role in the self-positivity bias.

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The Effect of Discounting the Influence of Sources of Information on Choice and Product Perceptions

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Extended Abstract

In this research, we examine the effect of the source of the influence (e.g., salesperson or friend) and consumers' ability to correct for the source's influence on their product evaluations. Consumer's perceptions of the source of a persuasive attempt have been found to influence the effectiveness of persuasive attempts in previous research (for a review, see Wilson and Sherrell 1993). People may react negatively when they believe a salesperson has an ulterior motive for persuasion (Campbell and Kirmani 2000), yet yield to a recognized persuasion attempt by a friend (Hamilton 2003).

Wegener and Petty's (1995, 1997, 1998) Flexible Correction Model postulates that individuals correct for perceived bias when they are motivated and able to adjust their judgments, and that they make these adjustments based on their naïve theories about how a given source influences their judgments. We propose that the manner in which consumers correct for a perceived influence on their judgments is influenced by the perceived source of the influence. If people hold different beliefs about how strong an influence a source might have on their judgments, they may account for that influence differently.

Consumers may think that a salesperson is trying to persuade them (Campbell and Kirmani 2000; Stafford, Leigh and Martin 1995), but may not perceive a friend's attempt to influence their judgments in the same way. As a result, they may react differently to the same persuasive message depending on whether a salesperson or a friend delivers it. For example, Hamilton (2003) found that under some conditions, consumers were more likely to comply and choose the "suggested" alternative when a friend (rather than a stranger) was trying to influence them, even though the influence attempt was the same. Therefore, we propose that consumers will be more likely to resist the persuasion of a salesperson than the persuasion of a friend.

However, when consumers are instructed to correct their judgments (e.g., if they are told to avoid letting the salesperson or friend influence their judgments), we expect the pattern to reverse. Because consumers naturally resist the influence of a salesperson, they may overcorrect for the influence of the salesperson, resulting in enhanced effectiveness of the persuasive message rather than reduced effectiveness. In contrast, because consumers do not naturally resist the influence of a friend, an instruction to correct may reduce the effectiveness of the persuasion attempt.

We designed an experiment to test these predictions. The study employs a 2 (salesperson vs. friend) x 2 (no-instruction vs. instruction to correct) between-subjects design. The dependent variables were choice and willingness to purchase the product. Measures regarding persuasion knowledge and ulterior motives were also included.

Participants (N=71) read a written scenario (adapted from Campbell and Kirmani 2000) describing a situation in which they imagined they were looking for a jacket. In the salesperson condition, the salesperson makes a comment about one of the two jackets the participant imagines trying on (the target jacket); in the friend condition, the participant's friend makes the same comment. In the no-instruction condition, participants answered the questions immediately after reading the scenario; in the instruction condition, participants were told to "try their best not to let the salesperson's (the friend's) opinion influence their own opinion." Participants then chose between the non-target and the target jacket and completed the other measures.

As predicted, the salesperson was perceived as more persuasive than the friend ($M_s=6.21, M_f=4.58$), indicating a main effect of source ($F(1, 67)=22.13, p<.001$). Participants also perceived the salesperson as being more manipulative ($F(1, 67)=11.79, p<.001$), less trustworthy ($F(1, 67)=54.57, p<.001$), and less sincere than the friend ($F(1, 67)=16.94, p<.001$). Consistent with their desire to resist the salesperson's influence, we found that in the salesperson condition participants chose the jacket that had not been recommended by the salesperson (the non-target jacket) marginally more often (15% of the time) than in the friend condition (7% of the time) ($\chi^2=3.127, p<.07$).

In the no-instruction condition, participants indicated that they tried harder to resist the salesperson's influence than the friend's influence ($M_s=4.5, M_f=2.83$). However, when they were instructed to correct, they tended to resist the salesperson's influence less and the friend's influence more ($M_s=3.71, M_f=3.77$), resulting in a significant interaction ($F(1, 67)=4.6, p<.05$).

Consistent with participants' perceptions of their resistance, participants in the salesperson condition tended to prefer the non-target jacket relative to the target jacket in the no-instruction condition. However, when they were instructed to correct, there was no difference in their willingness to purchase the two jackets. The opposite pattern was observed in the friend condition, resulting in a significant three-way interaction ($F(1, 67)=4.23, p<.05$). Participants in the friend condition were more willing to purchase the recommended jacket in the no-instruction condition; the difference was not significant in the instruction condition.

Our findings show that when they are not instructed to correct their judgments, participants tend to comply with their friends and resist the salesperson's influence, choosing the recommended jacket more when it was recommended by the friend than when it was recommended by the salesperson. Instruction to correct decreased choice of the recommended jacket in the friend condition and increased choice of the recommended jacket in the salesperson condition, making the proportion of choice equal.

This research builds on earlier research on source effects and on correction by showing that providing instructions to correct can moderate source effects. Notably, when people attempt to correct for a source's influence the persuasiveness of a less trusted source such as a salesperson can actually increase. Despite the advantages of a friend in perceived trustworthiness, manipulativeness and sincerity, a simple reminder to a consumer to avoid being influenced by a third party can make a salesperson just as effective as a friend.

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Mental Visual Imagery, Authenticity and Consumers' Attitude Formation towards Licensed Brands

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Many researchers (e.g. Holt 2002; Kozinets 2002; Thompson et al. 2006) have noted that brand licensing undermines the value of the brands. However some examples suggest differently. Haier, a global brand in home electronics began its ascent in China by licensing refrigerator technology and the brand from German Liebherr Corp. Sanyo Fashion House Inc. obtained license to manufacture and distribute "blue label" Burberry products in Japan. Despite their licensee image, they have both achieved strong brand value internationally.

In this paper, we ask the question "when and how licensed brands achieve the same or even higher value than original brands?" and we reason that consumers' assessment of authenticity may hold the key to this question. Most researchers agree that authenticity is not

an attribute inherent in an object and is better understood and assessed by a particular evaluator in its particular context (Grayson and Martinec 2004). However, little research has studied the antecedents and consequences of authenticity. This is particularly relevant in brand licensing, as the cues for communicating authenticity of a licensed brand will help consumers' assessment of the value of the licensed brand, and these cues may or may not be related to the attributes of the original brands. This research intends to make three related contributions. Firstly, we attempt to develop multidimensional measures for authenticity in brand licensing. Secondly, we will empirically test whether mental visual imagery influence consumers' perception of authenticity. Thirdly, we are to test the link between the types of authenticity and consumers' attitude formation of licensed brands.

Indexical and Iconic Authenticity

Grayson and Martinec (2004) identified two dimensions of authenticity based on the semiotic model developed by Peirce (1998): the *indexical authenticity* and *iconic authenticity*. Indexical authenticity refers to the physical or psychological link which distinguishes the "real thing" from its copies (Grayson and Shulman 2000). Iconic authenticity refers to the preexisting knowledge or expectations which a person perceives something being similar to something else. In order for the licensed brand to be perceived as authentic, the cues for communicating authenticity are crucial, and this process of understanding and specifying these cues is called the negotiation of meaning (Grayson and Martinec, 2004).

Mental Visual Imagery

Past research (e.g. Adeyemo, 1990; Dahl and Chattopadhyay, 1999; MacInnis and Price, 1987) has shown that mental visual imagery is one of the mental processes which one uses to make sense of cues. Mental imagery is a form of internal representation in which information about the appearance of physical objects, events and scenes can be depicted and manipulated (Richardson 1999, P. 3). Research in marketing has distinguished different types of visual mental imagery: the image based on *memory* and *imagination* (Dahl and Chattopadhyay, 1999; MacInnis and Price 1987). These authors define memory image as the event or occasion that a person has personally experienced or observed whereas imagination imagery is a new, never-before-experienced event.

The link between authenticity and mental visual imagery

Assessment of authenticity involves a complex perceptual process (Belk and Costa 1998; Pen˜aloza 2001). A person construes the cues via the formation of mental visual image before further deriving his/her perception about the authenticity of a licensed brand. Iconic authenticity may be achieved when cues are congruent with their memory. Because to view something as iconically authentic, a perceiver must have some preexisting knowledge or perceived similarities of a licensed brand with something he or she is familiar with, memory imagery can be interpreted as the cue which links consumers preexisting knowledge with the perceived iconic authenticity about the licensed brand. Therefore:

H1: Consumers' memory imagery is positively correlated with perceived iconic authenticity.

Imagination imagery involves the creation of previously unseen image and the capacity of imagination imagery determines one's ability to negotiate meaning out of novel information (Adeyemo 1990). To view something as an index, a perceiver must believe it actually has the "factual" and "spatio-temporal link" that is claimed (Grayson and Shulman 2000). Imagination imagery can be interpreted as acceptance of marketing communications from the licensee toward the perception of indexical authenticity by consumers. Therefore:

H2: Consumers' imagination imagery is positively correlated with perceived indexical authenticity.

H3: The more the licensed brand is perceived with iconic cues, the more licensed brand will be perceived as authentic.

H4: The more the licensed brand is perceived with indexical cues, the more licensed brand will be perceived as authentic.

Although both iconic and indexical cues are likely to encourage consumers to believe that a licensed brand is authentic, iconic cues are likely to be more powerful because consumers possess some preexisting knowledge about the licensed brand or perceive similarities with something they are familiar with. Therefore:

H5: Iconic cues have greater influence than indexical cues on consumers' assessment of authenticity.

Finally we examine whether assessment of authenticity will in turn influence consumers' attitude toward the licensed brand. Attitude towards a brand can be defined as consumer's overall brand evaluation (Aaker and Keller, 1990). Cognition is part of the belief formation and the salience of beliefs in tern form attitude (Ajzen, 2002). Assessment of authenticity is one type of cognitive associations assisting consumers to negotiate the meaning of brand licensing. Therefore:

H6: Perceived authenticity is positively correlated with consumers' attitude formation toward licensed brands.

Methods and Measures

There are two stages of data collection in this research: exploratory focus group studies and controlled experiments.

Exploratory Focus Group Studies

The focus group studies were completed. The purpose of the focus group studies is twofold. Firstly, we hoped to gain deeper understanding about how consumers perceive the connections among our three focal concepts and to develop a set of hypotheses. Secondly, it would help with the development of relevant measures to be used in the controlled experiments.

Three focus group interviews were designed and conducted based on the guideline from Krueger (1994) and Yin (1984). Twenty-six informants (20 to 35 years of age) were recruited from both undergraduate and postgraduate students in a west midland university in the United Kingdom. Each focus group lasted around 60 minutes. The informants, 51% of which are female, have Chinese origin. These informants were recruited for the consistency with second stage of data collection in China. The focus group results were content analyzed according to the guideline of Yin (1984). The results shown that, firstly, the distinction between the use of memory and imagination imagery is important to assess authenticity of licensed brands. Secondly, there exist different antecedents for the two dimensions of authenticity (detailed findings will be reported in the full paper).

Controlled experiments

A set of controlled experiments will be employed to test our derived hypotheses. Brand selection criteria are based on Aaker and Keller's (1990), i.e. relevance to the subjects, generally perceived as high quality, able to elicit relatively specific associations. Two hundred students will be recruited from a Chinese university to participate in the study. Chinese market is chosen because of its market size and rapid growth in licensing activities (LIMA, 2005).

The independent variables are visual mental imagery and authenticity. Visual mental imagery types will be manipulated by instructing participants to rely on either imagination or memory when evaluating authenticity. The measurements for manipulation check will be adopted from Dahl and Chattopadhyay's (1999) 7-point scale. Two 7-point authenticity measures were developed based on focus group findings:

- (a) Indexical authenticity in brand licensing: novelty, level of involvement of the brand owner, and perception about distribution.
- (b) Iconic authenticity in brand licensing: quality, country of origin, and trademark.

The dependent variable is attitude toward the licensed brand. To measure attitude toward licensed brand, we will adopt Kind and Smith's (2001) 7-point semantic differential scale. Two experimental factors (imagery types) will be manipulated. Experimental design will consist of a 2 (imagery type) x 2 (authenticity type) + 1 control mixed model. Imagery types are between-subjects variables, with subjects exposed to a set of either memory or imagination stimuli. Authenticity types are crossed within-subject, so that all subjects will be exposed to all levels of these variables.

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Understanding Value Perceptions in Consumer Relationships: A Look at the Role of Self-Esteem

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Introduction

Value is essential in today's world of marketing. Levere (1992) argues that, "when it comes to value, today's consumers want to know precisely what kind of bang they are getting for their bucks" (p.18). Additionally value has been touted as the central driver of customer satisfaction (Woodruff 1997). Lichtenstein et al. (1990) argue that consumer seek the "lowest priced product that meets his or her specific quality requirements" (p. 56). While these convergent viewpoints suggest that consumers seek low prices, previous research indicates that even though firms might provide a high quality product at an appropriate price, individual differences could influence consumers' processing of product attributes and lead to different perceptions of value (Rao and Monroe 1988; Inman et al. 1997). This affect of individual differences in consumers' evaluation of products raises an issue for firms that decide to compete on offering superior customer value (i.e., lowering prices).

The notion of receiving good value is always welcomed news to consumers. This point has not been lost on behavioral scientists, who have proposed that there is a fundamental human tendency for people to seek positive or self-enhancing feedback (Swann et al 1990). For example, consumers generally feel good when they receive great value from their market choices and will attribute such favorable outcomes perhaps to their decision making capacity or ability to recognize a good deal. However, it has been established that not all people are equally motivated to self-enhance or to feel as confident about generating positive outcomes.

Individual differences in self-esteem, that is, one's global self evaluation is a key factor in explaining how people perceive and construe their own behavior and performance (Baumeister 1982). Furthermore, consumer perceptions of value might vary depending on the type of relationship between consumers and a firm (Woodruff 1997). The extent to which individual differences such as self-esteem and the nature of consumer relationships with retailers impacts value perceptions is the focus of this research.

Theoretical Background

The Role of Self Esteem in Value Perceptions

Self-esteem is known to play a key role in determining a buyer's susceptibility to marketing communications (Maile and Kizilbash 1977). For instance, consumers with low self-esteem tend to be influenced by less credible than the more credible communications whereas consumers with high self-esteem tend to be persuaded by marketing messages only when communications is deemed credible. Those with high self-esteem hold high expectations about outcomes and expect to excel at whatever task they undertake (Tice 1993). As a result, they exert maximal effort towards processing information and are willing to take risks to stand out in self-enhancing ways (Baumeister 1982). Those with positive self views tend to process information deeply even when faced with uncertainties (Swann et al. 1990). In contrast, people with low self-esteem lack confidence to form judgments and are thus not inclined to extensively consider information to form independent judgments that might call attention to their perceived deficiencies (Baumeister 1982; Baumeister and Tice 1985).

The degree of confidence that consumers have in their price knowledge relates to their purchase experience and their attitudes towards the company making the offer. In situations where consumers have established, loyal relationships with a company, their trust and confidence in the company's practices could potentially enhance customer loyalty (Siredeshmukh, Singh and Sabol 2002). Furthermore, Suri and Monroe (2003) showed that when consumers spend cognitive resources to process information they use price more to determine the perceived sacrifice associated with the purchase of a product and consequently its value (i.e., low price represents low sacrifice and high value). On the other hand, when cognitive resources are limited, price is processed more in its role to evaluate a product's quality and value (i.e., low price represents low quality and low value).

Integrating the role of self-esteem and customer loyalty, we expect that consumers with high self-esteem will spend cognitive effort to process information and associate low (high) prices with high (low) perceived value. Because they process information thoroughly and are also tolerant of risk, high self-esteem consumers are prone to draw on their prior knowledge about market prices and likely to utilize internal rather than external reference prices in brand choice decisions even when evaluating price information in uncertain situations (Mazumdar and Papatla 1995). Consumers with low self-esteem, however, want to avoid risky outcomes (Baumeister 1982). To reduce the possibility of making a bad decision, they are apt to trust external information (e.g., provided by retailers) rather than their own prior price knowledge (Brockner 1984) but are likely to feel at a loss when engaged in relationships with multiple retailers. This conceptualization leads to the following hypotheses:

- H1: High self-esteem individuals will perceive low (high) price as high (low) in perceived value irrespective of the consumer relationship with a retailer.
- H2a: Low self-esteem individuals will perceive low (high) price to be high (low) in perceived value when they maintain a relationship with a single retailer (exclusive loyalty).
- H2b: Low self-esteem individuals will not perceive differences in value between low and high prices when they maintain relationships with multiple retailers (divided loyalty).

Methodology

This exploratory study included 196 undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory business course. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the conditions in a 2 (price: high and low) X 2 (customer relationship: single- versus multi-store loyalty) between subjects

design. Participants read a hypothetical scenario describing a customer's relationship with one or two retailers who specialized in selling denim apparel. This scenario was followed by the presentation of price and other attribute information for a pair of Levi blue jeans, available at the focal retailer for either a low price or high price. Participants completed a number of perceptual and attitudinal measures about price including perceived value, loyalty and behavioral intentions. They also completed the Rosenberg (1965) self-esteem scale a week prior to completing the main study.

Preliminary Results

Based on a median split of participants' score on the Rosenberg self-esteem scale, support was obtained for all hypotheses. Consistent with predictions of H1, high self-esteem individuals reported differences in value perceptions between the low- and high-price jeans in both the relationship conditions, with the low price jeans being associated with high perceptions of value and purchase intentions than the high-price jeans. Support was also obtained for H2a and H2b. The results showed that low self-esteem individuals associated high perceived value with the low-price jeans under conditions of exclusive loyalty, but under conditions of divided loyalty low self-esteem individuals found no difference in value between low- and high-price jeans. Additional analyses indicated that self-esteem was a better predictor of the patterns of value perceptions in the relational setting used in this study compared to individual differences in value consciousness (see Lichtenstein et al. 1990).

Conclusion

The results show that not all consumers seek low prices in today's relational environments. It appears that the confluence of strategic (i.e., pricing strategy), situational (relationship type) and individual factors (self-esteem) can have significantly different consequences on how consumers cognitively process price information and the construction of value perceptions. Based on the findings of this exploratory study, the role of value perceptions in consumer relationships warrants further investigation.

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Perceived Fairness: Conceptual Framework and Scale Development

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Fairness is a concept that first entered the English language about 1460 as a referent to "equitableness, fair dealing, honesty, impartiality, uprightness" (*Oxford English Dictionary Online*, 2004, 3). From the outset, the concept was associated with morality, commerce, and public life, for its first recorded use is in the line, "it is best that we treat him with fairness," found in religious plays (*Towneley Mysteries*, c. 1460, Cawley 1963) put on for townspeople by medieval craft guilds such as cloth merchants or tanners. The definition has remained remarkably unchanged in six centuries of use, and is now a cardinal concept in social science and marketing research, referring to an individual's social judgment about what is "just" or "deserved." Its importance lies in its influence on an individual's feelings, attitudes, and behaviors in interactions with others (Campbell 1999; Feinberg, Krishna, and Zhang 2001; Tyler and

Smith 1998), for perceptions of fairness have been found to have significant psychological consequences such as associations with feelings of anger (Montada and Schneider 1989), envy (Smith, Spears, and Oyen 1994), psychological depression (Walker and Mann 1987), and self-esteem (Koper, Van Knippenberg, Bouhuijs, Vermunt, and Wilke 1993). Perceived perception has also been found to have significant marketing consequences in reference to consumer satisfaction and repeat purchase intentions (Oliver 1993, 1997; Oliver and Swan 1989a, b). Yet despite the concept's presence across research domains, there is a lack of threaded discourse attributable to the commingling of cognitive and affective elements and the failure to distinguish between antecedents and consequences.

To disentangle the elements and establish hierarchical order, we begin by revisiting the cognitive and affective dimensions in terms of theories of equity (Adams 1965; Austin 1977), relative deprivation (Crosby 1982, 1984), and consumer satisfaction (Oliver 1997). Even though most theorists consider fairness to have a cognitive core, there is no consensus about the presence or nature of a causal relationship between cognition and affect. The reason seems to be that the treatment of fairness as a concept in its own right has been taken second place to treatments of it in reference to positive emotional responses such as satisfaction and/or negative ones such as anger and guilt. In consequence, different studies and researchers yield different lists of antecedents and consequences, and controversy abounds. For example, social psychologists do not agree about whether an individual's degree of satisfaction with a purchase is an antecedent or consequence of his or her perception of fairness (Messick and Sentis 1983). Further, emotion/cognition confounding is perpetuated in recent study findings (van den Bos 2003) that even unrelated moods influence fairness perceptions (van den Bos 2003). Despite efforts to identify satisfaction and fairness as separate concepts in social science research, with satisfaction influenced by one's personal history of outcomes, and fairness influenced by one's comparison of personal outcomes to those of relevant others (Blau 1964; Austin, McGinn, and Susmilch 1980; van den Bos, Wilke, Lind and Vermunt 1998), the issue of hierarchical order remains unclear. Even though satisfaction theorists in marketing generally consider fairness an antecedent to satisfaction (Oliver 1993, 1997; Szymanski and Henard 2001), the order may well be the reverse, depending on how one defines both concepts.

Another problem that arises in studies of fairness vis-à-vis unfairness and negative affect is exacerbated confounding of cognitive and affective antecedents and consequences. Whereas classic accounts of the relationship between judgments of injustice and negative emotional consequences (Adams 1965; Homans, 1961; Walster, Berscheid, and Walster 1978) suggest that cognition of injustice precedes negative affect, later accounts claim (O'Malley and Davies 1984; Scher and Heise 1993; Sinclair and Mark 1991) that in some situations, negative affect may precede and/or influence cognitive ones. Admittedly, limitations are built into these studies, for the virtual simultaneity of unfairness perceptions and negative emotional consequences makes hierarchical ordering difficult. Further, unfairness is an ambiguous state that can be triggered either by receiving less than is fair (anger or resentment) or more than is fair (guilt or fear of retaliation), with the dominant effect of the latter especially difficult to identify. But notwithstanding the limitations, closer study of fairness in relation to similar concepts is required to clarify its attributes, measurement, and outcomes.

Lack of clarity has led to random definitions of fairness with different researchers relying on different ad hoc scales. Some are single-item, and thus lacking in reliability and validity (e.g., Austin, McGinn and Susmilch 1980; Greenberg 1987; Messe and Watts 1983; Seligman and Schwartz 1997; van den Bos et al. 1998). Even though some multiple-item scales have been devised in the social sciences, insofar as their focus is on affective responses, they do not contribute to the understanding of fairness as a multidimensional concept (Scher 1997). In the business disciplines, the study of fairness in organizations is also beset by non-comparable definitions and measures (Blader and Tyler 2003). In marketing research, where the tendency to use ad hoc scales also exists, the dominant focus on price fairness (Darke and Dahl 2003) or service fairness (Clemmer 1993) does not seem sufficiently rich to capture the broad dimensionality of consumer perceptions of fairness. Thus, we find that a theoretically sound scale of fairness in the consumer context has yet to be developed, and to do so, we must first construct a comprehensive framework suited to study consumer perceptions.

Our paper will present a multi-item fairness scale designed specifically for use in consumer research and tested empirically to provide evidence of its construct, internal, and external validity and reliability. Following the fairness research literature, we will conduct experimental studies to develop a new scale that encourages an integrated expansion of fairness perception research. Study findings and the new scale will be finished in time for presentation at the ACR 2006 Conference.

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Effect of Mood on Information Processing Style and Consequent Purchasing Decisions

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Extended Abstract

Moods are a transient and slight mental state; they are different from emotions, which are strong and long lasting feelings (Peterson and Sauber 1983). Moods occur and fade away, any time, any place. Small environmental cues, for example, a piece of music, a store display, a smile sign, or some smells can elicit good or bad moods (Schwarz and Clore 1983). Therefore, it is feasible to suggest that moods may be manipulated through advertisements, level of service, shopping contexts and marketing tools. Thus the purpose of this study is to explore the effects of mood arousal by these methods on consumers' cognition of product attributes.

Previous research has shown that people in different moods may be inclined to adopt different information processing styles (e.g.: Mackie and Worth 1989; Gardner and Hill 1988; Kuykendall and Keating 1990). The primary mechanism behind the above is that people in a good mood have the motivation to maintain their good mood, so their cognitive resources are relatively lower than those of neutral or bad moods (Forest, Clark, Mills, and Isen 1979). In other words, due to the instinct to maximize reward and minimize punishment, people in a good mood will exert, consciously or unconsciously, an effect on prolonging happiness; hence, most of their attention and cognitive resources are employed to retain the good mood, and they don't have the capacity and willing to contemplate things in a systematical way. When using the heuristic-systematic model (HSM) (Bohner, Moskowitz, and Chaiken 1995; Bohner, Ruder, and Erb 2002) to classify

information processing styles, a good mood will lead to the heuristic thinking approach, because people with a heuristic thinking approach evaluate events based on available and applicable heuristics and employ less cognitive effort and capacity. On the contrary, a bad mood will lead to the systematic thinking approach, and people with a systematic thinking approach process information in a more analytical style; they analyze events more rationally and don't give judgments based solely on environmental cues.

Furthermore, people with different information processing styles will exhibit varied responses to marketing messages. This study suggests that people with different information processing styles pay attention to different product attributes, meaning that when shopping in a store or making purchasing decisions, the importance and attractiveness of the product attributes will change as the consumers' information processing styles change. Product attributes have been dichotomized into intrinsic and extrinsic cues (Olson and Jacoby 1972): intrinsic attributes are the physical composition of the product, for example, color, texture and size. Extrinsic attributes are external to the product, such as brand name, advertising, and brand image (Olson and Jacoby 1972). Obviously, the evaluation and comparison of intrinsic attributes among several products requires more cognitive labor, while using extrinsic attributes, for example, brand reputation, to determine which to buy requires less cognitive resources. Therefore, it is proposed that the consumers who employ heuristic thinking tend to pay more attention to extrinsic attributes, while the consumers who employ systematic thinking tend to be concerned more with intrinsic attributes.

In this study, the influences of mood on the consumers' cognition of product attributes are examined. All the 60 respondents were randomly assigned to the three experimental conditions: good, bad, and neutral mood. Short films were then applied to elicit good, bad, and neutral moods. After seeing the 2 minutes short movies, all respondents were told to complete questionnaires about their favorite movie styles and movie-watching behaviors as the experimental filler—the purpose of the filler was to avoid the respondents guessing the objective of this study. When the questionnaires were completed the experimenter asked them to help with an “unrelated survey”—the digital camera purchasing decision survey. In the questionnaire, several intrinsic and extrinsic attributes were listed, and respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of every attribute to their purchasing decisions.

The data of this research show that the consumers in a good mood are inclined to focus on extrinsic attributes more than intrinsic attributes ($t=2.21, p=0.0453$); the consumers in a bad mood are inclined to pay more attention to intrinsic attributes ($t=-2.33, p=0.0352$). For the neutral mood respondents, there is no difference between the intrinsic and extrinsic attributes in their decision weight ($t=-0.12, p=0.9401$).

Therefore, this study shows that moods do indeed influence the cognition of product attributes via differing information processing approaches. A good mood results in concerns about extrinsic attributes, whereas a bad mood results in a focus on the intrinsic attributes. This is a meaningful and useful result that can be extended to advertising and market research, for example, the effect of retail settings, the service quality of waiters, or the advertisement context on mood and attitude.

Measuring the Antecedents of Impulsive Buying Behavior on the WWW

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Introduction

Marketing practitioners have long realized the importance of impulsive consumer actions and use new technologies like collaborative filtering to enhance unplanned cross- and upselling. Amazon.com, for example, generated 23% of its sales from purchases made by suggesting customers' products which “similar” customers had already bought (Economist, 2000).

However, marketing scholars have not spent much attention on this research topic. Madhavaram and Laverie (2004) state a significant deficit in conceptual and empirical research concerning online impulsive buying behavior. This gap is surprising given the fact that online shopping is an easily mode for making unplanned purchases (Donthu & Garcia 1999).

The purpose of this paper is to: (1) review and analyze existing research (2) broaden and adopt the concept of impulsive buying to the online shopping environment (3) discuss different antecedents of unplanned purchases on the internet and (4) present exploratory research findings of a pilot study.

Conceptual Framework

Impulsive buying is defined as a purchase decision made within the store without an explicit recognition of a need for this purchase before entering the store (Abratt & Goodey, 1990; Bellenger, Robertson, & Hirschmann, 1978). Basically, the four main factors can be distinguished to have a direct or indirect influence on impulsive buying behavior. Most of them have been subject to thorough analysis in store-based retailing (Kollat & Willet 1967; Rook 1987; Youn & Faber 2000), but have not been validated in an online shopping context:

The relevance of in-store *marketing stimuli* for unplanned purchases is evident (Belk, 1975; Kollat & Willet 1969; Rook 1987). Possible stimuli of an e-retailer are banners, pop-ups and newsletters. We add electronic marketing stimuli to our model and suggest a positive effect of banners, pop-ups etc. on impulsive buying behavior. [H1]

Situational factors are environmental conditions that surround the buying process and may hinder or favor unplanned purchases (Stern, 1962). Situational factors are diverse constraints at the time of the purchase as well as the individual's current mood (Dholakia, 2000). The authors suggest a negative influence of constraints on impulsive buying behavior and differ between technical (registration, online payment systems) and other constraints (time, money). [H2]

Personal factors: In their article from 1986, Cobb and Hoyer pointed out that early impulsive buying research had widely neglected the role of consumer characteristics. In social sciences research, impulsivity trait has been identified as an appropriate dimension of impulsive behavior (Plutchik & van Praag, 1995). We suppose a positive effect of impulsive trait on impulsive buying behavior. [H3]

Technical factors: This category of influencing factors has been added due to different characteristics of online shops compared to an offline in-store environment (Adelaar et al., 2003). The authors suggest including website quality and browsing as additional explaining variables (Seethamraju, 2004). Both variables have a supposed positive effect on impulsive buying behavior [H4, H5]

Method

This study is based on a focus group with frequent online shoppers, followed by a data collection using a web questionnaire. The focus group shows (1) the high practical relevance of impulsive buying in online shopping (2) the important role of constraining factors (3) the most frequent unplanned product categories purchased in an online shop (books, CDs and DVDs). Afterwards, an email was sent out to 2,000 students. 290 completed the questionnaire. However, only 91 students quote online impulsive behavior in the past.

Results

All used items and scales meet the recommended levels of fit indices (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1995): (1) substantially high positive factor loadings (2) indicator reliability above .4 (3) factor reliability higher than .6 (4) values greater than 0.5 for the average variance extracted and (5) GFI above .9 (6) RMSEA below the recommended upper limit of 0.08.

Standardized regression weights are significant at .01-level, supporting all hypotheses except H3. Based on these results, we conclude that the model has been validated successfully and can be seen as appropriate for the explanation and prediction of online impulsive buying behavior.

Summary

Literature review of existing impulsive buying research shows a significant lack of studies explaining unplanned purchases of online shops. This paper tries to fulfill this gap by measuring the antecedents of impulsive buying. Additional explaining factors like technical constraints or browsing suggested by the IS literature are added into the causal model. The results of a pilot study show satisfactorily local fit indices indicating high construct validity of the used scales. The supposed hypotheses of the causal are only partially confirmed. The authors suggest conducting further studies focusing on different product categories and personal characteristics.

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Uncertainty, Virtual Consumption, and Prolonged Happiness

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Abstract

People generally dislike uncertainty. However, recent research shows that uncertainty associated with positive events may actually prolong people's happiness. The present research further suggests that whether an uncertain positive event (e.g., winning a lucky draw

but not knowing the particular prize won) would lead to prolonged happiness depends on the amount of imagery thought elicited by the event. Positive moods would be sustained only when people can generate sufficient imagery thought about the various possibilities involved in the event. Results from three experiments lend support to the proposed mechanism underlying happiness prolongation following uncertain positive events.

Effects of Interpersonal Influences on Innovation Evaluation

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In the present economic environment, where technological advances happen very quickly and a product's life cycle is cut short, companies need a strategy for innovations development to accomplish the objectives. In this paper, we analyze how the addition of innovations affect product evaluation, and how this influence is affected by the type of innovation, but also by the individual's interpersonal influences. The preliminary analyses confirm that the impact of the interpersonal influences on innovation evaluation depends on innovation type.

The Relationship Between Consumer Guilt and Shopping Behavior

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Extended Abstract

Guilt is a negative state that an individual experiences in reaction to either a positive but undeserved event or a negative but deserved event (Roseman, 1984). Despite its negative valence, guilt is considered a functional emotion, because it informs individuals that they have violated personal or social standards and motivates reparative action (Tangney, Miller, Flicker, & Barlow, 1996). In a consumption context, guilt has been linked to impulsive buying (Rook, 1987), compulsive consumption (O'Guinn & Faber, 1989), and overspending (Pirisi, 1995). This guilt about consumption is usually named "Consumer Guilt." Furthermore, Burnett and Lunsford (1994) defined consumer guilt as "a violation of one's internal standard and subsequently a lowering of self esteem"; they also suggested four dimensions of consumer guilt: financial guilt, health guilt, moral guilt, and social responsibility guilt. Although previous research has defined consumer guilt, the difference between consumer guilt versus guilt in a general term is not clear. Beyond the several categories of consumer guilt, the construct and measurement of consumer guilt are still not available in previous research. Therefore, this study focuses on the relationship between the consumers' shopping behaviors and consumer guilt and intends to explore the dimensions and evolution of consumer guilt.

In order to find out the relationship of the consumer guilt and shopping behavior, respondents were reminded with a shopping situation which consumers usually have the feelings of guilt, which is self-gift giving. Self-gift giving has been promoted heavily as a reward as "you worth to own it" to oneself in advertising. However, under the constraints of budgets and the influence of traditional values, consumers may still hesitate to buy themselves gifts. Self-gift giving is a situation which can elicit consumer guilt. Thus the interviewees were requested to recall their last self-gift giving situation. This research employed the critical incident techniques. A simple constructed questionnaire was first designed and pre-tested three times before the main field work. The main study contains 60 self-gift giving events.

The results illustrate three major findings. First, before beginning the construct development of consumer guilt, we suggest that guilt is an independent construct that is different from the negative side of satisfaction and happiness. 9 questions about the feelings of satisfaction, happiness, and consumer guilt are asked. The respondents are asked to rate, on a nine-point scale, "Before you buy this gift for yourself, how happy, satisfied, and guilty you are?", "when you are buying this gift for yourself, how happy, satisfied, and guilty you are?" and "After you buy this gift for yourself, how happy, satisfied, and guilty you are?" (1=extremely not satisfied, happy, and guilty; 10=extremely satisfied, happy, and guilty). According to the results of factor analysis, they can divide into four factors. Three questions about consumer guilt, consumer guilt after buying, before buying, and at the point of buying, group to one factor (factor loadings=0.84, 0.75, 0.72). The two questions about satisfaction and happiness before buying group to one factor (factor loadings=0.94, 0.89). The two questions about satisfaction and happiness after buying group to one factor (factor loadings=0.91, 0.91). The two questions about satisfaction and happiness at the point of buying group to one factor (factor loadings=0.93, 0.92). Therefore, the result indicates that consumer guilt is different from negative satisfaction and happiness.

Second, through collecting, sorting and analyzing 60 self-gift giving events, the results pointed out consumer guilt had three dimensions: hesitation, pain of paying, and self-blame. The hesitation means that consumers think they should stop buying these gifts because buying these gifts has violated their value judgment or social standards. In addition, the pain of paying means that consumers have to pay much money when they buy something in a store. Furthermore, the self-blame means that consumers feel something wrong and don't understand why they have bought something and they disagree with their reason for buying them.

Third, the past researches indicated consumer guilt can divide into two categories: reactive guilt and anticipatory guilt (Rawlings, 1970). Anticipatory guilt occurs before buying and reactive guilt occurs after buying. Our study finds that besides anticipatory guilt and reactive guilt, consumer guilt occurs at the point of buying. We name it proceeding guilt. In addition, the three dimensions of consumer guilt, hesitation, pain of paying, and self-blame, can match the three moments of buying. The major dimension of anticipatory guilt is hesitation, the major dimension of proceeding guilt is pain of paying, and the major dimension of reactive guilt is self-blame.

Scarcity's Effects on Evaluation of Prices

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Abstract

This research develops a conceptual framework which incorporates both the motivational and the interference effects of scarcity on information processing. The results from two studies show that scarcity influences consumers' perceptions of price information for a travel package with the pattern of results being dependent on price levels and consumers' motivation to process information. Analyses of thought measures provided further support for the underlying processes.

Consumer Response to Marketplace Deception: Implication of the Persuasion Knowledge Model

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Extended Abstract

Deception—intentionally misleading others about the truth—is a fundamental human behavior, commonly practiced in the marketplace by both buyers and sellers. Building upon the Persuasion Knowledge Model (Friestad & Wright, 1994), we propose that consumers develop sensitivity and coping strategies in response to marketers' deceptive attempts. In particular, consumers' deception knowledge functions as a sensor in the formation of a valid attitude towards an advertisement or an influence agent. This process is described as associative decision making in psychology literature (e.g. Massaro, 1994). The basic notion is that consumers are able to recognize similar misleading patterns based on what they learn about marketers' practices. Therefore, they are more likely to perceive advertisement as deceptive and are less likely to be misled.

The Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM) is a useful framework for organizing knowledge that is relevant to marketplace deception since knowledge of deception can be viewed as a subset of knowledge about persuasion. The PKM argues that from early childhood through early adulthood and beyond, an individual develops knowledge relevant for the two persuasion-related tasks of everyday life: coping effectively with others' persuasion attempts and effectively executing one's own persuasion attempts. In this study, we aim to investigate the functions and limits of deception knowledge when consumers cope with deceptive ads. Both situational factors and individual differences are examined: knowledge or salience of the potentially deceptive tactics used, high and low stake situation (whether the expected consequence of being misled is serious), and cognitive optimism (the extent to which consumers wish the claims were true).

Hypotheses

First, we hypothesize that consumer deception knowledge increases the perceived deceptiveness of advertisements. Deception knowledge refers to consumers' beliefs about a deceptive agent's motives, strategies and tactics, and how to cope with deception episodes. Although deception knowledge does not necessarily lead to an accurate judgment, it makes consumers more skeptical toward advertisements. Second, we argue that high or low stake situation moderates the effect of perceived deception on consumers' attitude. In high-stake situation, consumers believe that being misled may cause serious consequences to themselves or others (e.g. safety and health problems), so they will form a stronger negative attitude. Third, we argue that consumers' attitude is also influenced by the degree to which consumers would like to believe the advertising claims are true. Advertisers often encourage consumers to believe that purchasing a product or service will make them more attractive, sexy, glamorous, popular, etc. The mechanism of cognitive optimism that leads to wishful thinking reduces consumers' negative attitude toward deceptive advertisements. Even though consumers do not completely trust advertisers' claims, positive thinking brings hopeful comfort and triggers an intention to try.

Method

The experiment used a 2 (instruction of deception knowledge vs. no instruction, between) X 2 (high vs. low stake situation, between) X 2 (deceptive ads vs. non-deceptive ads, within) mixed design and was administered to one hundred and thirty-three college students on personal computers. Deception knowledge was manipulated by instructions placed at the beginning of the questionnaire. The one-page instruction described the nature of deception knowledge, common deceptive tactics and cues to detect deception in advertising. Participants in the control condition were not given the instruction. The seriousness of expected consequences and advertisement deceptiveness were manipulated by having the participants view different types of print ads. In the high-stake situation (with serious consequences), participants rated six ads, half of which were higher in deceptiveness, and half of which were lower in deceptiveness. This was repeated in the low-stake situation (without serious consequences). A total of 12 stimuli were selected out of 248 print advertisements in major U.S. popular magazines published during the past two years. Stimuli were carefully examined along the manipulation dimensions in a pretest with 48 college students.

Results and Discussion

The repeated-measure ANOVA results show that deception knowledge significantly increased perceived deception but did not change attitude toward advertisements. Participants in the instruction condition (Mean=5.19, SD= 1.51) rated the ads as more deceptive than those in the no instruction condition (Mean=4.63, SD=1.38), $F(1, 130)=6.007, p<.05$. Also, perceived deceptiveness had a significant negative impact on attitude toward ads, $F(1,128)=31.581, p<.001$, when deceptive ads led to stronger negative attitude (Mean=4.96,

SD=1.33) than non-deceptive ads (Mean=5.63, SD =.99). There was no significant interaction between deception knowledge and high vs. low-stake situation, $F(1,128)=2.51, p>.05$.

There was a significant interaction between perceived deceptiveness and high vs. low-stake situation, $F(1,128)=41.63, p<.001$. Consumers' attitude toward deceptive ads (Mean=4.23, SD=1.24) was more negative than that toward the non-deceptive ads (Mean=5.63, SD=1.03) in high-stake situation. In low-stake situation, however, participants' attitude toward deceptive ads was not significantly different from that toward non-deceptive ads. Further, when individuals' cognitive optimism was controlled for, the interaction between perceived deceptiveness and high vs. low-stake situation remained significant; however, the main effect of perceived deceptiveness was no longer significant, which suggests that participants who wish the claims were true tended to hold less negative attitude toward advertisements despite perceived deceptiveness.

This study extends the Persuasion Knowledge Model to marketplace deception. Deception knowledge appears to make consumers more skeptical toward advertisements. However, whether it involves with a high or low stake situation moderates the effect of perceived deception on attitude. When consumers foresee more serious consequences, they tend to hold stronger negative attitude toward deceptive advertisements. Also, individuals' desire to trust advertised claims appears to moderate the negative effect of perceived deceptiveness on attitude. As consumers want to believe ads, they tend to hold less negative attitude.

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Consumer Consideration Sets: Altering Memory, Brand Evaluations, and Choice

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Brands that have increased memory accessibility have an advantage to less accessible brands (Nedungadi, 1990). The present work focuses on the effects of prior experiences on consumer memory for brands in choice situations. Previous research suggests that only minor (i.e., relatively low share) brands within a product category will benefit from advertising effects of competitors (Nedungadi, 1990). For example, advertising for Sprite would be more beneficial to a minor brand such as 7-Up than to a major brand within that category, such as Coke.

The DRM Effect

The pattern of priming effects found on only the minor brand is surprising in light of the DRM effect (Deese; 1959; Roediger & McDermott, 1995). The DRM paradigm consists of showing participants lists of related words such as *thread, pin, sewing, sharp, point*, and so on; participants falsely report having seen the non-presented critical lure, *needle* (in the context of either an explicit or implicit memory task; e.g., McDermott 1997; McKone and Murphy 2000; Hancock, Hicks, Marsh and Ritschel 2003), and are even more likely to do so if longer lists are used (e.g., Robinson & Roediger, 1997). Warning participants about the illusion right before the memory task does not eliminate the effect (Gallo, Roediger and McDermott 2001); however, if the warning occurs before the exposure session, the instruction serves to attenuate the effect (Gallo, Roberts and Seamon 1997; Gallo et al. 2001), suggesting that the illusion is created by the encoding process.

Hypothesis Development

The DRM findings suggest that advertising effects of competitors would be of more benefit to major rather than minor brands in the same category. That is because the major brands have many more schema-based associations in memory than do the minor brands. For example, Hilton (major) could be linked to, or expected from lobby, lounge, front desk, swimming pool, comfort, and so on, whereas Days Inn (minor) may not be linked to all of those associates. Following this logic, the schema-based associations created by advertising of competitors are more likely to overlap with already existing associations of the major versus the minor brands. This would cause more facilitation of the major than the minor brands.

We speculated that Nedungadi's (1990) results may have been restricted by the limited set of brand categories he used. Moreover, his hypotheses were derived from assumptions of the separate systems account of memory, assuming principles of activation and inhibition. Recent evidence for the DRM effect has been inconsistent with simple activation accounts (Watson, Balota and Roediger 2003) and has favored attributional accounts (Gallo and Roediger 2003; Whittlesea 2002). Thus we performed a re-inquiry into the work of Nedungadi (1990) to investigate the extent to which his findings may or may not be consistent with the DRM effect; we used more categories and drew our predictions from the current DRM literature.

Current Work

We conducted extensive pilot testing to develop 28 stimulus sets, each comprising a product category (e.g., vehicles), major brands (e.g., Toyota), minor brands (e.g., Nissan), and associates to those brands (e.g., car, drive). In our preliminary studies, we observed that

participants reported having been exposed to “major brand lures” such as Coke, when in fact they had only been exposed to associates (e.g., caffeine) and direct competitors of those lures (e.g., Pepsi). This effect was attenuated when participants were warned about the illusion before the memory test.

We also examined preference ratings of major brand lures. Participants had higher preference ratings for major versus minor brands, and for brands seen earlier versus those not seen. Thus, preliminary testing demonstrated that brand accessibility does influence brand evaluation. It thereby provided the basis for using the present stimulus set to investigate the effects on brand choice and to assess the relationships among consideration set inclusion, brand evaluation, and choice.

In an initial study conducted in a mixed-choice (a combination of memory-based and stimulus-based) setting, prior exposure to associates and competitors had minimal influence on the choice of major brand lures; and more importantly, such prior exposure had *no influence* on the choice of minor brand lures. Further, prior exposure to associates and competitors had no effect on brand evaluations (of either major or minor brands), although in the absence of prior exposure, evaluations were consistently higher for the major versus minor brands. These results appear to contradict those of Nedungadi (1990). We are currently investigating the reasons for the divergence in the results we obtained compared to those of Nedungadi (1990).

We suggest that stimulus-based and memory-based, as well as mixed choices may be influenced by (a) one’s evaluation of the match between the current fluency of processing and the expectations developed “on the fly” (Kahneman and Miller 1986) that are acquired through the exposure situation that increases accessibility (cf. Whittlesea 2002; 2004), and (b) people’s intuitive theories of cause and effect (Marcel 1983; Ross 1977).

In contrast to Nedungadi’s (1990) assertion that priming can affect accessibility without having any influence of brand evaluation, we hypothesize that accessibility and choice are both based on the same mechanisms, and that the processing style and outcome involved in brand memory are the same as those in brand evaluation (for a similar perspective, see Kronlund and Bernstein 2006). In addition, we assume that stimulus- and memory-based choices are influenced by the same factors (cf. Whittlesea and Leboe 2000), even though the decision-making for each type of choice has been found to differ (e.g., Lynch et al 1988).

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Adaptive Selling Behavior among Retail Salespeople: The Use of Overt Cues and Consumer Stereotypes

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Extended Abstract

In traditional bricks and mortar retailing, salespeople play a key role in helping to grow and sustain a loyal customer base. Yet as consumers continue to be presented with more ways to make purchases, building consumer loyalty is becoming increasingly difficult; thus even more emphasis is placed on the role of salespeople in terms of ensuring that consumers' needs are met and that lasting relationships are formed. In theory, in order to best meet the needs of consumers, salespeople must be able to quickly identify consumers' needs and respond to them with selling behaviors that are most appropriate. The preceding statement is based on the widely accepted notion that a salesperson who adapts his or her behavior to different types of consumers is going to be more successful than a salesperson who uses the same pre-determined approach; thus we might assume that effective retail salespeople practice the concept of adaptive selling (Weitz, Sujan and Sujan 1986). Is this really the case however, that retail salespeople practice adaptive selling and if so how do they go about it?

In order to begin to shed some light on these issues it is necessary to have a detailed understanding of retail salespeople's actual behaviors with consumers and an understanding of their thoughts and beliefs about how a salesperson should behave with a consumer and what makes a good salesperson. Our first step was to examine their thoughts and beliefs by conducting depth interviews with retail salespeople working for a large consumer electronics/home computer retailer.

Sample Characteristics

The sample consisted of 20 retail salespeople. All informants were male with a median age of 27. The oldest informant was 45; the youngest was 22, and the average length of employment with the company 3.5 years with the shortest length of employment 3.5 months and the longest 8 years. All informants were employed as full-time retail salespeople associated with a specific department—either computers or home electronics/home theater.

Interview Format

A semi-structured depth interview format was used and one researcher conducted all 20 interviews. All interviews were audio-taped with the permission of the informants and were later transcribed verbatim for analysis. Interviews lasted anywhere from 32 to 76 minutes.

Data Coding and Interpretation

The informants' transcripts were coded using NVivo qualitative software which allows the researcher to customize searches, create nodes within the data of related topics, and search for themes within the data based on key words and phrases.

Excerpts from the interviews illustrate some of the key findings.

Behavior with Customers.

We were interested to see if informants altered their selling behavior with customers, and if so, what caused them to do this. The majority of responses indicated that age, appearance and gender were often used as cues for altering selling behavior

I had this young guy who kind of knew what was cool now and what he wanted and he wanted to take me in a certain direction, so I just treated him like he was my friend and we went from there, but when I had an older gentleman I treated him with a lot more respect and in a more polite manner. Like I didn't use slang or anything like that (Jeff age 24).

I look at age and gender but not dress style. I look at old people and feel that they are different because they value their money more so they might take a bit more time than say a young person would because they always think they know exactly what they want. Young people tend to spend their money more freely. Sometimes I help the young person first so I can get them out of the way and then I help the older person because they'll probably take more time and they'll tell me how their grandson is or whatever and take up about 20 minutes of my time. I don't look at somebody and say they look rich or they look poor and treat them differently that way (Tim age 26).

When you get somebody like a grandma that comes in, she is going to want extra attention because you know she is an old lady and you have to adapt to that. If you have a guy coming in and he is from the country and he is looking for the latest NASCAR electronic game he won't want to know about a TV that has progressive scanning and high definition. He's going to be like what the hell is that and he will get frustrated if you bring that stuff in. You just have to be simple (Pete age 28).

It seems there are clearly preconceived stereotypes about consumers based on very overt characteristics. Informants use these characteristics as indicators of consumer knowledge and/or spending power and spending habits. Using this type of classification system is questionable at best and clearly these observable characteristics do not provide any indication of what the customer's needs are for the specific interaction with the salesperson.

After hearing these kinds of statements from all 20 salespeople we wondered how the salespeople in the sample would define or describe a successful salesperson. Do they feel that in order to be successful, a salesperson simply needs to observe overt characteristics and then select behaviors based on a stereotype or are there other beliefs about successful salespeople? What we found was a belief that successful salespeople do not behave in the same manner with every customer. Successful salespeople quickly 'read' a customer and then select the appropriate selling style. Theoretically, we found that our informants were articulating the concept of adaptive selling, which we would argue is what salespeople should practice in order to best meet consumers' needs, but what is the troubling aspect are the cues

the salespeople use when attempting to adapt. They use overt cues and associated stereotypes as opposed to really attempting to understand consumers' needs. By adapting in this manner, the dangers are many including missed opportunities for initial sales and missed opportunities for really connecting with a consumer on a deeper level, which helps to create loyal consumers.

The next step in the research is to conduct additional depth interviews with retail salespeople in different sectors of retailing, e.g., clothing and home furnishings in order to ascertain how wide spread some of the issues we have initially uncovered are among retail salespeople. Following that we plan to gather observational data of retail salespeople in actual selling situations to see if it corresponds with what the salespeople tell us they do.

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Luxury Good Expenditures of Husband and Wife Dyads Incorporating User Attitudes

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Extended Abstract

Luxury is defined as, "something adding to pleasure or comfort but not absolutely necessary; an indulgence in something that provides pleasure, satisfaction, or ease." (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2004). In the broadest definition of luxury, the U.S. luxury goods retailing market, which includes product categories such as perfume, jewelry, watches, cars, champagne and crystal, to name a few, surpassed the \$500 billion mark in 2004 (*SmartMoney*, 2004). Despite its size, the luxury industry as a whole is relatively under researched in the marketing literature. Those that have studied luxury goods have focused on the consumer psychology of consumption, such as materialism, symbolism, and social identity (Prendergast and Wong 2003; Vickers and Renand 2003), to name a few. However, no study in the academic literature has investigated the unique buying behavior of husbands and wives in luxury goods categories, or the impact of user attitudes, spousal purchasing behavior, and individual and household characteristics on either of these.

This paper investigates luxury good expenditures of husband and wife dyads within a household, where all purchases are made for the wife. This allows us to compare the purchasing behavior of user and non-user within a household as well as that of husband and wife dyads. Our main interest is to understand how the purchasing behavior, attitudes, and personal characteristics of one member of the dyad affect the purchasing behavior of the other.

We begin by developing a conceptual model of the dyadic purchasing behavior of husbands (non-users) and wives (users) for luxury goods. To explain the purchasing behavior of each of the two members of the dyad, we include as explanatory variables in our model, 1) the wife's (user's) attitudes towards the product and product category, 2) the purchasing behavior of the other member of the dyad, and 3) individual and household characteristics. Figure 1 provides a pictorial view that captures this logic.

As Figure 1 shows, our dyadic model of husband and wife expenditures for luxury goods is influenced by exogenous and endogenous factors. The three rectangles represent the exogenous variables of the wife's attitudes towards jewelry, individual characteristics about the husband and the wife, and household characteristics. The two circles represent the endogenous variables of the expenditure of each spouse, and are determined by the model.

To test our dyadic conceptual model we conduct an empirical study that utilizes 2003 diary panel data provided by Ipsos, a global market research company which ranks 3rd among all global survey-based research companies with 2004 revenues of 605.6 million euros. The data tracks husband and wife expenditures on jewelry for the wife only, for up to a four month period. The jewelry category is a large and important sector of the luxury goods category. U.S. jewelry sales were estimated at \$45B in 2004 and in the same year jewelry represented the fastest growing advertising category for many luxury magazines including *Vogue* and *Town & Country* (*Advertising Age*, 2004).

We first use factor analysis to reduce a set of thirteen original variables capturing wives' attitudes towards jewelry. The thirteen original variables are reduced to five main user attitudes, which we label, "Guilty Consumer", "Romantic Consumer", "Enthusiastic Purchaser", "Involved Recipient", and "Infrequent User". We then use the method of instrumental variables to estimate the parameters of our dyadic model of luxury good expenditures where the dependent variables are the husband's expenditures on jewelry for his wife and the wife's expenditures on jewelry for herself during the window of observation. The explanatory variables in our model include the five user attitudes mentioned above, the spending behavior of both members of the dyad, and personal and household characteristics of the husband and wife.

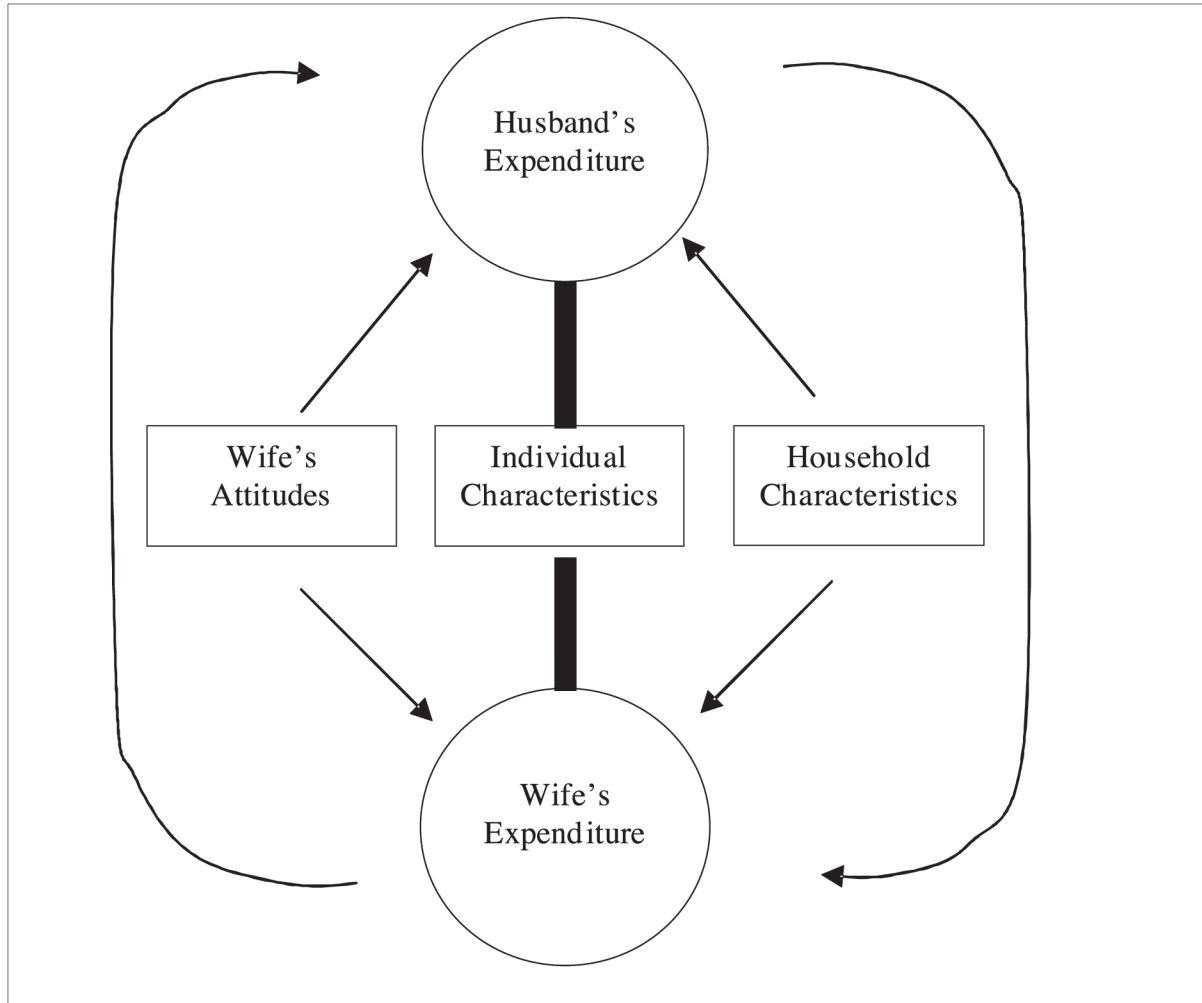
Our findings reveal that while household income is a useful predictor of luxury good spending, income has a different impact on the expenditure of husbands ("non-users") than wives ("users"). We also find that "user" attitudes of the wife affect her self-purchases differently than the purchases made for her by her husband, and that spousal purchasing behavior and individual and household characteristics affect a wife's purchases of luxury goods for herself differently than they affect the purchases made for her by her husband.

Our results are useful for marketers of luxury goods where both wives (users) and husbands (non-users) within a household are purchasers of the product, but they behave differently and therefore developing a differentiated approach to market to both is advantageous.

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FIGURE 1
 Model of Husband-Wife Dyad Expenditure on Luxury Goods for the Wife



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Does a Broken Heart Lead to an Empty Wallet? Social Exclusion Affects Impulsive Spending

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Extended Abstract

Impulse purchases are made spontaneously, without deliberation, and without regard for the consequences of making the purchase (Rook 1987). Hoch and Loewenstein (1991) argued that the decision to purchase is determined by 2 factors: The desire to purchase and the amount of willpower one has to overcome this desire. When the urge to purchase becomes stronger than the amount of willpower, purchasing becomes more likely.

Recently, Vohs and Faber (in press) demonstrated that people with a reduced capacity to exert self-control are more likely to spend money impulsively. That is, participants who engaged in prior acts of self-control, and therefore had a reduced capacity to exert self-

control, spent more money than participants who had not engaged in prior acts of self-control. Research on social exclusion has shown that when people are socially excluded they engage in behavior indicative of low self-control (Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, & Twenge 2005). For example, they eat more cookies, drink less of a healthy but unpleasant-tasting drink, and give up on difficult tasks sooner than participants who were not socially excluded. Thus, socially excluded people are less able to implement a more desirable response than participants who are not socially excluded. Taken together, these results suggest that social exclusion should lead to increased impulsive spending via reduced self-control. One laboratory study supports this hypothesis.

Social exclusion was manipulated using a procedure developed by Baumeister and colleagues (2005). After arriving to the experiment, participants completed the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ). The experimenter scored their questionnaire; based on random assignment, the experimenter gave the participant bogus feedback regarding their personality score. Participants in the *future belong condition* were told they would have rewarding relationships throughout life, a long and stable marriage, and lasting friendships. Participants in the *future alone condition* were told they would end up alone later in life; their current friends and relationships would fade away, their (several) marriages would all dissolve, and they would essentially be alone later in life. Participants in the *misfortune control condition* were told they would be accident prone later in life. This condition served as a negative feedback control, allowing us to attribute increases in spending to the specificity of negative feedback regarding social relationships, not negative feedback in general. After the feedback, we checked for differences in affect by administering the Brief Mood Introspection Scale (BMIS; Mayer and Gaschke 1988).

Next, we measured amount willingness to spend, using a Feinberg (1986) method adapted by Vohs and Faber (in press). Participants were given a binder, which contained 15 glossy pictures of various mid to high end products (watch, car, fridge, sofa, jewelry, etc.). Participants were asked to indicate the maximum price they would be willing to pay for each product. Independent raters classified the products according to three categories: 1) Products one purchases for the self (e.g., Widescreen Flat-Panel TV) 2) Products one purchases to indicate status or resources, that is, conspicuous consumption products (e.g., Audi, Rolex) and 3) Products one buys for practical purposes (e.g., table, sofa).

We summed amount willing to pay for all 15 products as an overall index of willingness to spend. An ANOVA with condition as the predictor showed that participants in the *future alone condition* were willing to pay significantly more than the *future belonging condition* and the *misfortune control condition*. Willingness to pay was not significantly different between the *future alone condition* and the *misfortune control condition*.

We also summed amount willing to pay for the three categories of items: Conspicuous consumption items, items for the self, and practical items. Three separate ANOVAs using condition as the predictor showed that participants in the *future alone condition* were willing to pay significantly more for conspicuous consumption items and items purchased for the self than participants in the *future belonging condition* and *misfortune control condition*; however, there was no difference between the three groups in willingness to pay for practical items.

Our experimental design precludes the possibility that obtained results are attributable to receiving negative feedback. Participants in the *misfortune control condition* also received negative feedback; however, they were willing to pay less than participants in the *future alone condition*. The increase in willingness to spend seems more specific to the negative feedback of social exclusion.

No differences in emotion, measured by the BMIS (Mayer and Gaschke 1988), were found as a result of the feedback. This is consistent with previous laboratory social exclusion manipulations (e.g., Baumeister et al., 2005). Furthermore, correlations between amount willing to pay and emotion indicated there were no significant relations between our dependent measures and emotion.

In sum, this study provides evidence that social exclusion leads to increased willingness to spend. Participants who have been socially excluded indicated they would pay more for products that demonstrate status and resources, as well as for products one purchases for the self, relative to participants who were not socially excluded. Social exclusion did not, however, lead to an increased willingness to pay for practical items.

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It's About Time: Sex Differences in Estimating Time for Shopping in Five Contexts

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Traditional sex roles hold that women not only spend more time shopping than men, but also enjoy shopping far more than men do. Indeed, there seems to be as much pride among men when they announce how much they "hate" shopping as among women who proclaim their prowess (Dennis & McCall, 2005). If retailers and researchers wish to alter males' perceptions of shopping, we require a better

understanding of the processes that maintain those sex differences. To help fill this gap, this research will test the hypothesis that sex differences in shopping behavior are reflected in, and influenced by, the amount of time women and men estimate in advance for shopping tasks, and more fundamentally, in how they arrive at these estimates. Men, more so than women, may be falling into a form of planning fallacy (Kruger & Evans, 2003) where time estimates become unrealistic, leading to unpleasant experiences.

Time estimation and shopping enjoyment are linked in a close, reciprocal relationship that can have dramatic effects on the retail environment (Donovan, Rossiter, Marcolyn & Nesdale, 1994). Previous research shows that enjoyment of a task may lead to an underestimation of time elapsing as the task unfolds, as when people lose track of time doing something they enjoy (see Chaston & Kingstone, 2004). Conversely, underestimating time in advance of an activity will tend to create a sense of time pressure that can interfere with the task and reduce enjoyment. Time pressure has been identified as a significant source of shopping stress (Aylott & Mitchell, 1999; Fram, 1991, 1992; Fram & Axelrod, 1990; Suján, Suján, Bettman, & Verhallen, 1999). Time pressure is an important variable for marketers to understand because it affects attitude towards shopping (Mowen, 1993) and consumer behavior (Van Kenhove & De Wulf, 2000). The amount of time allotted for shopping, and the way in which shopping time is estimated, can either exacerbate or relieve time pressure. For this reason, time estimation holds the potential to be a lynchpin in understanding the psychological differences between men and women shoppers; there is little previous research in this area.

To test the hypotheses underlying this study, we required a diversity of shopping contexts experienced by both sexes and a relatively homogeneous sample of shoppers. We selected a sample of men and women enrolled full-time in the Business program at Cape Breton University. This allowed for with the added benefit of a “member check” (Maxwell, 2005) of our interpretations of the results with a subgroup of 30 study participants. After pilot testing, we asked the main sample of 203 respondents to estimate the time required to perform specific shopping tasks with which they had experience. The self-report questionnaire had several elements, but our focus in this paper is on the time estimation data.

Shopping is a contextualized act (Buttle, 1992). Therefore, we asked respondents to imagine shopping in 5 different contexts commonly experienced by both men and women. In each context we presented respondents with a product acquisition motive. The specific contexts were shopping for (1) a gift, (2) a computer, (3) a leisure product such as sporting goods, a book, or music, (4) clothing (specifically jeans or casual pants) and (5) a short list of grocery items. We tested the hypothesis that men and women estimate time differently within each of the contexts (MacNeil, 2006).

In analyzing the time estimates provided by men and women in the five shopping contexts, significant main effects were found for both sex ($F(1,162)=17.2, p<.001, \text{partial eta-squared}=.096$) and shopping context ($F(4,648)=28.9, p<.001, \text{partial eta-squared}=.151$), and the interaction was significant ($F(4,680)=5.91, p<.001, \text{partial eta-squared}=.035$). The main effect for sex indicates that women and men differ significantly in their estimates of shopping time, and the significant interaction indicates that sex differences in time estimation depend on shopping contexts.

Results showed that in all contexts women estimated longer amounts of time than did men, but sex differences were statistically significant ($p<.05$) in only three of the five shopping contexts: gift, computer, and clothes. In two contexts, gift and computer, women estimated it would take almost 50% more time than did the men. In the clothing context, women’s estimates were almost twice as high as those given by men. The estimates of time were very similar and not significantly different for leisure product and grocery shopping.

To better understand why men and women are providing different estimates of time, we examined sex differences in the methods by which those estimates were generated. In three of the shopping contexts, we asked respondents to indicate the method of time estimation by selecting one of four options (ballpark, desired time, recall, and subtasks). Using 2 x 4 cross-tabulations and the chi-square statistic we found significant differences in both the gift and leisure product contexts, where men preferred the cursory “ballpark” estimation method, and women preferred to estimate by recalling a previous shopping trip. No significant differences were found in the method of estimating the time required to purchase a computer.

The major results of this study both support and qualify the hypotheses we had in approaching the research project. We found that women tend to allocate more time to shopping than men, but the difference depends on context. We also found that men tend to use more cursory methods of time estimation, though again the shopping context has an impact. Finally, when asked to use the same time estimation procedure, breaking the task into subtasks and estimating the time allocated to each, men and women differ in one context (clothing) and not the other (grocery). The complexity of the results and their implications for retail environments suggest that time estimation for shopping will be fertile ground for future research.

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The Role of Prior Knowledge in Advertisement Evaluation

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Extended Abstract

As an important construct in consumer research, prior knowledge has garnered researchers' attention for more than two decades. Previous research traditionally focuses on prior knowledge's impact on consumers' information search, information processing and learning behaviors. Very few studies (e.g. Roehm and Sternthal 2001) have directly explored the role of prior knowledge in advertisement evaluation. The attempted contribution of this research is to broaden our understanding in this area by investigating the processes by which knowledge has its impact on consumers' evaluation of advertising messages.

The angle from which this study looks at prior knowledge is different from past research in which knowledge is often operationalized as a dichotomous variable (i.e. high vs. low or objective vs. subjective). This study distinguishes itself by focusing on knowledge accessibility and its applicability in judgment. Advertising messages are usually seen or heard by consumers for a very brief period of time. It is unlikely that consumers will mull over their stored knowledge before forming impressions of the ads. In these circumstances, the accessible knowledge ought to play a major role in making judgments. What remains unclear is the interaction between the accessible knowledge and the salient features of the messages to which they attend.

Higgins (1995) proposes that the relation between the stored knowledge and stimulus information depends on whether the perceivers have a priori expectancies or goals. When expectancies or goals are absent, only those salient features of the stimulus that match stored knowledge are relevant. When expectancies or goals are present, "both features that match and features mismatch stored knowledge are relevant" (p.137). Armed with the popular persuasion models such as Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty and Cacioppo 1986), I translate Higgins' proposition into the following research hypothesis: (1) when message processing motivation is low, consumers will give more positive evaluations to the advertisement whose salient feature matches their accessible knowledge about the advertised product; (2) when message processing motivation is high, consumers will not rely on their accessible knowledge to make judgments. There will be no significant difference between the evaluations of matched and mismatched advertisements.

A 2 (processing motivation: low vs. high) x 3 (knowledge accessibility: match vs. mismatch vs. control) between-subjects laboratory experiment was conducted to test the research hypothesis. In the experiment, student subjects' prior knowledge about a specific product feature was made accessible by a priming task. A no-prime control condition was also included. After the priming, subjects were presented with a print newsletter that contains the focal advertisement. Subjects' processing motivation was manipulated by instructing them either to produce a detailed evaluation (high motivation condition) or to provide reading time estimation (low motivation condition).

The results confirmed the hypothesis. Under the low processing motivation condition, matched ads received more favorable evaluations and the mismatched ads were judged worse than those in the no-prime control condition. Under the high processing motivation condition, no significant difference was found across all conditions.

A second study is proposed to test the external validity of the findings from the first study and to provide managerial implications of this research to marketing practitioners.

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I Self Gift Therefore I am: An Examination of Self-construal and Consumers Attitudes Towards Self-gifting

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Extended Abstract

Up until the last decade, gift giving theory and research had been primarily dyadic or interpersonal in nature (e.g. Belk, 1979). Nonetheless, it was acknowledged that people may sometimes give gifts to themselves, and suggested that the self-gift phenomenon may be widely occurring in American society (Mick and DeMoss, 1990a, 1990b).

More specifically, it appears that gifts to oneself are ubiquitous, at least in American society. (Mick and DeMoss, 1990b). Other research has substantiated the notion that self-gifts are a fairly common and important phenomenon particularly in western consumer

behavior (e.g. Faure and Mick, 1993). According to social researchers, Western individuals have become increasingly self-oriented in their purchases and consumption behavior (Mick, DeMoss and Faber 1992), and an example of this phenomena has been labeled self-gifts. Similarly, McKeage et al. (1993) believe that people have been giving gifts to themselves since the early beginnings of self-indulgence.

Self-gifting is clearly prevalent in western consumer behavior. The question then becomes whether the propensity to self gift is confined to the United States, or a more wide spread phenomenon. For example, it is well established that people with different cultural backgrounds may behave differently and have different reactions to similar situations. More specifically, research has shown that different cultural identifications have an impact on the way people think, feel, and behave (e.g. Markus and Kitayama, 1991). How does this effect self-gifting behavior? This research proposes to answer this question by investigating whether self-gifting is a universal phenomenon or one simply confined to Western societies by examining consumers self-construal and attitude towards self-gifting.

Overall, it has been suggested that self-gifts represent a complex class of personal acquisitions that offer intriguing insights on self-directed consumer behavior (Mick and DeMoss 1990b). "Self gift theory will likely benefit from drawing on additionally relevant psychological research" (Mick and DeMoss, 1990b p. 329) since "with rich and complex qualities, self-gifts provide a window through which consumer behavior can be viewed in some of its most adaptive, dramatic and personal significant forms" (Mick and DeMoss, 1990b p.331).

As demonstrated by its name and definition, one of the predominant aspects of self-gifting is the direct focus on the self. Clearly, if people view the self differently, they will react differently to self-gifting. Taken together with the recommendation above by Mick and DeMoss (1990), we propose to draw on the psychological research of Markus and Kitayama (1991) that identified two dimensions of the self that can be used to characterize consumer's self-construal as well as explain and identify differences between cultures: independence and interdependence.

According to Markus and Kitayama, self-construal can be conceptualized by the degree of independence/interdependence that a person possesses. They further state that all people contain both an independent and interdependent self, but that the culture in which they are brought up in influences which one dominates. For example, Europeans and Caucasian Americans are typically said to be independent because they tend to emphasize the individual whereas people from Asian cultures are typically interdependent because they tend to emphasize the group as more important than the individual. People with independent self-construals strive to develop and express their unique characteristics, whereas people with interdependent self-construals place value on harmonious relationships with others and acceptance in their community. Those with well-developed independent self-construals gain self-esteem through expressing the self and validating their internal attributes, whereas harmonious interpersonal relationships and the ability to adjust to various situations are sources of self esteem for the interdependent self-construal (Singelis 1994). After reviewing an extensive array of studies, Markus and Kitayama (1991) argue that these independent and interdependent views of the self influence cognition, emotion, and motivation and help to explain individual differences between cultural groups.

It seems reasonable then to propose that consumers' self-construal will have an impact on their attitude and likelihood to self-gift. More specifically, it seems that people with an independent self-construal will be more likely to self-gift, as they tend to have self-benefiting motivations, such as the need to achieve, self-enhance, or affiliate. Conversely, people with an interdependent self-construal will be less likely to self-gift as they tend to derive their motivations from what benefits others and a group as a whole, such as the need to be agreeable to others, to accommodate to their needs, and to restrain one's own wishes or wants.

To test the above propositions, a survey was distributed to 84 college students in the New York area that measured their self-construal, attitude, subjective norm, and likelihood to self-gift and some other demographic information. As predicted, subjects with high independent self-construals had a significantly more favorable attitude towards self-gifting, and subjects with high interdependent self-construals had a significantly less favorable attitude towards self-gifting (Mindependent=5.37, Minterdependent=4.87; $p < .01$). We also tested subjects' attitude towards self-gifting advertisement slogans (e.g. "The perfect little thank me" (Andies candy) and "Because I'm worth it" (L'Oreal). Overall, Independents had a significantly more favorable attitude towards self-gifting slogans and Interdependents had a significantly less favorable attitude towards them (Mindependent=6.42, Minterdependent=5.98; $p = .018$).

The results of this research have important implications for managers, particularly when choosing an international advertising strategy. It will help companies who market their products in the United States using self-gift appeals in their advertisements decide whether they should use these messages in other countries or need to modify them to successfully sell their products. Based on our study, it seems that they cannot standardize these ads for countries that have consumers typically classified as having Interdependent self-construal. However, the results of this analysis provide some direction to marketers as to what appeals they should use. More specifically, rather than the slogans used in the United States that emphasizes the worth of the individual, (i.e. you deserve it), to better target Interdependents, the slogans should emphasize family and friends and their happiness.

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Anomie Goes Online: The Emo Microculture

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Abstract

Whether the palliative is jazz or emo, it is common for fringe youth microcultures to identify with a musical genre that gives voice to feelings of alienation. However, the place where these youth connect—their *touchspace*—has morphed from yesterday's coffeehouse to today's website. The purpose of this first stage project is to chronicle how adherents of the emo microculture relieve alienation by finding and communicating with other "like me" participants. As part of a larger project focusing upon youth microcultures centered on the common theme of anomie, we are collecting data from a variety of sources to identify emergent themes relative to communication, ritual, and resistance within this new cyber-mediated anomic microculture.

Introduction

Back then, they were hanging out in the coffee shop. In the 1960 British movie *Beat Girl*, "teenage bad girl" Jenny sneaks out of the house to hang out with her "beatnik" pals at the local coffee shop where they talk about alienation and jazz.⁴

Today, they are commiserating on the Internet. In this excerpt from a typical interview with an "emo kid," a girl who could be Jenny's daughter says:

"...I had a bit of an abusive childhood, and I was the fat ugly kid in class until high school...My best friend Nina—the one who introduced me to emo bands seemed to think I didn't like her...That brought me down real hard...Music has always helped me out. Nina and I are a lot alike, and the first thing we found out about each other was that were it not for music we'd probably both either be stuck in a crisis center or dead by now. I rely a lot on music to get me through the day. When I get home from school the only things I do are go online and listen to music." (Greenwald 2003, p. 307)

⁴A plethora of online sources richly document the experience of beatniks and other youth microcultures, cf. for example (<http://www.stim.com/Stim-x/0896August/Automedia/beatnik.html>)

Whether the palliative is jazz or emo, it is common for fringe youth microcultures to identify with a musical genre that gives voice to feelings of alienation. However, the place where these youth connect—their *touchspace*—has morphed from yesterday’s coffeehouse to today’s website. The purpose of this project is to chronicle how adherents of the emo microculture relieve alienation by finding and communicating with other “like me” participants. We will identify emergent themes relative to communication, ritual, and resistance within this new cyber-mediated, anomic microculture.

Adolescence is for many a tormented period characterized by an approach-avoidance conflict—the need for connectedness (cf. Edgette 2002) coupled with feelings of alienation from adults and social institutions. We can view adolescent alienation within the framework of *anomie*, originally articulated by Emile Durkheim as instability within society due to normlessness. This void produces a “...personal sense of unrest, alienation, and uncertainty” (Garfield 1987, p. 276). Although these concepts have been used to explain congregational behaviors from union organizing to mafia social clubs, there have been few attempts to study anomic youth-oriented groups like emo.

Microcultures form and evolve on the basis of strong identification with an activity or art form.⁵ Gans (1974) proposed that people can be categorized into taste cultures based on their individual orientations toward popular culture—in this case, musical taste. We regard the emo phenomenon as a taste culture characterized by shared anomie and the strong propensity to communicate this central theme by constructing a community (offline or online) that shares and reinforces preferences for music and associated clothing styles, hair styles, hang-outs, etc.

McLeod and Chaffee (1972) suggest that social reality is created when an individual receives information from a mediated source such as television or a website; the verisimilitude of this information often rivals that of direct physical observation or real world (i.e., offline) social interaction. The evolving emo genre is a mass-mediated microculture.⁶ Like the beatniks that preceded them, “emo kids” find and connect with one another through music, slang, rituals, and clothing. Emo, short for emotional, is a label both for a musical genre and for the youthful adherents to that genre. Although there are different manifestations of this microculture (e.g. hardcore—extremely abrasive, screamo—screaming lyrics, or post-emo indie rock—softer lyrics), the common thread uniting emo kids is a strong current of alienation, bridging feelings of anger and hurt. Emo song lyrics are histrionic, often desperate, and maybe even whiney. These lyrics from the song “Three Weeks” by the emo artist Aaron Anatasi are typical of this angst: “You are treating me so differently / so different, I can’t explain / I feel like I’m invisible to you.”

Emo kids tend to look like they have just shopped at a garage sale. They often sport work jackets, too-small jeans, and old Chuck Taylor sneakers. The emblematic hairstyle is short, slick, dyed-black hair with pronounced bangs. Their “stores of choice” are retailers that carry the look Hot Topic stores have popularized, although most purchases are made at thrift stores for economy and originality. Emo kids interact primarily on the web, though they may also at times link up at small independent shows. Emo has yet to penetrate mass youth culture. Although a few emo bands have “made it” to MTV, emo kids generally view this commercial success as a form of betrayal.

Method

We will sample a diverse set of photos, movies, websites (including MySpace.com, the emos’ primary gathering place in cyberspace) and blogs to document the emerging emo microculture. Our goal is to identify emergent themes relative to communication, ritual, and resistance as part of our quest to understand how the consumption practices of significant numbers of youths are mediated by this anomic microculture.

Expected Results

We will report results from the first stage of an ongoing project that will chronicle the successive waves of alienation-based youth microcultures since WWII, from the Beatniks of the 1950s to the emos of today (e.g. Mods, Hipsters, Punks). The ongoing study will identify emergent themes relative to communication, ritual, and resistance/alienation as expressed both in offline and online venues by successive generations of anomic consumers.

We expect that this study will uncover emergent themes associated with varying levels of anomia dependent upon the centrality of the emo experience to the respondent. Emos who are at the core of the movement, participating at every level (e.g. music, clothing, rituals) to construct a lifestyle will demonstrate greater degrees of anomic behavior. As participation ripples toward the periphery (e.g. ‘posers’ that just like the distinctive hair but not the music), we expect to observe less anomic behavior as the intensity of identification with this musical genre decreases.

Returns: A Motivational Perspective

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Background & Conceptualization

Product returns are a vital issue among retailers and distributors in today’s marketplace. Cost of returns range from 5% to as much as 30% of sales in some according to a recent article in the Wall Street Journal and, in aggregate, cost retailers billions of dollars a year (Hess and Mayhew, 1997). This is in addition to various hidden costs that are frequently difficult to model such as consumer disloyalty resulting from disappointing product and unpalatable return experiences and the logistics costs of managing the reverse supply chain.

Research conducted on returns phenomena has been sparse and, where existent, has tended to focus on modeling financial and demographic aspects of returns processes. Padmanabhan (1997) modeled the financial feasibility of various return policies; Hess and

⁵Researchers have historically referred to these groups as subcultures (e.g. Hall and Jefferson 1976; Hebdige 1979), but some analysts are starting to prefer the term microculture to distinguish taste subcultures from those defined by gender, race, ethnicity, and so on (Solomon 2006).

⁶Members of this microculture never capitalize the label emo.

Mayhew (1997) modeled a consumer's likelihood of returning a product given demographic, product-specific and behavioral characteristics of consumers; and Wood (2001) provides experimental evidence that return policy leniency affects consumers' transaction dynamics in a remote ordering (i.e. internet, catalog, etc.) environment.

The remainder of the extant product returns research has focused on the supply side issues, while indirectly tapping into the motivational aspects of consumers' thought processes. Hess, Chu and Gerstner (1996) provide theoretical evidence of the efficacy of non-refundable charges in discouraging "inappropriate" (i.e. opportunistic) returns. Davis, Hagerty and Gerstner (1998) document the popular managerial mindset that ease of completing returns (i.e. cost to consumer) correlates highly with the likelihood of making returns.

The purpose of this study is to examine consumer motivations for returning products. Although previous research has tangentially concerned itself with consumer motivations in a returns decision context, no study has comprehensively examined an exhaustive set of reasons why consumers could return products and the effects of those reasons on key behavioral variables of interest.

The major hypothesis of this paper is that return motivations affect consumers' likelihood of returning products, the level of costs consumers will incur to return products, and the amount of guilt consumers experience in returning products. In short, this paper hypothesizes that not all returns are created equal from a motivational perspective.

The managerial implications of this study are potentially far-reaching. Retailers and distributors are constantly striving to minimize or altogether eliminate product returns, despite their adoption of liberal return policies which serve to maximize sales through low-risk trial. Knowing consumers' principal motivations for returns would allow distributors to address these issues in their marketing and merchandising plans. This holds true especially in a world of increasingly pervasive internet and catalog (i.e. remote) sales where experiential product trials are diminished for consumers.

Methodology

Subjects are presented with thirteen different reason-for-return (i.e. motivational) scenarios each about a paragraph in length. They include: (1) Being Overcharged, (2) Functional Failure, (3) Aesthetic Failure, (4) Mistaken Needs Assessment, (5) Better Competitor Functionality, (6) Money Generation, (7) Simultaneous Comparison, (8) Sense of Accomplishment, (9) Extracted Use, (10) Cheaper Competitor Product, (11) Combating Feelings of Inadequacy (Failure Salience), (12) Counteracting Impulsive Tendencies and (13) Undue Pressure from Seller.

For each scenario, subjects are told to assume that the price paid for the product being returned is either \$10, \$100, or \$1,000, representing small, moderate and large purchase amounts respectively. Subjects are then asked to report, using a nine-point scale: (1) the maximum amount of cost they would incur to make the return (MaxCost), (2) their likelihood of making the return (RL), and how guilty they would feel about making the return (Guilt). Subjects are subsequently asked to report how responsible they believe both they and the seller are for causing the return, given the particular scenario described.

All scenarios were presented using a within-subject design so as to make the manipulation conditions more salient and evoke relative ratings on the dependent variables.

Results and Major Findings

51 respondents completed the surveys. The major hypothesis of the paper is confirmed: The motivation employed in making a return affects (1) the amount of cost consumers will incur to make the return, (2) how likely consumers are to make the return, and (3) the guilt experienced while contemplating making the return.

Correlational Findings

Purchase Price correlates very strongly with the Maximum Cost (Max Cost) subjects are willing to incur to return product ($r=.57$, $p < .001$), and less strongly, but still significantly, with Return Likelihood ($r = .29$, $p < .001$). Purchase Price does not correlate with Maximum Cost as a % of Amount Spent (MaxCost/Amt). The Maximum Cost (Max Cost) subjects are willing to incur correlates moderately well with Likelihood of Return ($r=.21$, $p < .001$). Lastly, Return Likelihood correlates negatively with Guilt ($r=-.28$, $p < .001$).

ANOVA Results

For the Maximum Cost respondents are willing to incur dependent variable (MaxCost), only Purchase Price (Amount) is significant. For the Maximum Cost as a Percentage of Purchase Price dependent variable (MaxCost/Amt), only Scenario is significant ($p=.014$). For the Return Likelihood dependent variable, Scenario is significant ($p < .001$), Purchase Price (Amount) is significant ($p < .001$) and the Scenario*Purchase Price interaction is significant at about the 10% level.

For the guilt experienced while contemplating the return dependent variable (Guilt), only Scenario is significant ($p < .001$). For both the Perception of Seller Responsibility for causing the return and Perception of Buyer Responsibility for causing the return, Scenario was significant ($p < .001$ for both) while Purchase Price was not.

Specific Results Discussion

Maximum cost consumers were willing to incur as a percentage of price (MaxCost/Amt) was highest for Money Generation and Functional Failure and lowest for Being Overcharged and Cheaper Competitor Product. Return Likelihood was highest for Being Overcharged, Functional Failure, Cheaper Competitor Product and Undue Pressure from Seller and lowest for Sense of Accomplishment and Extracted Use. Guilt was highest for Extracted Use, Sense of Accomplishment and Simultaneous Comparison, and lowest for Better Competitor Functionality, Cheaper Competitor Product and Undue Pressure from Seller.

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A Designer is Only as Good as a Star Who Wears Her Clothes: Examining the Roles of Opinion Leaders using the Persuasion Knowledge Model

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Extended Abstract

A basic assumption in diffusion theory is that some individuals, referred to as opinion leaders, are influential in persuading others to adopt products within a given social structure. They directly affect the diffusion of innovation by being the early adopters and spurring new product interest as well as trial. The diffusion of information pertaining to the innovation and its influence depends on the opinion leadership. Many attempts have been made to identify the characteristics of opinion leaders, and the findings have typically shown that opinion leaders are individuals who are knowledgeable about various topics and whose advice is taken seriously by others. They also tend to be very socially active and highly interconnected within the community (Darley and Johnson, 1993). Moreover, effective opinion leaders tend to be slightly higher than the people they influence in terms of status and educational attainment, but not so high as to be in a different social class (Rogers, 1995). This way, the leaders are still a part of their audience's reference group. And as opinion leaders these individuals are looked upon by the follower-group to make their assessments about the worth of the innovations.

The theoretical contribution of this research arises in the form of empirical evidence that the Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM) (Friestad and Wright 1994) can explain some of the anomalies in the Diffusion of Innovations (DoI) model. We suggest that the perception of the opinion leaders, as endorsers or adopters, is the key variable in determining how much influence the opinion leaders would ultimately have upon the follower class.

Fashion is an area where interpersonal communications has been found to be highly important in the diffusion of information. Additionally, the frequent introduction of new clothing styles each season makes the fashion market a desirable study for diffusion research focusing upon innovativeness (Baumgarten, 1975). Thus, we focused on fashion as the domain of the first study.

According to Rogers (1995,) an innovation is any idea, practice or object perceived as new. Fashion is characterized by constant innovations, whether real or perceived that often include small changes from the previous season or year. Because fashions are constantly changing, but the fashion changes are not extreme innovations, they can be classified as dynamically continuous innovations (Rogers, 1995). Understanding the diffusion process for fashion therefore is crucial to marketers in the industry since fashion is so dynamic in nature.

Fashion opinion leaders represent a significant target market with high sales potential for the fashion marketer and furthermore, beyond their individual purchase capacity, they represent important change agents in disseminating fashion information to others during the fashion season (Summers, 1970). The goal of the marketer in reaching these opinion leaders is to stimulate positive word of mouth communication via them to the masses. In other words, the communication message should be tailored so that it's communicable in interpersonal channels, and can therefore lead to the diffusion of the particular fashion (Summers, 1970).

Opinion leaders are crucial for the social legitimation of new innovations and fashion ideas (Rogers, 1995). If a new look is adopted by fashion opinion leaders, then it has an increased chance of becoming a fashion adopted by the rest of the population, and the teen market is no exception. Opinion leadership is defined as "the degree to which an individual is able to influence other individual's attitudes or overt behavior informally in a desired way with relative frequency" (Rogers, 1995). If designers can determine who these opinion leaders are, and target them effectively, then the introduction of a particular fashion has a much higher probability of becoming adopted.

It is often difficult to determine who the opinion leaders are for a particular segment, and even more difficult to figure out how to target them effectively. However, for the fashion industry, and specifically the teenage market, we propose that celebrities may serve as opinion leaders, in that that through them interpersonal communication about the latest fashions are facilitated.

To gain more insight into our proposed phenomenon of celebrities as fashion opinion leaders for this segment, we conducted 3 focus groups (8 subjects each) and 6 in-depth interviews with 4 females and 2 males who lived in the New York City area. We found overwhelming support for our notion that teenagers view celebrities as fashion opinion leaders. Specifically, there was a lot of interest in celebrity singers, who were considered to be 'cool, stylish and real,' and limited interest in younger celebrities. Additionally, depending on the style, (i.e. funky vs. classy) different types of celebrities (i.e. singers vs. actresses) were preferred.

One of the more interesting findings that our research yielded was that teens seemed to discriminate between celebrities wearing a particular style in a commercial or some other paid form of advertisement and celebrities wearing a particular style on an award show or pictured casually in a magazine, the latter of which they felt displayed a more real and legitimate image. Apparently, credibility was a big issue for the teens and they felt that being paid to wear something was not reflective of personal tastes or likes by the celebrities and therefore would not be influential in getting them to adopt a new fashion.

Our findings are also in tune with robust findings of persuasion knowledge model that suggests that consumers who perceive the persuasive attempts of marketers react in a way to neutralize such attempts (Friestad and Wright 1994). In this research also we show that consumers do perceive the celebrity endorsements in the commercials as persuasive attempts by marketers and thus, try to undermine them by actively rejecting the claim that such an endorser indeed uses or likes the endorsed product (fashion).

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When We Practice to Deceive: An Exploration Into the Accommodative Role of Deceptive Practices in Market Exchanges

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Since early in the history of studying consumer markets, scholars have maintained an interest in the use of deceptive practices in market exchanges (Deighton and Grayson 1995; Zinbarg 2001). Much of the deception research that appears in consumer and marketing journals addresses the potential of consumers to be deceived by advertising (e.g. Barone, Palan, and Miniard 2004; Johar 1995; and Burke, DeSarbo, and Oliver 1988) and public policy aimed at protecting consumers against deceptive marketing practices (e.g. Burke, Milberg, and Moe 1997; Ford and Calfee 1986). The understanding of deception that emerged from these studies has greatly informed consumer researchers and policy makers as to the various ways consumers may be deceived and the potentially detrimental outcomes of deceptive market practices.

Most consumer research on deceptive practices assumes that a misleading representation, omission, or practice on the part of a seller ultimately results in injury or loss to the consumer. However, not all deceptive practices result in consumer injury or loss. Evidence from the negotiation and mediation literature suggests that the deceptive practices employed by buyers and sellers involved in a negotiation actually *facilitate* rather than hinder exchange between the two parties. The accommodative function of deception is particularly important in the management of complex protracted negotiation where mutually beneficial resolutions can "...seldom be accomplished by pure rational analysis and logic alone" (Benjamin 1995, pg. 4). Many consumer market exchanges such as the purchase of a new automobile, a new home, major appliances, etc., involve complex negotiations between buyers and sellers. In capturing the full extent to which deceptive practices operate in complex market exchanges, the conceptualization of marketplace deception currently reflected in the consumer literature falls short in two ways. First, with the exception of a recent study of consumers' interpersonal deceptive practices (Argo, White, and Dahl 2006), extant research accounts only for the deceptive practices of sellers while virtually ignoring the deceptive practices of buyers. Second, extant research does little to inform the potential efficiencies that may be gained from buyers' and sellers' use of deception in negotiation processes.

The purpose of this study is to explore the structure and strategic use of deception in negotiated exchanges between buyers and sellers. Specifically, we examine the question, how might deceptive practices, used by both buyers and sellers, serve an accommodative role in the negotiation between parties in a complex, protracted exchange?

Theoretical Background

This study is theoretically grounded in the sociological concept of accommodative moral schemas. The underlying principle of accommodative schemas asserts that describing the ideological orientations of each party in a social exchange does not sufficiently

describe the interactions of the two parties (Lidz and Walker 1980). For instance, buyers and sellers approach market exchanges with opposing ideological perspectives. These ideologies provide meaning and structure to the roles played by both parties in a social exchange. Buyers are guided by an ideology of maximizing their value and minimizing their costs while sellers are guided by an ideology of maximizing their profit. However, these opposing ideological orientations place the parties in conflict with one another. Yet clearly, to achieve a mutually beneficial outcome, buyers and sellers must not approach the exchange process guided exclusively by their independent ideologies. Instead, they require a shared moral schema that facilitates cooperation with the opposing party in the exchange.

The position here is that buyers' and sellers' moral orientations toward the use of deceptive practices accommodate the exchange between two parties with otherwise conflicting ideologies. Therefore, in the present context, an accommodative schema refers to an ideology of the morality of deception that is *shared* between buyers and sellers. An accommodative schema can be thought of as serving the same function as the rules of sport that allow two teams with opposing objectives to play on the same field under prescribed rules of engagement. They are necessary for the cooperation of two groups whose independent ideologies otherwise mandate conflict.

Proposed Study

The purpose of the proposed empirical study is to analyze the strategic use of deception by buyers and sellers to elucidate the potential accommodative role of deception in negotiated market exchanges. To support the notion that deception accommodates exchange, it is important to demonstrate that the use of deception serves two functions. First, the use of deception by both parties must provide one or more reference points which allow and facilitate cooperative action. That is, the moral schemas that guide interaction in the context of a market exchange must be specific to the exchange context and independent from macro-societal moral codes. Second, the use of deception must provide parties in an exchange with "...ways of neutralizing the binds of their mandating ideologies so that they are released from the moral obligations inherent in those ideologies" (Lidz and Walker 1980, pg. 110).

The position here is that criteria to evaluate the accommodative function of deception are embedded in the motivations that drive buyers' and sellers' strategies employed in the negotiation process. As such, we propose a study employing qualitative methodology that will attempt to "un-bundle" the motivations associated with the use of deceptive practices by both buyers and sellers. Data will be collected in depth interviews with both buyers and sellers in the context of new car purchases. As a context for exploring the present research question, the new car market is desirable for two reasons. First, the exchange process for new cars is relatively protracted and typically involves a complex negotiation process. Second, the exchange between buyers and sellers in the new car market is typically unmediated. That is, negotiation occurs directly between a consumer and seller rather than between a consumer and an agent of the seller. This second condition is desirable to avoid the complexity of isolating the use of deception by buyers and sellers from the use of deception by the third party in an exchange.

Results of the proposed study potentially will contribute to consumer research in three ways. First, the study represents the first attempt to articulate the role of accommodative moral schemas in a consumer context. Second, the study will extend current research on marketplace deception to include deceptive behaviors practiced by consumers. Finally, by challenging and elucidating the current conceptual boundaries of marketplace deception, this study will provide a holistic account of when and how deceptive techniques are used by buyers and sellers involved in negotiation. This in turn will inform the debate of possible limits that should be observed in the use of deception in consumer market exchanges. As such, the study will be of interest to consumer researchers, marketing researchers, and public policy makers.

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The Influence of Impression Management Concerns on Product Evaluation

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Impression management goals are an important motivation across a wide variety of social situations (Tedeschi 1981). Much research has focused on the tactics individuals use to manage their impressions (e.g. enhanced self-descriptions; Leary 1995). In marketing, research has demonstrated that possessions can affect observers' impressions (Christopher and Schlenker 2000) and it has been suggested that consumers will strategically display products to achieve impression management goals (Burroughs, Drew, and Hallman 1991). However, there is little research examining the effects of impression management goals on product evaluation. The current research contributes to the literature by demonstrating that impression management goals can exert a powerful influence on consumers' evaluation of a product. It also highlights the importance of impression management as an avoidance motivation—consumers may avoid certain products, despite their functional benefits, because of the impression the product will convey.

Impression Management

Impression management refers to attempts to regulate behavior in order to influence observers' impressions. Leary (1995) identified a number of different goals associated with impression management, including positive material and social consequences (e.g. positive emotions that stem from being regarded favorably); constructing and maintaining one's self-concept (Baumeister 1982); and avoiding socially and materially deleterious consequences associated with negative impressions.

Much of the research on impression management has focused on the tactics individuals use to influence others' impressions (e.g. expressing similar attitudes to observers (Tetlock 1985), engaging in helping behavior (Deutsch and Lamberti 1986), etc.). Other research has focused on the impression created. For example, Burroughs et al. (1991) showed that observers formed an impression of individuals based on their possessions that was consistent with the image owners were attempting to convey. Gosling et al. (2002) found that observers were able to form consistent and accurate impressions of occupants based on the content of their offices and bedrooms.

The current research contributes to this literature by examining the influence of consumers' impression management concerns on product evaluation. Specifically, it is shown that consumers' will pay substantially less for a product when they believe it will convey an undesired impression.

Study 1

The purpose of Study 1 was to examine the influence of consumers' impression management concerns on their evaluation of a product. We chose a product that was likely (at least occasionally) to be used in public—in this case a portable MP3 player that could be worn around the arm. The color of the product was manipulated in a way that was expected to influence impression management concerns. Specifically, we predicted that when the product was offered in a feminine color (vs. a neutral color), men—but not women—would be concerned about their impression. We also tested the alternative explanation that product evaluation was affected by liking of the color rather than impression management concerns per se.

Method

Ninety-eight students (47 men and 51 women) participated in a 2 (product colour: pink vs. black) x 2 (gender) between-subjects factorial design. Participants were told that they would be participating in an auction for an MP3 player (a "Creative MuVo" with 256Mb of storage). All participants saw the player prior to the auction and were told that they were bidding for that particular MP3 player and that its retail price was \$185 after tax. In half of the cases the player was pink, otherwise it was black. The two players were identical in every other respect.

All participants submitted sealed bids. The winner would only pay the amount bid by the second highest bidder though, which creates an incentive for individuals to bid their true maximum willingness to pay. Participants were provided with a detailed example of the procedure to ensure they understood this. After placing their bid, participants completed a questionnaire designed to assess their attitude towards the product ($r=.81$), liking of the color (single item measure), and the extent to which they would be concerned about using the product in front of other people (impression management concerns, $\alpha=.91$). All items were measured using 5-point scales.

Results

As expected, there were significant interactions between gender and product color on all dependent variables (willingness to pay (WTP): $F(1, 94)=19.34, p<.001$; attitude: $F(1, 94)=10.44, p<.01$; liking of colour: $F(1, 94)=21.98, p<.001$; impression management concerns: $F(1, 94)=45.53, p<.001$). Simple effects analyses indicated that men bid less for the pink player (M 's=\$41.20 vs. \$84.43; $F(1, 94)=22.54, p<.001$), liked it less (attitude: M 's=1.27 vs. 2.13; $F(1, 94)=12.38, p<.001$), liked the color less (M 's=.25 vs. 2.48; $F(1, 94)=44.62, p<.001$), and were more concerned about the impression they would convey using the pink player (M 's=1.29 vs. 2.95; $F(1, 94)=73.17, p<.001$). Women made no distinctions between the players (no differences were significant). Mediation analyses (Baron and Kenny 1986) conducted on the men's results demonstrated that the effect of product color on WTP was mediated by impression management concerns (product color–WTP: $\beta=.52, p<.001$; product color–impression management–WTP: β 's=.08 and .58, $p>.66$ and $p<.001$), but not liking of the color (product color–liking of color–WTP: β 's=.35 and .22, p 's=.09 and .29). Similar effects were obtained when examining the mediation of attitudes by impression management concerns and liking of the color.

General Discussion

The current study demonstrated that consumers' desire to avoid creating a particular impression exerted an important influence on their attitudes and ultimately their willingness to pay for a product. The experimental manipulation was designed to create impression

management concerns that would primarily influence men. Specifically, a gender-typed color was chosen that was expected to be inconsistent with the image most men would want to create. Supporting this prediction, men liked the pink MP3 player less and consequently bid less than half what they offered for a functionally identical black player. In contrast, women showed no aversion to the pink player, presumably because they were not concerned about the impression it would convey. Future research will examine the influence of impression management goals on product choice and the nature of the specific impressions consumers wish to avoid or convey.

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Nostalgia Advertisements: A Content Analysis

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Extended Abstract

Background. Very little work has been done on the use of nostalgia as an advertising tactic. Holbrook and Schindler note that "nostalgia has received relatively little attention from academicians in general and from scholars devoted to the study of consumer research in particular" (1991, p. 330). Research on nostalgia is now in its infancy and has focused on nostalgia proneness (Holbrook, 1993), the emotions produced by nostalgic advertisements (Holak and Havlena, 1998), and the consequences of its use in advertising (e.g., attitudes toward the ad, brand, etc.; Muehling and Sprout, 2004; Pascal et al., 2002). The research has shown that nostalgia preferences occur in a wide range of product categories (Schindler and Holbrook, 2003), that advertisements with a nostalgic theme are capable of producing nostalgic reflections (Muehling and Sprout, 2004), and that nostalgic ads create more positive attitudes toward the ad and the brand (Muehling and Sprout, 2004; Pascal et al., 2002). However, none of the research has actually considered the incidence of nostalgia cues in print advertisement. Our purpose is to extend the current research in this area by reviewing the actual occurrence of nostalgia-themed ads used in popular magazines.

A variety of definitions of nostalgia exist in the literature. We borrow from a number of these (Holbrook and Schindler, 1991; Hirsch, 1992; Baker and Kennedy, 1994; Holak and Havlena, 1998) in defining *nostalgia* as a bittersweet emotional state comprised of many discrete emotions produced by reflection on things (objects, persons, experiences, ideas) associated with an idealized past. This definition was used in classifying ads that used a nostalgia appeal from those that were not.

Method. Using the *Top 100 ABC Total Paid Circulation* list of magazines for 2004, the authors distinguished ten different categories of magazines. The two most popular magazines from each category were selected. Two issues from 2004 were then randomly selected and reviewed. A total of 40 magazines were included in the current analysis. Two judges reviewed advertisements in the magazines looking for nostalgia ads one-third of a page or larger.

Havlena and Holak (1991) categorized nostalgia products and advertisements into two categories: (1) products or ads directly from the past and (2) new products or messages that "create a 'period' feeling" (p. 323). We adapted this framework in distinguishing the use of nostalgia in advertisements from that of products. Each ad was reviewed in detail to determine how nostalgia was being used. Three types of nostalgia were identified: Actual Nostalgia, Borrowed Nostalgia, and Classic Nostalgia.

Actual Nostalgia maps directly onto Havlena and Holak's first category, and is defined as the use of nostalgia for products from or relating to the time period from which the nostalgia was taken. For example, advertisements promoting CD's as "A Goldmine of Musical Memories" or movies described as "Timeless Classics" would be categorized as Actual Nostalgia. Havlena and Holak's second category is split into two different uses of nostalgia, borrowed and classic. *Borrowed Nostalgia* is defined as the use of nostalgia for current or modern-day products. For instance, Johnson and Johnson's use of black and white photos depicting a mother and child drawing together at the kitchen table with other crayon drawings hanging on the refrigerator in the background would be categorized in this type of nostalgia. *Classic Nostalgia* is defined as the use of nostalgia for modern products using old advertisements or memories for the same products from the past. An example of this is Jack Daniel's use of an old advertisement and pictures of their old distillery and trucks in a current ad.

Results. Of the 2,354 ads reviewed, a total of 88 were identified as using a nostalgia theme. Interjudge reliability, using the Perrault and Leigh (1989) measure, showed agreement of .979. The use of the three types of nostalgia varied little, with borrowed nostalgia being

the most common type used, 93.2% or 82 ads (interjudge reliability=.99), and actual and classic nostalgia being far less used, with 5.7% (5 ads) and 1.1% (1 ad), respectively.

Our results also showed that the magazine categories of Family and Home & Garden were the two most popular types of magazines for nostalgia ads with 21 and 19 ads respectively. Also, the results indicate that nostalgia ads appear in a wide variety of product categories, from cars to cell phones, but most often in advertisements for consumable goods. Nostalgia ads were predominantly visual (86.3%, n=76). Far fewer of the ads combined visual with copy that included nostalgic statements. The ads in the actual and classic nostalgia categories all combined visual and copy (100%, n=6), while only 6 ads in the borrowed nostalgia category used both (7.3%).

A number of conclusions are drawn from this study. First, while research has been done about the effect of nostalgia ads on consumers, none has actually done a content analysis on the frequency of nostalgia in print ads. While nostalgic ads are not as common in print as was found for guilt appeals (Huhmann and Brotherton, 1997), previous research shows that the use of nostalgia has a number of practical implications for marketers including more favorable attitudes toward the ad and brand (Muehling and Sprott, 2004; Pascal et al., 2002), as well as increased intentions to purchase the product (Pascal et al., 2002). Given the ramifications of the tactical use of nostalgia, it is surprising that the actual incidence of ads using nostalgia is so small.

Previous research showed that the use of nostalgia is effective; the current research indicates that nostalgia is not a method used widely in print advertising. Further research can be done to show how nostalgia works in the ad, determining which type of nostalgia (actual, borrowed or classic) and which mode (visual, copy, or both) is most effective. Borrowed nostalgia appeared most often in our research, but that does not indicate it is the most effective. Lastly, research could ascertain whether nostalgic ads are more effective for certain product classes or in certain types of magazines.

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The Impact of Information Format on Consumer Search Order and Choice in an Online Setting

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Extended Abstract

Consumers are having more control over the information flow on the Internet, which helps them to find information that better matches their preferences and be more confident in their judgments (Ariely 2000). However, it is also recognized that the information on the Internet is overloaded and highly manipulative, which can largely influence consumer information search and decision making. For example, research shows that the background picture and color of a web page can influence both novice and expert consumers' choice and such an effect is mediated by the search behavior for novice consumers (Mandel and Johnson 2002).

This research builds on the literature of online consumer information search and preference construction and further investigates how online information presentation format influences consumer search order and choice. The objectives of this research is to examine (1) how attributes presented in digital versus non-digital format and salient versus non-salient format influence consumers' search order of attribute and alternative information, and (2) how the search order affects consumer choice.

Built on Lal and Sarvary's (1999) definition of digital versus non-digital attribute, we consider digital attribute information as information that is presented by numbers, scales, or categories; whereas non-digital attribute information is presented by detailed description. It is much easier and faster to examine digital attribute information. Consumers can easily apply a cut-off point on digital

attribute information to quickly screen all the alternatives. They can even use digital attribute information to make inferences about non-digital attribute information if they perceive there is certain correlation among the attributes (Kardes et al. 2004). Thus, we expect

H1: Consumers tend to examine the same digital attribute information earlier when a product is presented by more non-digital (vs. digital) attribute information.

We argue that an attribute examined earlier (vs. later) will have more impact on choice and such an impact is over and above the effect of attribute importance. First, an attribute examined earlier is more likely to be used as a screening criterion to exclude other alternatives. Second, given consumers do not always examine all the attributes, an attribute examined earlier tend to be accessed more frequently. This will make the attribute more accessible in the memory, which increases its impact on choice. Therefore, we predict

H2: Consumers' tendency to search the same digital attribute information earlier when a product is presented by more non-digital (vs. digital) attribute information is likely to increase the impact of that digital attribute information on choice.

Consumers' need for cognitive closure (NFCC) may moderate the hypothesized effect. NFCC relates to consumers' motivation for information processing and judgment (Webster and Kruglanski 1994). It refers to individuals' desire for definite knowledge, thus avoiding confusion or ambiguity. Individuals with high NFCC tend to reach a conclusion quickly and are reluctant to process further information (Kruglanski and Webster 1996). Therefore, we hypothesize that

H3: The impact of digital attribute information on choice is stronger for consumers with high (vs. low) NFCC.

Visually salient information can be created by increasing the object's size and contrast (Janiszewski 1998). It is much faster and easier for consumers to locate and pay attention to visually salient information (e.g., Janiszewski 1998). It is also easier for consumers to visually screen and sort all the alternatives according to the visually salient attribute. Therefore, we predict that consumers tend to examine alternatives with higher values on the visually salient attribute earlier. They will examine alternatives with lower values on the visually salient attribute only when they are not satisfied with the alternatives examined earlier.

H4: Consumers tend to examine alternatives with higher values on the visually salient attribute earlier.

It is found that the amount of attention focused on an attribute directly affects its importance (MacKenzie 1986). Hence, visually salient attribute will receive higher importance in choice. In addition, as consumers process higher values of the visually salient attribute much earlier and more often in the search, they are more likely to anchor on those values and perceive choosing alternatives with lower values on the visually salient attribute as a loss. Given consumers' general tendency of loss aversion, we predict that consumers will prefer the alternatives examined earlier, i.e., those with higher values on the visually salient attribute. Therefore, we expect

H5: Consumers' tendency to examine alternatives with higher values on the visually salient attribute is likely to increase the impact of the visually salient attribute on choice.

Sorting alternatives according to the visually non-salient attribute may reduce such an effect. When alternatives are sorted by the visually non-salient attribute, that attribute will distract consumers' attention and change consumers' search order. Hence, we hypothesize that

H6: The impact of the visually salient attribute on choice is stronger when alternatives are not sorted by a non-salient attribute.

We propose to conduct two online experiments to test our hypotheses. Results from our pretest show that participants tend to examine the same digital attribute information earlier when there is more non-digital (vs. non-digital) attribute information. Study 1 focuses on the impact of digital attribute information on choice and study 2 examines the influence of the visually salient attribute on choice.

Our research adds to the literature of online consumer information search and preference construction by showing when digital attribute information can have more impact on choice and how visually salient attribute influences consumer preference. This research also shows the underlying processes of these effects: consumers' search order for attribute and alternative information. Finally, this research discusses how individual difference and information organization may moderate these effects.

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The Effects of Reciprocity in a Triadic Relationship

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Extended Abstract

The norm of reciprocity reflects both a socially stabilizing function as well as a relationship-initiating role, and is universal (Gouldner 1960). Reciprocity involves both rights and duties for each side of a gift exchange (Gouldner 1960), such that individuals have the obligation to give, to receive, and to give back (Mauss 1954 (1925)). Studies within dyadic relationships have shown that gifts, whether or not they are searched for or expected, elicit a sense of obligation in the recipient (Regan 1971). Despite the fact that these theories were developed to explain the role of reciprocity in networks, research designed to understand effects beyond the context of dyads has not been done. It has been proposed that "triadization either supports and reinforces or inhibits and upsets a dyadic reciprocity" (Lebra 1975). Examining the effects of reciprocity beyond dyads has important implications for researchers of social influence in many disciplines, public policy makers, and practitioners.

Consider the following scenario: A pharmaceutical salesperson visits a healthcare provider, intent on increasing prescriptions for a particular product. After delivering a sales message about the product and its benefits, the salesperson leaves some samples. The samples are presented so the provider can facilitate initiation of therapy with a patient, with purported convenience and financial benefits. But the provider may also utilize these pharmaceutical samples for his or her own use, to treat an existing condition. In practice, both transference and personal use are fairly common (Tesoriero 2006).

In healthcare, voluntary professional guidelines developed by both physician groups like the American Medical Association and the pharmaceutical industry, have limited gifts to items of relatively low value, such as pens and pads, as well as the distribution of free samples (AMA 1998-1999; PhRMA 2002). While it has been argued that items of nominal value such as pens and pads may elicit obligations that alter provider behavior (Katz, Caplan, and Merz 2003), in practice their use has become more limited recently (Tesoriero 2006). We focus instead on the effect of samples, as these are *designed* to be utilized in a triadic relationship.

We hypothesize that samples will be perceived as gifts, both in the dyad (salesperson-provider) and in the triad (salesperson-provider-patient) scenario, and will elicit obligation due to the norm of reciprocity. The provider will feel obligated to the salesperson in either situation, personal use or transference; the end-user patient will feel obligated to the provider or the pharmaceutical firm, or both. But in which scenario (dyad or triad) are obligations the strongest? How can the salience of a message of obligation affect compliance behavior? What is the nature of the underlying relationship, whereby each member of a triad can repay another? Finally, can liking be ruled out as an alternative explanation?

Instances when samples are retained by the provider, creating a dyad, seem to converge with research showing positive effects on reciprocal behavior (Guéguen and Pascual 2003; Regan 1971). Marketing literature has documented small positive effects of samples upon prescribing behavior (Gönül, Carter, Petrova et al. 2001; Mizik and Jacobson 2004). These studies, however, remain empirical in nature, not explicitly examining the underlying theoretical mechanism. Our study utilizes a similar context, yet diverges in its purpose: we aim not to explain an empirical observation, but instead to test and extend theory and to resolve competing explanations for underlying causes.

Among seven proposed triadic relationships (Lebra 1975), we suspect that acts of repayment in this context may be explained by either circular transference, where the end user attempts to repay the initial giver, or lineal transference, where the provider is involved in linked dyads as a 'middleman.' The role of the provider is such that "there is a distinct breach in the traditional buying decision process: the decision maker...chooses among an array of...alternatives" (Gönül, Carter, Petrova et al. 2001); the end user ultimately acquires the product and evaluates its utility. For us, a gift is a tangible sample relevant to a recipient's role as a decision-maker, an object capable of either being utilized by the expert or transferred through to a third party.

Two arguments offer divergent predictions of the strength of the norm of reciprocity between dyadic and triadic relationships. On one hand, "triadization may bind the actor more effectively than does a dyadic bond," while on the other hand, a triad may "reduce the intensity of an interpersonal bond characteristic of a dyad" (Lebra 1975). The conditions under which triads are more or less binding than dyads will be investigated here.

The first perspective stems from work on dyadic reciprocation. Posing as a vehicle for information, this "not-so-free sample" can automatically invoke a "natural indebtedting force" (Cialdini 1993), in a healthcare setting (Wazana 2000), and represents a lineal transference, where the provider is involved through the linking of two dyads.

Alternatively, when a sample is transferred to the patient, it is being utilized as intended, and the provider may feel indebted from value provided to the patient. However, in this situation the provider does not realize the direct benefits of the sample, and may be less apt to reciprocate. The patient's receipt of the sample, however, may lead to a desire to reciprocate directly to the pharmaceutical firm (Oldani 2004), creating a circular transference. We suspect that the effects found in a circular transference are weaker than those in a lineal transference.

Salience of the obligation may play a significant role. In conditions of high message salience, the salesperson may be exhibiting “creditor ideology,” where “creditors prefer to have others in their debt because they believe that the norm of reciprocity will produce generous repayments” (Eisenberger, Cotterell, and Marvel 1987). This may be perceived by the recipient, thereby producing ‘reciprocation wariness’ (Cotterell, Eisenberger, and Speicher 1992) or ‘persuasion knowledge’ (Friestad and Wright 1999). A recipient can mentally acknowledge that a gift is a ‘sales device,’ thereby sidestepping the obligation altogether (Cialdini 1993). This may be true in both dyads and triads. In conditions of low message salience, a sense of obligation may not manifest at all.

A pretest on high-expert students (n=52), utilizing sunscreen samples, found a significant interaction between sample condition, motivation orientation (extrinsic/intrinsic), and likelihood to recommend ($F(1, 33) = 4.88, p = .05$). Our next experiment will be a 2 (gift retained/transferred) x 2 (high/low salience) + 1 (control group) experiment conducted with approximately 150 physician assistant (PA) students. Our instrument will be a questionnaire where hypothetical scenarios focus on a fictitious PA’s liking of the salesperson, likelihood to recommend the sampled product, the perceived benefits of the samples, and sense of obligation toward the salesperson.

Healthcare providers overwhelmingly believe that the acceptance of gifts has little or no impact on their recommendation decisions (Harris 2006; Murray 2002). Therefore, conducting an experiment with providers requires overcoming some level of social desirability bias (Neeley and Cronley 2004). We propose an experiment that will utilize indirect-report questioning formats to mitigate this bias, where “participants will project their own opinions and behaviors onto [an in-group] referent person” (Cronley, Neeley, and Silvera 2006).

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Comparative Content Analysis of Thai and Vietnamese Ads, 1994 and 2004

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Abstract

Thai and Vietnamese print advertisements were content analyzed to examine how content and advertising expression differed in the two countries at two different time periods, 1994 and 2004. Analysis focused on traditional Eastern and Western, and Informational and Emotional appeals. As hypothesized, Vietnamese ads contained more traditional and informational appeals than Thai ads, while Thai ads were found to contain fewer informational and traditional Eastern appeals than Vietnamese ads. Implications for practitioners and theoreticians are discussed.

In Southeast Asia, Vietnam and Thailand are among the countries most visible in the West. Although adjacent and culturally quite similar, they differ dramatically in their political systems and economic foundation. Thailand is a constitutional monarchy, with a widely revered king who exercises his powers through the National Assembly, the Council of Ministers (Cabinet), and the Courts. Vietnam is a socialistic democracy governed by a single-party parliamentary system, with an Executive and Judiciary chosen by the party. Vietnam, of course, was deeply affected by the war, while Thailand managed to stay largely out of the conflict.

Thailand enjoys a vital consumer economy built on gold, gemstones, and other natural resources, and has been active trade with the West since the 1970s. Only in recent years have international trade and modern consumerism begun to emerge in Vietnam, and then only in the large cities like Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). In economic terms, the Thai per capita GNP was roughly \$ 5,500 in 1994 and \$ 6,500 in 2004, an 85% increase. Vietnam's was \$1,200 in 1994 and \$1,700 in 2004, a 70% increase (Global EDGE, 2004). This promising growth has attracted the attention of business leaders throughout Europe and North America.

With economic growth often comes an increasing interest in advertising, along with new challenges for Western advertising agencies that want to work in non-Western cultures (Zhou and Belk, 2004). Advertising practitioners and researchers are well aware of the dangers of applying American and British approaches in other countries. Many scholars have warned of the perils, e.g., Hofstede (1980), and some have done empirical studies in their efforts to understand international audiences better. For example, Biswas, Olsen, and Carlet (1992) observed that French advertisements employed more emotional appeals, humor, and sex, while American advertisements used more informational cues. Partially consistent with these findings, Cheng and Schweitzer (1996) reported that more Westernized countries such as France, the US, Finland, the UK, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Philippines use emotional appeals more often than do traditional Asian countries such as China, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

In Southeast Asia, Wongthada and Leelakulthanit (1997) in Thailand and Schutz and Que (1997) in Vietnam pointed out the substantial effects of socio-political transition on advertising, and Sar and Doyle (2002) showed that Thai ads expressed more Western values than Cambodian ads. The importance of all these studies, of course, is that they help refine the practice of advertising, especially advertising designed by Western firms for use in Eastern countries. They may also contribute to cross-cultural audience analysis and theory-building, and to theories of cultural transmission and "hegemony."

The present study tries to advance our understanding of Southeast Asian audiences and culture by focusing on changes in the content of advertising in the ten years from 1994-2004. It applies tried-and-true comparative techniques, and adds a development dimension seldom seen in the cross-cultural advertising literature.

Method

This is a content analysis in which we draw inferences about the development of Thai and Vietnamese cultures from the Eastern versus Western content of Thai and Vietnamese magazine advertisements over the past ten years. We shall argue that practitioners who understand this cultural development better will be able to produce more effective ads and campaigns, and that theorists who peruse these data will be able to make finer distinctions than they previously could, particularly within Southeast Asia.

The Magazines. According to the Thai daily newspaper *Thairath* (2004) the three most widely read monthly magazines in Thailand are *Bangkok Metro*, *Prail* ("Shining"), and *Bambi News*. According to the Vietnamese daily newspaper "*Vietnam News*" (2004), the three most popular monthly magazines in Vietnam are *Song Manh*, *Phu Nu Viet*, and *Que Huong* ("People"). In both sets, the first magazine is a general-interest publication similar to *Life* or *Look* in the United States; the second is a women's magazine similar to *Home and Garden*; and the third is a popular magazine similar to *People*.

The Ads. In the twelve 1994 and twelve 2004 issues of each of these magazines, we identified all ads for household products, personal and non-personal. Personal household products included shampoo, soap, body lotion, sanitary pads, and toothpaste; non-personal household products included detergent, fabric rinse, and dishwashing liquid.

From the total number of these ads—79 in 1994 and 90 in 2004 for Thailand; 56 in 1994 and 45 in 2004 for Vietnam—we randomly selected 35 from each year and each country, for a total final sample of 140 ads.

Content Analysis. The focus of the analysis was the relative frequency of traditional Eastern versus Western appeals (per our literature review) and emotional versus informational cues, in the two countries in the two years.

To define the first of these terms, twenty Thai and Vietnamese students studying at a large Midwestern university in the United States participated in a focus group in which they were asked to define traditional "Eastern" appeals. This discussion identified four principle characteristics of traditional appeals: Respect for Elders, Collectivism, Conservative Sexual Morality, and Modesty.

To define the second of these terms, Western Appeals, we used Hong and Zhu's (1995) scales: Sexy, Humorous, Comfortable, and Convenient. These scales have been used in numerous studies of international advertising, e.g., Lai Man So (2004), Zhang and Shavitt (2003), Tai (1997), and Wang, Pinkleton, and Morton (1997), and Graham, Kamins, Oetomo (1993).

To define Emotional Appeals, we used Plutchik's abbreviated Mood Rating Scale (1980), which relies on four adjectives selected from his longer checklist. The four elements on the abbreviated scale are Happiness, Pleasantness, Interest, and Surprise. These scales were used in Hong, Muderrisoglus, and Zinkhan's (1987) study of cultural differences in Japanese and American magazines.

Finally, we defined Informational Appeals with four elements from Stern and Resnick's (1981) conception of "informativeness": Price/Value, Quality, Guarantees/Warranties, and New Ideas, or Novelty. These scales, too, were used in Lai Man So's (2004) study of cross cultural comparison between Hong Kong and Australia's women magazines; Hong, Muderrisoglus, and Zinkhan's (1987).

We created a five-point semantic differential scale for each of the 16 elements, e.g., Not Happy to Very Happy. Four judges then used these scales to code the Thai and Vietnamese ads for Eastern versus Western appeals, including emotional versus informational cues. Two Thai graduate students, one male and one female, coded the Thai ads, and two Vietnamese graduate students, also one male and one female, coded the Vietnamese ads. All coders were fluent in English as well as in their home languages. Reliability coefficients for this coding ranged from .79 (Traditional, Thai 1994) to .85 (Emotional, Vietnamese, 2004), with an average of .81, well within the recommended range for studies of this sort (Kassarjian, 1977); and Nunnally, 1978).

Results

With regard to Traditional Eastern Appeals in Vietnamese versus Thai ads for the two years combined, Table 1a indicates significant differences on Respect, Collectiveness, and Modesty, and a borderline-significant difference ($p=.08$) on Sexual Morality. These differences uniformly depict Vietnam as the more traditional of the two countries:

With regard to differences in the extent of Traditional Eastern Appeals between 1994 and 2004, Table 1b shows significant difference across years on all four variables for the Vietnamese ads, and on two of the four variables—Collectivity and Sexual Morality—for the Thai ads.

In the Vietnamese ads, the Respect, Collectivity, and Modesty means are higher for 2004 than for 1994, the Morality mean lower. In the Thai ads, the situation is partially reversed: The Collectivity mean is lower for 2004, the Morality mean higher. At the same time, the Respect and Modesty means are unchanged. According to these data, over the past decade the Vietnamese ads have become more Respectful, more Communal, and more Modest, but also more sexual (lower Morality). The Thai ads have become less Communal and less sexual (more Moral), but remained unchanged in Respect and Modesty.

With regard to Traditional Western Appeals in Vietnamese versus Thai ads for the two years combined, Table 2a indicates significant differences on all four dimensions: Convenient, Sexy, Comfortable, and Humorous. These differences again depict Vietnam as the more traditional Eastern, the less Western, of the two countries.

With regard to differences in the extent of Traditional Western Appeals between 1994 and 2004, Table 2b shows significant differences on three of the four dimensions—all except Comfortable—for both the Vietnamese and the Thai ads. In the Vietnamese ads, the Convenient, Sexy, and Humorous means are all higher for 2004 than for 1994. In the Thai ads, the situation is again reversed: The 2004 means are all lower. In the Vietnamese ads, the 2004 mean ratings are always higher than the 1994 mean ratings. According to these data, the Vietnamese ads have become a little more Western than they used to be, but they remain less than Thai ads.

With regard to Emotional Appeals in Vietnamese versus Thai ads for the two years combined, Table 3a shows higher Thai means on Surprised, Pleasant, and Interesting, and a non-significant difference on Happy. The Thai ads for the most part use more emotional cues than the Vietnamese ads.

With regard to differences in the extent of Emotional Appeals between 1994 and 2004, Table 3b shows significant differences on two of the four variables—non-significant on Surprised and Pleasant—for the Vietnamese ads, and on all four variables for the Thai ads. In the Vietnamese ads, the Happy mean is higher for 2004 than for 1994, the Interesting mean lower. In the Thai ads, all 2004 means are higher than the corresponding 1994 means. According to these data, the Thai ads have increased in all four kinds of emotional content, while the Vietnamese ads have increased in Happy content, decreased in Interesting content. The ads depict Thai culture as more emotional than Vietnamese culture, and Thai ads more emotional—happier, more interesting, more surprising, more pleasant—and growing still more so.

With regard to Information Appeals in Vietnamese versus Thai ads for the two years combined, Table 4a indicates significant differences on all four dimensions of Informational Appeal: Price Value, Quality, Warranty, and New Ideas (Novelty). These differences consistently depict Vietnam as using more informational cues than Thailand.

With regard to differences in the extent of Informational Appeals between 1994 and 2004, Table 4b shows significant differences on two of the four variables (Quality and Warranty), a borderline significant difference on one variable ($p=.07$ for New Idea), and a non-significant difference on one variable (Price Value) for the Vietnamese ads. Table 4b also shows significant differences on two variables (Price Value and Quality), a borderline difference ($p=.06$ on New Idea), and a non-significant difference (Warranty) on the Thai ads.

Again, the Vietnamese and Thai patterns are substantially opposite. On Quality—the only Informational dimension on which the change is significant for both countries—the 2004 Vietnamese mean is lower than the 1994 mean, but in the Thai ads, the 2004 mean is higher. On Novelty, borderline-significant for both countries, the 2004 Vietnamese mean is higher than the 1994 mean, but the 2004 Thai mean is lower. Vietnamese culture, per the above less emotional than Thai culture, is growing less concerned with quality information and more interested in novelty, while Thai culture, more emotional, is growing more concerned with quality information, and less concerned with Novelty. The inference we draw is that, just as the two cultures are moving toward each other in terms of emotional cues, so they are becoming more similar in terms of informational cues.

Discussion

The principal strengths of this study are that it is built on random samples of ads from the most widely read magazines in Thailand and Vietnam and that it evaluates those ads according to attributes identified as important in respected previous studies. The principal weaknesses are that the study analyzes only print ads, indeed only magazine ads, and that it samples ads from only two points in time. Despite these weaknesses, we believe the results are consistent enough that practitioners and theorists may draw conclusions from them.

Our analysis identified a number of important patterns: First, that Vietnam is the more traditional, less Westernized of the two cultures; second, that Vietnamese ads have become more Western over the past ten years, Thai ads in many (but not all) ways less Western (Collective, Sexual, Humorous); third, that Vietnamese ads have become more emotionally cued in the past ten years; and, fourth, that Thai ads have become more informationally cued in some ways (Quality), less so in others (Novelty), while Vietnamese ads showed just the opposite pattern, less informationally cued as to Quality, more so as to Novelty. The Thai patterns were often just the opposite of the Vietnamese patterns, despite the proximity and apparent cultural similarity of the two countries.

What are advertising practitioners and theorists to draw from these findings? The most obvious conclusion is that, despite the proximity and superficial similarity of the two cultures, they should not be treated the same. In more technical terms, they are not samples from the same population.

More specifically, practitioners and theorists can expect that Vietnamese print-ad audiences will respond positively to more traditional Asian appeals—those that rest on Conservative Sexual Morality, Collectivity, and Product Information—while Thai audiences will respond positively to somewhat more Western appeals. We cannot escape the image of a fundamentally Confucian culture (Doyle, 1999, pp. 89ff) in Vietnam growing increasingly Western as it sheds its Communistic history and takes its place on the international stage.

TABLE 1
Traditional *Eastern* Appeals in Vietnamese and Thai Ads (N=140 ads)

Table 1a: Between Countries, Years Collapsed

		df	F	Sig.
Respect	(between Countries)	1,138	9.99	.00
Collective	(between Countries)	1,138	4.11	.05
Morality	(Between Countries)	1,138	2.25	.08
Modesty	(Between Countries)	1,138	9.96	.00

Table 1b: Means of 1994 and 2004 Ads on Four Traditional *Eastern* Dimensions

Countries	Years	Types of Appeals			
		Respect	Collective	Morality	Modesty
Vietnam	1994	4.30	3.58	5.00	6.36
	2004	5.80	4.78	4.01	5.26
Mean Differences		-1.5	-1.2	.99	1.1
F-Value		5.45	6.10	4.00	5.21
P-Value	p<.	.01	.01	.02	.01
Thailand	1994	3.91	4.75	3.92	4.35
	2004	4.02	4.01	3.00	5.15
Mean Differences		-.11	.74	.92	-.8
F-Value		2.66	4.00	4.00	2.54
P-Value	p<.	n/s	.00	.00	n/s

TABLE 2
Traditional *Western* Appeals in Vietnamese and Thai Ads (N=140 ads)

Table 2A: Between Countries, Years Collapsed

		df	F	Sig.
Convenient	(between Countries)	1,138	5.19	.02
Sexy	(between Countries)	1,138	6.12	.01
Comfortable	(Between Countries)	1,138	23.78	.00
Humorous	(Between Countries)	1,138	5.55	.02

Table 2B: Means of 1994 and 2004 Ads on Four Traditional *Western* Dimensions

Countries	Years	Types of Appeals			
		Convenient	Sexy	Comfortable	Humorous
Vietnam	1994	4.00	3.72	4.25	3.87
	2004	5.61	4.45	4.91	5.11
Mean Differences		-1.61	-.73	.66	-1.24
F-Value		9.75	3.65	2.00	9.77
P-Value	p<.	.00	.05	n/s	.00
Thailand	1994	6.01	6.21	6.11	5.58
	2004	4.97	5.48	5.64	4.21
Mean Differences		.84	.73	.47	1.37
F-Value		32.38	3.65	1.58	7.37
P-Value	p<.	.00	.05	n/s	.00

TABLE 3
Emotional Appeals of Vietnamese and Thai Ads (N=140 Ads)

Table 3A: Between Countries, Years Collapsed

		df	F	Sig.
Happy	(between Countries)	1,138	.98	n/s
Surprised	(between Countries)	1,138	9.73	.00
Pleasant	(Between Countries)	1,138	23.01	.00
Interesting	(Between Countries)	1,138	22.93	.00

Table 3B: Means of 1994 and 2004 Ads on Emotional Appeal

Countries	Years	Types of Appeals			
		Happy	Surprised	Pleasant	Interesting
Vietnam	1994	4.12	4.68	3.91	4.97
	2004	5.41	5.06	4.40	4.14
Mean Differences		-1.29	-.36	-.49	.83
F-Value		16.89	.89	.97	9.87
P-Value	p<	.00	n/s	n/s	.00
Thailand	1994	4.80	5.40	4.65	5.40
	2004	6.32	6.32	6.27	6.30
Mean Differences		-1.52	-.92	-1.62	-.90
F-Value		15.74	4.75	15.34	3.96
P-Value	p<.	.00	.03	.00	.05

TABLE 4
Informational Appeals of Vietnamese and Thai Ads (N=140 Ads)

Table 4a: Means Between Countries both years

		df	F	Sig.
Price Value	(between Countries)	1,138	7.51	.00
Quality	(between Countries)	1,138	4.29	.04
Warranty	(Between Countries)	1,138	14.71	.00
New Idea	(Between Countries)	1,138	4.36	.03

Table 4b: Means of 1994 and 2004 Ads on Informational Appeal

Countries	Years	Types of Appeals			
		Price Value	Quality	Warranty	New Idea
Vietnam	1994	5.02	4.92	5.25	5.88
	2004	4.01	6.01	5.90	5.00
Mean Differences		1.01	-1.09	-.65	.88
F-Value		7.12	7.46	2.98	3.63
P-Value	p<.	.00	.00	n/s	.06
Thai	1994	5.41	5.31	4.01	4.60
	2004	5.90	4.35	4.81	5.32
Mean Differences		-.49	-.96	-.80	-.72
F-Value		1.75	4.74	4.40	3.18
P-Value	p<.	n/s	.03	.03	.07

The Thai ads seem to reflect a culture that may have peaked in terms of Western influence and is finding its identity in a cosmopolitan blend of East and West.

More specifically still, our data suggest that sexual images and allusions, a staple of Western advertising, will be more problematic in Southeast Asia than in most parts of the United States and Great Britain. Whether measured as traditional Eastern "Sexual Morality" or Western "Sexiness," our data indicate that Vietnamese ads have grown more sexual, Thai ads less so. We take this as a sign that the two cultures are seeking a level of sexuality in advertising that fits their changing circumstances. Vietnam, newer to the game, is still experimenting with sexuality in advertising; Thailand, more experienced—Bangkok is well-known for its free if not libertine sexual culture—may be retreating to a more conservative state.

Both sets of ads seem to depict cultures that are more light-hearted than they were ten years ago. That is, "happy" cues are higher in both cultures, "surprising" and "pleasant" cues higher also in Thai culture, perhaps a sign of distancing from the turmoil of the 1970s, perhaps an indication of growing equilibrium between Eastern and Western influences. In either event, both Vietnamese and Thai audiences should respond well to "happy" cues as long as these do not overpower the essential information needs of Vietnamese culture.

From a theoretical view, our study supports and extends the findings of the relatively few studies of comparative Asian culture in advertising. It identifies both cultures as fundamentally Asian, but goes on to offer distinctions that, so far as we know, have not been made before, in particular the movement toward Eastern/Western and Information/Emotional equilibrium. As such, it is compatible with theories of "globalization" (e.g., Tomlinson, 2000) and even "hegemony" (e.g., Gramsci, 1992), although our data are not sufficient to determine whether or not such cultural diffusion is welcome.

Like all research, our study raises as many questions as it answers. Among them, will these patterns hold up in broadcast as well as print media? Are the changes speeding up or slowing down? What differences will we find within these cultures, among older versus young audiences, for example, or males versus females, highly educated versus less so? Further empirical work should address these questions.

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Are “Paradigms Lost” in Marketing? Some Twenty Years Later...: A Content Analysis

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Extended Abstract

In the fall of 1983, Rohit Deshpande wrote an article in the *Journal of Marketing* entitled “Paradigms lost: On Theory and Method in Research in Marketing.” The article presented a discussion of the dominance of the positivist or quantitative paradigm over the much neglected qualitative one in marketing. Our objective in this paper is an attempt to provide a more statistical account of the article’s claim that quantitative research dominates the marketing literature, but after some twenty years later.

The quantitative-qualitative debate is a lengthy one that dates back to the late nineteenth century with the growth of the interpretive approach (qualitative approach) to social inquiry which was considered a reaction to the positivist approach (Giddens, 1976; Hughes, 1958; Outhwaite, 1975, 1983; Polkinghorne, 1983; Smith 1983a, 1983b). Several researchers point out the need for and importance of qualitative research which would help provide a better understanding of the complex nature of the social world we live in (Cronbach 1975; Hirschman 1986). Others disagree and state that such qualitative research is purely subjective (Smith and Heshusius 1986) and some go as far as claiming that “it doesn’t constitute market research” and that “two people doing the same qualitative study can obtain totally different results” (Achenbaum 2001, p. 14).

On comparing the two methodologies, some say that they can be considered as mutually exclusive (Tauber 1987) and each method has its own set of different evaluation criteria (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Brodbeck (1968, p. 573) states that “the quantitative-qualitative dichotomy is spurious,” and Seymour (1989) argues that consumer research should not be an “either/or” case when it comes to the type of methodology used but rather it should be able to encompass and build a more comprehensive understanding of the consumer. He further recommends staying away from being too focused on the method and the “technique-driven-and lose track of the real purpose in generating information” (p. 27). Likewise, Kassarian (1989) offers a similar view as he says that “the appropriate question is whether or not it is good science, rather than what kind of science it is,” and “is it making a contribution to knowledge?” (p. 126).

In the “Paradigms Lost” article, the focus of our paper here, Deshpande argues that the marketing literature has been dominated by one paradigm and that is the logical empiricism/positivism or the quantitative paradigm. He offers a discussion on the dominance of the quantitative paradigm over the often abandoned qualitative one which may be responsible for the low development of theory construction in marketing research. He suggests attaining a balance between the two paradigms and calls for more triangulation of methods and using each method more appropriately. This would be in an attempt to reduce the current bias that exists especially when addressing the issues of theory discovery versus theory verification.

In this study we used a content analysis procedure to investigate our research question of whether quantitative methods research does dominate the marketing literature even after twenty years of the “Paradigms Lost” article. We reviewed all the articles for the top three marketing journals (Hult, Neese, and Bashaw 1997), namely: the *Journal of Marketing* (JM), the *Journal of Marketing Research* (JMR), and the *Journal of Consumer Research* (JCR) from the years 2002 to 2004. We chose the past three years to reflect a “snapshot” of the recent trend. We basically classified each article on whether it was a quantitative study, a qualitative one or both based strictly on the research methodology used. Thus articles that do not include any methodology used were considered not applicable.

We analyzed a total of 394 articles (109 in JM, 115 in JMR and 170 in JCR). Almost half (47.2%) of all the articles published were of the quantitative methodology. Purely qualitative articles made up a mere 7.1% and articles containing both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies made up 32.7%. Articles that were considered not applicable made up the remaining 12.9%.

When looking at the journals more specifically, we found that JCR had the highest percentage of purely quantitative articles (65.3%) and at the same time it had the highest percentage of qualitative articles (13.5%). JMR had the lowest percentage of qualitative articles with only *one* article in the three years investigated! And JM also had a very low percentage of qualitative articles (3.7%). However, both JMR and JM had the highest percentage of articles with both methodologies used. Based on this analysis, it may be feasible perhaps to say that a researcher looking to publish a purely qualitative study maybe far better off shooting for JCR than JMR or even JM.

In terms of the types of methodologies used, experiments showed up as the highest percentage of methodology used, accounting for 41.4% of all the journal articles. Surveys, interviews and secondary data analysis were all almost similar in the percentage used (15-17%). To be more specific, quantitative articles were dominated by experiments and qualitative articles were dominated by interviews. Furthermore, in terms of the journals, JM was dominated by surveys, JMR was dominated by secondary data analysis and JCR was dominated by experiments. These particular findings provide further evidence of the dominance of the quantitative methodologies in marketing journals and perhaps indicate the preferences of certain methodologies over others.

In conclusion, based on our limited study, we have attempted to provide some preliminary evidence of the dominance of the quantitative paradigm over the much neglected qualitative paradigm in the marketing literature, even after more than twenty years of the “Paradigms Lost” article. However, the clear sign of studies including both methodologies provides growing evidence that even though purely qualitative studies are still minimal, there integration with quantitative studies maybe catching pace.

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Compulsive Buyers and the Emotional Roller Coaster in Shopping

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Extended Abstract

Shopping is increasingly seen as a recreational activity in which consumers are emotionally involved. Instead of going to a store to buy necessary items, consumers often stroll around and browse for hours just for the fun of it. Shopping provides a necessary escape for consumers whose lives are hectic or otherwise troublesome. However, for some consumers, shopping can become more than recreation. Compulsive shoppers are consumers who are addicted to shopping. For these consumers, shopping is part of their lifestyle, and strongly related to emotional goals.

The emotions compulsive shoppers go through influence their feelings and satisfaction of the shopping activity. For example, consumers who have a bad day might go shopping to cheer themselves up, or consumers who have completed a difficult task at work might reward themselves by going shopping. For compulsive shoppers, the emotions involved with the shopping activity are particularly important, as they play such a large part of the consumer's life and influence their happiness as a whole. Feelings such as joy, anticipation, thrill during the shopping activity can quickly shift over to guilt, depression, and dissatisfaction with managing one's finances. Based on previous research results, literature has termed these consumers bulimic shoppers, who crave for shopping in excess, but afterwards get emotional qualms.

The emotions involved with shopping activities have usually been studied by examining how consumers feel before and after the shopping activity. The purpose of this paper is to extend on this view by examining consumers feelings with the shopping activity before, during and after the shopping process, to receive a more comprehensive picture of the emotional shifts consumers go through during the shopping activity. By examining all three stages, we expect to get a more refined picture of how emotions can change during the shopping activity, and what the triggers involved in these changes are.

To achieve the goal of the study, a three-step research methodology was employed. We first utilized an online questionnaire to identify consumers who could be classified as compulsive shoppers. Then, we conducted a digital ethnography study by communicating with consumers using their mobile phones. By communicating with consumers before, during, and after the shopping process using SMS and picture messages, we were able to be sensitive to the emotional changes consumers go through while shopping. Finally, we conducted personal interviews with the compulsive shoppers to hear them describe their feelings involved with the shopping activity, and their emotions towards shopping in their own words. The three steps complemented each other, and provided us with the ability to cross-check and validate results across the different kinds of data collected.

The results show that compulsive shoppers go through an emotional rollercoaster during the shopping process. The trigger involved with the emotions is closely linked to finding a bargain. A bargain is defined as a good deal, or a situation in which the consumers perceive they get mental satisfaction from their purchase. If compulsive shoppers make a bargain, they feel pride, happiness, and goal achievement. However, if they do not manage to find a bargain, they feel disappointed, sad, and unsuccessful. These emotions switch back and forth during the shopping activity. The largest disappointment for these consumers comes if they think they have managed to find a bargain, but realize that it was not one, after all (e.g., the item is too expensive, or they do not have it in the customers' size). However, this disappointed can be overturned if another bargain is found. These findings expand on those found by previous literature by showing the emotions consumers go through during the shopping process are not predominantly negative or positive before or after the shopping process. Instead, consumers move up and down on an emotional continuum during shopping, and can also feel pride and satisfaction after shopping if they manage to find a bargain.

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Knowledge Transfer and Rhetoric: The Influence of Rhetorical Figures on Consumer Learning

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Extended Abstract

Recently, researchers in marketing have begun to investigate the processes of internal knowledge transfer that consumers engage in when learning about a new, unfamiliar product (Gregan-Paxton, Hibbard, Brunel and Azar 2002; Gregan-Paxton and Moreau 2003; Moreau, Lehman and Markman 2001; Moreau, Markman and Lehmann 2001, Roehm and Sternthal 2001). This stream of research promises to expand our understanding of how consumers use existing knowledge to help them learn about unfamiliar products as well as ways in which this learning process can be influenced. Based on work done in cognitive psychology, the dominant theory driving this stream of research is analogical reasoning, which holds that we learn about new products much in the same way as we solve analogies (Gentner and Gentner 1983; Genter, 1989; Holyoak, Gentner, and Kokinov 2001; Markman and Gentner 2001; Vosniadou 1989). In applying and testing this theory in marketing, consumer researchers have often employed analogies in the headlines or copy of advertisements used as experimental stimuli. The use of an analogy in an ad has been found to influence the way consumers learn about the products being advertised (Gregan-Paxton, Hibbard, Brunel and Azar 2002; Gregan-Paxton and Moreau 2003). In spite of this explicit use of analogy, consumer researchers have failed to acknowledge the fact that an analogy is a rhetorical figure and thus have neglected to incorporate findings from the literature on rhetorical figures (McQuarrie and Mick, 1992, 1996, 1999, 2003) and persuasive communication.

This research seeks to answer the following question: what influence does the use of rhetorical figures in marketing communication have on consumer learning? Specifically, the impact on consumer learning will be examined from the perspective of internal knowledge transfer and the validity of the inferences consumers draw after exposure to a persuasive communication containing a rhetorical figure. One goal of this proposed research is to expand the scope of studies on knowledge transfer to a different context: the health care industry, specifically prescription drugs. Prescription drugs represent a different category of products than consumer electronics on many levels: consumers cannot directly buy prescription drugs; prescription drugs are incredibly complex in terms of interactions with other medications and/or lifestyles; prescription drugs have a direct and potentially powerful impact on consumers' health and well being as well as a far reaching impact on public policy and society in general (for example Coney 2002; Lexchin and Mintzes 2002; Roth, 1996; Menon, Deshpande, Zinkhan and Perri 2004; Narayanan, Desiraju and Chintagunta 2004).

In an initial study, 260 undergraduate students from the introductory marketing course at a large Canadian university were exposed to six versions of a print ad for Gentrex, a fictitious brand name for a medication to treat genital herpes. This study was intended to serve as a test of a selected medical condition (genital herpes) and drug therapy as well as to investigate whether there were any substantial differences among subjects at processing similes versus metaphors. Even though metaphors and similes are both technically analogies, they represent different forms (implied versus explicit) and may have a differential impact on knowledge transfer processes.

The experimental design for the study was a 3 x 2 between subjects design. The first factor refers to the type of rhetorical figure used in the headline, with the following three conditions: simile, metaphor or declarative (non-figurative) statement. A declarative statement

was included as a third headline in order to have a baseline against which to evaluate the simile and metaphor headlines. The different headlines for each category were: Gentrex is like a sleeping pill for genital herpes (simile); One Gentrex a day keeps genital herpes at bay (metaphor); Gentrex suppresses genital herpes (declarative statement). The second factor pertains to the copy that appeared in the ad, with the following two conditions: no copy, and copy. The amount of copy contained within the ad was varied to test for any differences in processing due to the inclusion of additional information.

A one-way ANOVA revealed a significant difference in the mean levels of perceived creativity between the figurative headlines (simile and metaphor) and the non-figurative headline, suggesting a successful manipulation. As expected, no significant difference was found between simile and metaphor, suggesting subjects perceived the two forms of analogy similarly. Following previous research on knowledge transfer in consumer research (Gregan-Paxton and Moreau, 2003), the nature and extent of subjects' internal knowledge transfer was captured by having subjects complete two cognitive response tasks. Thought protocol analysis revealed that simile and metaphor comparisons were not significantly different at encouraging relational knowledge transfer. This suggests that simile and metaphor should have similar effects on consumer knowledge transfer.

More than one quarter of all subjects (26%) made the inference that Gentrex cures genital herpes. Currently, there is no cure for genital herpes and no information in the ads shown to subjects indicated that Gentrex can cure genital herpes; however, it is conceivable that subjects might have inferred this from the ad headline. When the ad contained no copy, subjects in the analogical comparison conditions were significantly more likely to make the curative inference than subjects in the declarative condition. This finding suggests that subjects exposed to analogical comparisons engaged in further elaboration of the message than subjects exposed to the declarative statement, but that the additional inferences made were not valid. All subjects were relative novices, and therefore might not have been able to judge the validity of their inferences. When the ad contained copy, there were no significant differences among conditions at making the invalid inference (proportions were .14 for simile, .25 for metaphor and .16 for declarative). Additionally, the finding points to the potential danger of analogical comparisons involving medication. If there is no text that corrects for invalid inferences, or, as is more likely the case in a natural setting, consumers do not pay attention to the copy and only read the headline, consumers are in danger of drawing invalid, misleading conclusions about the advertised medication.

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Distrust: An Alternative Source of Power For Consumers

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Extended Abstract

The broad objectives of this article are to make theoretical arguments and to provide empirical support for the significance of studying consumer distrust. More specifically, we study consumers' distrust in various key institutions in the food system, and describe how consumer distrust in various social institutions shapes their beliefs about food safety. It has been argued that trust plays an important role in shaping consumer beliefs about food safety in general and beliefs about the novel food applications in particular (e.g. irradiated foods and genetically modified foods) (Juannillo 2001; McGarity and Hansen 2001). In this paper, we argue that, in order to have a more complete understanding about consumer beliefs in food safety, in addition to trust, consumer researchers and policy makers should also pay attention to the concept of distrust. A review of the literature both in consumer research and in other areas of social sciences suggests that as most researchers have dealt with the concept of *trust*, very limited attention has been paid to the concept of *distrust*.

Marketing literature does not provide a definition for distrust for the same reason that it treats distrust as the negative polar of a single trust continuum. Scholars in other disciplines provided a view of distrust; however, they, too, have mainly conceptualized distrust as "lack of" trust, not as a separate construct (these points will be elaborated in the next section). Deutsch's (1962) conceptualization of trust and distrust appears to make clearer distinctions between the two. Deutsch (1962) viewed trust as an individual's confidence in the intentions and capabilities of a relationship partner and the belief that a relationship partner would behave as one hoped. His view of distrust builds around suspicion and fear: confidence about a relationship partner's undesirable behavior, stemming from knowledge of the individual's capabilities and intentions. More recently, Lewicki, McAllister, and Bies (1998) mentioned distrust as confident negative expectations involving fear of another's conduct.

We conceptualized distrust in terms of confident negative expectations regarding another's conduct. More specifically, distrust in social institutions is conceptualized as consumers' confident negative expectations regarding institution A's conduct (words, actions, and decisions), and confident negative expectations as a fear of, a propensity to attribute sinister intentions to, and a desire to buffer oneself from the effects of institution A's conduct.

Institutional distrust (described as distrust directed at social institutions such as the government or manufacturers) can be studied in two ways. One is to view distrust as "lack of," "loss of," or "decreased" trust, and therefore study it in "trust" terms. Another way to deal with institutional distrust is to call it by its name and work to understand what caused it and what is maintaining it. Most studies have followed the former view, which I see as shortsighted. For example, in their study of distrust in institutions in nine post-Communist societies, Rose and Mishler (1997), conceptualized distrust as "lack of trust" and introduced subjects with the statements "There are many institutions in this country, for example, the government, courts, police, and civil servants. Please show me on this 7-point scale, where 1 represents great distrust and 7 represents great trust, how much is your personal trust in each of the following." (p.8). When distrust is conceptualized as "decreased" or "lack of" of trust, and measured along the same trust/distrust continuum, then it assumes that distrust exists in terms of trust, not as a separate concept (i.e. low levels of trust would mean distrust). As a result, respondents are forced to indicate either trust or distrust toward an institution. This generalized approach does not allow the possibility that individuals can trust an institution in some areas and distrust it in others. In other words, this view omits the possibility that distrust in institutions may exist independently of the level of trust individuals might have in these institutions given different contexts. For example, government may be trusted to deal with foreign threats but may be distrusted to eliminate corruption. In this case trust and distrust may grow or decline based on different elements and may be caused by different antecedents.

We believe that current conceptualizations of trust and distrust (distrust as opposite of trust) leave us only with the "tool" of trust to deal with social problems. However, when trust and distrust are considered as separate constructs, both can be utilized independently to deal with complex social phenomena. In other words, our view also suggests that elements of trust and elements of distrust towards an institution separately may be used as strategy tools by individuals in a complex social system. The Rose and Mishler (1997) study, mentioned above, reported that individuals scored low on the 1-7 distrust/trust scale for most institutions, and therefore concluded that distrust is the persisting attitude in these societies. A summary analysis that low trust would actually mean distrust may lead us nowhere in solving social problems. In the end, the study concluded that as long as distrust exists, many post-Communist countries will remain far from idealized models of civic democracies. However, as we know, in most civic democracies distrust (and also trust) in institutions exists and persists, perhaps even as the backbone of these democratic societies. As Barber (1983) suggests "A democratic polity requires legitimate criticisms based on democratic allegiance, some distrust, in this sense, is essential for viable democratic order. Others have point this issue as paradox of democracy: "the more there is institutionalized distrust, the more there will be spontaneous trust" (Sztompka 1999, p. 140).

In summary, we believe that there is both merit and need in investigating distrust as a separate concept. We further believe that insights gathered through such attempts can provide guidance for public policy makers in their attempts to handle social issues and problems. For example, by studying consumer distrust in the context food safety (like in this paper,) we can have a more comprehensive understanding about consumers' orientations for various novel food applications including irradiated foods and genetically modified foods. In this paper, after providing an overview of our research context and activities that took place between 1999-2003 in the Midwest, we report our findings related to consumer distrust in social institution. Based on the data collected through in-depth interviews, we identified three dimensions of consumer distrust within which social institution of the food system can be viewed. Then, we conclude the paper with a general discussion of contributions and implications for consumer, for academicians, for practitioners (e.g. the food industry) and for public policy makers.

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Spinning Fantasies into Consumer Attitudes: A Fantasy-Realization Perspective of Attitude Formation

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Extended Abstract

Every consumer fantasizes about obtaining better things such as a better car, a new flat panel TV, or a dream vacation. Yet, as ubiquitous as such fantasies are, they are often times not realized. One reason individuals' positive fantasies become doomed to the limbo of the mind is that individuals do not possess the goal, or at least a strong enough goal, to make their fantasies into reality. Interestingly, fairly little empirical attention has been given to determine how or why people set goals in the first place, and how committed individuals become to their goals. Yet, such empirical considerations are important if marketers are to understand when and how consumers form goals to purchase products.

Potentially guiding such considerations, Oettingen (1996) has suggested that how individuals think about the future may be important in understanding how they come to set goals and commit to them. She offers that individuals can think about the future in two ways—by generating or considering expectations about what outcomes are likely to occur in the future, or by indulging in free fantasies. Free-fantasies involve individuals' imagination about what it would be like to attain a desirable future outcome (e.g., buying a desired new car). Importantly, free-fantasies can occur independently of individuals' expectations that the events about which they fantasize are likely to occur. For example, many consumers can fantasize about owning a new Ferrari, yet fully expect that actually owning such a car will never be within their financial reach.

In her Fantasy Realization Theory (FRT), Oettingen (1996) offers three ways an individual might deal with fantasies about the future and relate them back to their current situation as a means toward realizing the fantasy. That is, FRT offers three ways by which individuals' fantasies may influence goal formation and commitment. Two of the possibilities create a readiness to act that is independent of expectations that the goal is attainable (e.g., the Ferrari example), whereas the third entails an expectancy-based readiness to act.

First, individuals may largely disregard positive fantasies about the future and instead dwell on a negative reality that stands in the way of a desired future. When individuals engage in this type of thinking they are left without the necessity to act. Further, and more importantly, by not fantasizing about the positive future individuals also lack a direction in which to act. As a result, goal commitment will only be influenced by the negative aspects one considers about the current reality. That is, expectations about the attainability of the positive outcome do not tend to influence goal commitment.

Second, individuals can think about positive fantasies without considering current situations that may impede their fantasy-realization, a type of thought akin to daydreaming. In this situation, individuals merely fantasize about the future and consider no information in the present reality that would cause them to reflect on the fact that their fantasy of the future has not been realized. Further, because individuals in this frame of mind do not ponder their reality, their expectations for attaining the positive outcome is not considered and, therefore, does not influence their commitment to achieving the outcome in their fantasy. Rather, the positive incentive of the desired future outcome within the fantasy supplies the only motivation to act.

Third, individuals may indulge in an expectation-based type of thinking in which a positive fantasy is contrasted with a negative reality that blocks the potential realization of a fantasy. In essence, mental contrasting reveals the desired future as something that is to be attained, and the negative reality as something that needs to be overcome. A necessity to act is produced that questions whether reality can be turned into fantasy. Goals are enacted or forgotten based on the individual's degree of expectation of achieving that future. If expectations are high, then a committed goal will be formed, if expectations are low, a goal will not be formed.

To this point, FRT studies have relied on identifying expectations already held by participants. Of note, persuasion research (e.g., Fishbein and Ajzen 1975) indicates that the presentation of strong or weak arguments influence individuals' expectations that an attitude object is likely to produce positive or negative consequences. Thus, by manipulating argument quality, it is possible to manipulate individuals' expectations that a fantasy is attainable (e.g., that they can, or cannot, purchase a car). Further, individuals form favorable attitudes toward the topic of the message when it is supported by strong arguments, but relatively unfavorable attitudes about a message if it is supported by weak arguments (Petty and Wegener 1991). Thus, FRT would suggest that individuals who compare positive fantasies and negative realities should be particularly influenced by the expectations induced by strong or weak arguments. As a result, these individuals should form favorable attitudes toward a message topic if it contains strong, relative to weak arguments. However, individuals who only consider positive fantasies, or negative realities, should not be influenced by their expectations, and thus should form attitudes independent of the quality of the arguments they read.

Testing these predictions we manipulated participants' mindset using methods similar to those used by Oettingen et al. (2001). Specifically, participants were induced to either dwell on negative realities that stand in the way of buying a new car, positive fantasies

about buying a new car, or to mentally contrast both. They were then presented with an advertisement that offered excellent incentives for buying a new car (strong argument) or an advertisement that offered lackluster incentives for buying a new car (weak argument). We then administered a questionnaire about their expectations that buying a car was feasible and their attitudes toward buying a car in the near future.

As predicted, participants in the mental contrast condition who received a strong advertisement demonstrated more positive attitudes and higher expectations of buying a desired new car than those who received a weak advertisement. Further, participants in the other two conditions did not differ in their expectations or attitudes, regardless of which persuasive advertisement they received. These findings indicate that FRT can be usefully applied to research in consumer behavior.

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The Influence of Line and Surface Modifications in Product Design on Brand Recognition and Novelty

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Extended Abstract

The choice between novelty and familiarity when introducing a redesigned product is a crucial decision. How similar should the appearance of a redesigned product be compared to the old product to ensure brand familiarity? And, to what degree should the redesign look new in order to avoid boredom? A look into the processes of object perception reveals that novelty and similarity/familiarity are not two poles of the same dimension. Instead it is possible that consumers can perceive new products as both novel from and similar to a former product. According to the 4-stage model of object perception (cf. Palmer 1999; Palmer et al., 2003; Kreuzbauer & Malter 2006) a product which is perceived by a consumer passes 4 different stages until it becomes categorized within consumer memory. The first stage describes a 2-D *retinal image* which is a first impression of visual product stimuli that are projected to the viewpoint of the observer's eyes. A retinal image is perceived without the consumer's attention, and the information is unstructured and 'uninterpreted' (Julesz, 1984; Treisman, 1993). In the second stage, the 2-D retinal product impression is further processed, so that elements such as lines and edges of the stimulus are detected and "sharpened" (*image-based stage*). Further in the *surface-based stage*, general surface and spatial information is recovered. True 3-D processing first occurs in the final stage, called the *object-based stage*, since the product perception process does not end with the mere representation of all the visible lines and surfaces. Instead, it is assumed that during perception surface information is related to general stored knowledge about the intrinsic nature of the 3-D object (Biederman, 1987; Palmer, 1999). An example would be aspects of products that are occluded from the current viewpoint (e.g., the backs or undersides of a camera, TV, car, bottle, etc.). By simply perceiving the curved lines and surfaces of a bottle, the observer is able to make clear predictions regarding the probable appearance and properties of the back of the bottle. Therefore, hidden assumptions about the nature of the visual world are also required to enable the inclusion of information about unseen surfaces or parts of surfaces.

Since line perception is an earlier process than other processes such as surface and texture perception, lines are the major visual elements that determine object recognition and similarity (cf. Biederman & Ju, 1992). Based on the ideas of Biederman & Ju, one can expect that products of a brand that share major line characteristics (e.g. the car grill or line-silhouette of the lights of a BMW car or its overall silhouette) should be considered as more similar (i.e. stronger brand familiarity) than products that share similar colors, textures or other surface elements but have different line-structure. When companies introduce redesigned products, consumers are confronted with differences between the lines and surfaces of the old and redesigned product. These modifications are hypothesized to influence both the perception of product novelty and brand recognition in the following ways:

H1: Line modification has a strong (—) negative effect on brand recognition. Surface modification has a small (-) negative effect on brand recognition.

H2: Line modification has a strong (++) positive effect on novelty. Surface modification has a strong (+) positive effect on novelty.

To test our hypotheses, we redesigned the appearance of a Nokia phone. The 2-D stimuli were designed by a professional designer and differed on the degree of line and surface modifications. Stimuli were black and white sketches, no brand name was included. Our benchmark stimulus was a sketch of the most sold Nokia cell phone among our respondents. In study 1 (N=17), we assessed perceived line and surface changes to check our manipulations. Experts (Bachelor in design) compared 6 stimuli with the benchmark. Our stimuli indeed differed in line and surface modifications. Next to assess brand recognition, we asked the same respondents to indicate the brand of the stimuli and their degree of certainty on this. To test hypothesis 1, we correlated the perceived line and perceived surface modifications with brand recognition. Analyses showed a significant negative effect of both line (Pearson $R=.47$; $P<.001$) and surface changes (Pearson $R=.28$; $P<.01$) on brand recognition. Partial correlations showed that controlled for surface changes [line changes] the correlation remained significant (Pearson $R=.41$; $P<.001$) [correlation become insignificant (Pearson $R=.10$; $P=.32$)]. This confirms our hypothesis.

In a second study (N=17), we tested hypothesis 1 and 2. We asked respondents to compare our stimuli (differences in degree of line and surface change based on study 1) with our benchmark stimulus on newness and aesthetic evaluation. Results in this study for hypothesis 1 are comparable to those in study 1. Hypothesis 2 was tested with the use of partial correlations because of high correlation between surface and line change. Partial correlations showed that controlled for surface changes [line changes] the correlation was significant (Pearson $R=.26$; $P<.001$) [correlation was insignificant (Pearson $R=.10$; $P=.32$)]. This partly confirms our hypothesis 2.

As a next step we will make experiments with a bigger sample and with different products. In addition to that we will measure the interaction between line and surface changes on brand recognition and novelty as well as overall preference. The results will be presented at the conference.

The contribution of this research to consumer science is two fold: Firstly, it shows how different types of visual characteristics (line and surface) affect brand recognition, novelty and preference. Secondly, it provides an in-depth understanding of processes of product perception and should motivate further research into that direction. Whereas consumer information processing has mostly concentrated on the part of categorization and knowledge representation, this research focuses on the mostly overlooked part of (product) perception.

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Heuristic and Systematic Information Processing when Valuating Multiple Gains and Losses

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Extended Abstract

This research attempts to enhance our understanding of people's preferences for separating or combining gains and losses. According to the normative decision theory of rational choice, people should demonstrate indifference towards the combination or separation of negative and positive events (Thaler, 1985). However, there are many examples and empirical studies demonstrating that preferences systematically violate normative decision theory (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979, 1984). E.g. winning \$90 all at once is not perceived as being equal to winning \$40 and \$50 separately. Inspired by Kahneman and Tversky's Prospect Theory (1979) a substantial body of literature has investigated the patterns of preference formation when judging consolidated versus segregated gains and losses. Thaler's hedonic editing rules are based on the value function of the prospect theory and predict a preference for consolidating multiple losses and integrating multiple gains; empirical research confirmed these predictions (Thaler, 1985). Later studies confirmed the preference for segregating gains but stated—contrary to theory—a preference for segregating losses also (Linville & Fischer, 1991; Thaler & Johnson, 1990). Explanations for these findings refer to the theory of renewable resources (Linville & Fischer, 1991) or to the quasi hedonic-editing hypothesis (Thaler & Johnson, 1990). However, this previous research focuses on the emotional impact of segregated versus integrated gains and losses and the role of motivational underpinnings of preference formation for multiple gains and losses remain unclear.

Based on the heuristic-systematic model (HSM) of human information processing (Chaiken, 1987) this research attempts to shed light on the underlying logic of judgment of multiple gains and losses. The HSM differentiates systematic from heuristic information processing. Whereas heuristic processing is characterized by a relatively effortless application of simple decision rules, systematic processing is marked by a more cognitively demanding comprehensive analysis of judgment-relevant information. Which mode of information processing predominates depends on the individual's current motivation (Chen, Shechter, & Chaiken, 1996). It is stated that accuracy motivation will enhance systematic processing (Chaiken & Maheswaran, 1994). Numerous studies have demonstrated the differential influence of the two modes of information processing (heuristic and systematic) on judgment and decision making: Hsee and

Rottenstreich's (Hsee & Rottenstreich, 2004) experiments demonstrate the influence of the two modes of information processing on valuation and subsequently on preferences for segregation and integration of gains and losses. Additionally, research by Agrawal and Maheswaran (Agrawal & Maheswaran, 2005) lends support to the assumption that accuracy motivation eliminates outcome-biased judgments.

Based on the previous research on dual process models and valuation we predict that accuracy motivation will foster systematic information processing and will therefore take a substantial impact on how segregated versus integrated gains and losses are perceived and valued. To test the predictions an experimental study was conducted. 160 undergraduate students completed the study for a payment of \$5. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four groups. They were primed either to be accuracy motivated or to value by feelings and assigned to either a gain or a loss scenario. They were presented both an integrated and a segregated scenario and indicated their preference for one of the scenarios.

In general, the current research establishes that accuracy motivation strongly influences or even reverses preferences when people value segregated versus integrated gains. However, the results obtained by this research raise interesting issues on how the type of event (gain versus loss) elicits different valuations of multiple events. We assume that loss aversion and specific emotions related to losses influence the way outcomes are valued. Therefore, further work is needed to scrutinize the effects of emotions in the context of the valuation of segregated versus integrated losses.

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On the Importance of Non-dominant Cultural Dimensions: Effects of Vertical Individualism on Consumer Behaviour in Norway

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Introduction

Countries and cultures are typically characterised in terms of some dominant cultural variables. For example, the US is described as a vertical individualistic country, whereas Japan is vertical and collectivistic (Triandis 1995). Scandinavian countries are typically found to score high on horizontal dimensions (Nelson and Shavitt 2002; Silveira and Seger 2004). In this paper we promote the point that non-dominant cultural dimensions may play a more important role in explaining culturally related consumer behaviors than dominant dimensions.

Individualism-collectivism (INDCOL)

The original typology was later expanded with a new dimension of vertical vs. horizontal INDCOL (Singelis et al. 1995; Triandis and Gelfand 1998). Vertical dimension of INDCOL captures the degree of status and inequality present in this orientation whereas horizontal dimension captures the degree of egalitarianism (Singelis et al. 1995; Triandis and Gelfand 1998). Intracultural variation in INDCOL is conceptualised as idiocentric vs. allocentric tendencies (Triandis et al. 1985).

Effects of vertical and horizontal INDCOL

Vertical individualist subjects preferred domestic products only when they were perceived as superior, whereas vertical collectivist subjects were found to prefer domestic products regardless of product superiority (Gurhan-Canli and Maheswaran 2000). When individuals with independent self-construal were presented with promotion focused appeals, i.e. emphasizing gains, hopes and aspirations, the messages were more persuasive than when they were presented with prevention focused appeals, i.e. emphasizing avoidance of losses, duties and obligations (Aaker and Lee 2001). The reverse was true for individuals with interdependent self-construals. There is also evidence that these effects may hold only for vertical cultures.

The Norwegian culture

The Norwegian culture has been characterized as horizontal rather than vertical (Nelson and Shavitt 2002; Silvera and Seger 2004). The literature points to the predominance of the horizontal value orientations in the Norwegian culture so the researchers tended to use these to explain consumer behavior. However as we argue further and as our data shows other non-dominant dimensions may account for important differences in consumer behavior.

Cultural Embeddedness of Products (CEP)

The concept of CEP is defined as the degree of the various types of national cultural meanings that are transferred from the culturally constituted world (McCracken 1986) to the product category by means of various cultural media (Jakubaneč and Supphellen 2004; Jakubaneč and Supphellen 2005). For instance a product category that has high degree of CEP can serve as a symbol of the national culture. Consumers can draw on the meanings embedded in the product category in order to build their private and social self-concepts as a certain national, promote their national identity and distinguish themselves from other nations (Jakubaneč and Supphellen 2004; Jakubaneč and Supphellen 2005). The dimensions of INDCOL are in turn likely to have effects on CEP due to the importance of INDCOL in the definition of self.

Hypotheses formulation

Intracultural variation becomes an important factor when non-dominant dimensions are likely to account for important consumer behavior. The case is illustrated by the Norwegian example. The horizontal dimensions of INDCOL do not focus on hierarchies or status, which are important in the concept of CEP. Consequently we do not expect these dominant cultural orientations to have effect on this consumer behavior variable. Vertical individualists are likely to engage in national identity construction in order to enhance their status, provided that having strong national identity has a positive connotation. Being a good citizen is valued in the Norwegian culture.

Based on this discussion we formulate the following hypothesis:

H1: Vertical individualism has a strong positive effect on CEP (Cultural Embeddedness of Products) even in countries where vertical individualism is a non-dominant dimension (e.g., Scandinavia).

Methodology

The hypothesis was tested on a non-student sample from Norway (N=158). Vertical-horizontal INDCOL construct was measured by a 16-item, 7-point Likert scale (Singelis et al. 1995). The survey included 8 product categories: ketchup, bunad (a Norwegian national costume), cars, meat cakes (a national meat dish), make-up, goat cheese, pizza, cross-country skis. The concept of CEP was measured by a 22-item, 7-point Likert Cultural Embeddedness of Products (CEP) scale (Jakubaneč and Supphellen 2004; Jakubaneč and Supphellen 2005). The CEP Scale items included such as: "If I traveled abroad, and was asked about a typical Norwegian product, I could mention this one", "When I was a child my family referred to this product as one of the symbols of our Norwegian identity", "If other Norwegian were to see me using this product, he or she would perceive me as a typical Norwegian".

Results

Consistent with earlier studies, horizontal collectivism is the most dominant dimension in the Norwegian culture followed by vertical collectivism. Norwegians are also high on horizontal individualism and as expected rather low on vertical individualism.

EFA of CEP Scale resulted in the three-dimensional structure (Tradition, Identity-building and Relationship CEP) for the eight product categories. The data was subjected to path analysis via LISREL (Jøreskog and Sörbom 1993). Some of the LISREL model fit indices were: for ketchup- $\chi^2/df=2.895$, GFI=.981, CFI=.974, RMSEA=.110; for pizza- $\chi^2/df=2.122$, GFI=.983, CFI=.979, RMSEA=.085. The results strongly support H1. Vertical individualism has strong effects on the Tradition CEP (e.g. .359*** for meat cakes, .239*** for cars; ***= $p < .01$), Identity-building CEP (e.g. .510*** for meat cakes, .335*** for ketchup) for most product categories, whereas very few effects are observed for the other INDCOL dimensions.

Discussion

The most dominant cultural orientation of the Norwegian society-horizontal collectivism has little explanatory power when it comes to perception and construction of the national identity. The same conclusion applies to the other dominant dimension-horizontal individualism. Instead the dimension of vertical individualism, existence of which previously was ignored in the studies of the Norwegian culture, provides consistent explanations in this behavior cluster across the product categories. It could be the case that in the Norwegian culture, the national cultural meanings could serve status-enhancing purpose of being a good citizen which is important to vertical individualists.

Implications

We find support for importance of recognising and measuring allocentric and idiocentric tendencies when conducting cross-cultural consumer behavior studies. Reliance on nation-level studies and ignorance of the intracultural variation may weaken research validity.

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Flip-Flopping of General Action and Inaction States: A Study on the Mental Representation of Action and Inaction Goals

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Extended Abstract

Being active or inactive is essential to human life. People, cultures, and eras appear to vary in requisite levels of energy and productivity. Thus, we examined the possibility that general tendencies to engage in or abstain from behavior irrespective of the domain (e.g., buying, using drugs, exercising) can be due to the setting of general action and inaction goals. We have investigated *general action goals* that reside at the meta-level of goal systems (for goal-facilitation of specific behaviors, see Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Chartrand & Bargh, 1996; for the concept of general action and inaction goals, see Albarracín, in press). Action goals are generalized goals to engage in action (e.g., activated with instructions such as "go"). The counterpart to these action goals are *general inaction goals*, which are generalized goals to not engage in action (e.g., activated with instructions such as "rest"). Importantly, general action/inaction goals are diffuse desired ends that can mobilize the execution of more specific activities. Hence, their activation may trigger the pursuit or interruption of *any* particular (overt or covert) behavior that is subjectively relevant to the goal. Action goals imply a need to "do" irrespective of what one does; inaction goals imply a need to abstain from doing, irrespective of the domain of abstinence.

Research by Albarracín and her colleagues (see Albarracín, in press) have shown that people with general action goals preferred action-oriented tasks, identified more behaviors, performed better on a text comprehension task, and formed attitudes on a novel topic more than people with inaction goals. Given these differences in performance across these domains, we wanted to further explore these goals at the level of mental representations. In this study, we explored the activation of the action/inaction goals via a priming task with icons related to action and inaction and in turn, identified the conditions that led to the satisfaction of those goals. Our basic hypothesis is that the action goal is "turned off" via satisfaction of that goal and as a result, the inaction goal is "turned on." Thus, the purposes of this study were 1) to identify if general action and inaction goals are mentally represented and 2) to examine the "on and off" manner of action and inaction goals.

In the first part of study, half of the participants were exposed to the action primes while the rest were exposed to the inaction primes. To prime action goals, black and white icons concerning specific actions (e.g., running, throwing, and dancing) were employed. To prime inaction goals, black and white icons concerning specific inactions (e.g., lying down, meditating, and relaxing) were used. Participants in the action prime condition were exposed to 10 pictures related to actions and 14 pictures neutral to action. Those in the inaction prime condition were exposed to 10 pictures related to inaction and 14 pictures neutral to inaction. The participants' task was to identify whether the black part of a picture was larger than the white part.

After the priming task, all participants were given a lexical decision task (LDT) to measure the activation level of action-related and inaction-related concepts. The LDT contained 10 action-related words (e.g., go, move, and create), 10 inaction-related words (e.g., relax, stop, and halt), 20 words neutral to action/inaction matched with inaction/action words on word length and frequency, and 20 other neutral words. The task had 10 blocks and each block contained 12 words. The blocks were divided into first and last five blocks to examine if the participants changed their action/inaction goal states.

Following the LDT, the participants were given an opportunity to either choose to work on questions from GRE (graduate record examination) or to rest. The choice made by participants served as our measure of the "on-off" nature of these goals. For instance, participants who are primed with action and then perform the LDT should "flip" to an inactive state and choose to rest.

First, it was hypothesized that action/inaction priming should lead to activation of associated concepts. Results showed differences in activation, such that the participants primed with action goal icons identified action-related words more quickly than the participants primed with inaction goal icons in the first five blocks of the LDT. However, in the last five blocks there was no significant difference between these two goal conditions on reaction times for action-related words. These results suggest that after performing half of the LDT, participants primed with action might have satisfied this goal by performing the LDT.

Second, it was hypothesized that participants in the action goal condition should flip to an inaction state following the LDT. Results showed that participants primed with an action goal were more likely to choose to rest than perform the GRE, and were more likely to do so than those primed with inaction. In sum, the results verified that these general goals can be activated, and suggest the “on and off” nature of these goals.

The study of these general goals may yield many practical applications in tandem with theoretical advances in goal theory and self-regulatory processes. For instance, action goals may exert effects inadvertently by being included in the title of an intervention such as “Youth in Action Against Drugs” (Lowell Housing Authority, 2005; the emphasis is ours). The richer effect here is that not only might people be primed for action, but that people with action goals are more likely in some instances to be persuaded as well. Albarracín and her colleagues (see Albarracín, in press) have shown that people are more likely to employ external information when they do not have prior attitudes about the topic, hence, are more apt to be persuaded. However, once the primed action goal is satisfied, then perhaps the window for persuasion is closed.

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How Do Consumers Categorize Websites?

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Background

Similarity judgments have been used in many fields of research to serve as a cognitive categorization mechanism. This research presents the results of the perceptual mapping of stagnant (or mouse-free) images of multiple websites from the consumer perspective. The goal of our research is not from a decision making perspective, but more from a consumer perception framework. We aim to disentangle the internet into multiple separable pieces or frames, gather information from consumers on those frames, and then elaborate on ways in which they are categorized and conceptualized.

One of the key foundations of this pilot research effort is the de-activation of an otherwise interactive medium. Our effort was to gain insight as to how consumers may initially view websites—as images rather than “clickable” interfaces. We contend, then, that at first glance, a user categorizes websites according to some set of attributes. Those attributes, if further understood, can help guide our understanding of deployment of “effective” websites, from a consumer-centric viewpoint. Although the foundations of cognitive categorization are principally psychological, many other fields have employed them through use of mathematical techniques. Broken down at the lowest level, we see or discuss “things”, which then, in order to control for chaos and cognitive boundaries we have, we must categorize. (Smith and Medlin, 1981)

The fields of human factors, information systems, and marketing have also focused on the interesting implications of the internet as an interactive medium. Marketing research often studies the internet as an advertising medium and sees similarities with other forms such as television, where we have visual cues to stimulate action on the part of the consumer. Yet, we make note of something entirely unique in internet environments—the ability to have constant interaction with our consumer. (Hoffman and Novak, 1996) Consumer choice and decision making thus drives much of the literature on how a consumer can interact with the internet. (Peterson et al, 1997; Mandel and Johnson, 2002)

Hence, the contribution of this initial study is to break down and attempt to ascertain “first impressions” of consumers by using static as opposed to dynamic images. We posit that clickstream data, by focusing on either one consumer or one website, and presenting the internet in its full interactive complexity, may not be able to capture those initial categorizations which consumers make.

Experiment

Sixty-seven marketing undergraduates participated in this within subject study by completing a two part survey. Due to the subject matter of this study, namely internet websites, and the experience level of the participants, we considered this a homogeneous data set. Given a total of ten websites, part 1 of the study design called for a set of forty-five paired similarity/dissimilarity judgments. Two context areas, cameras and tourism, were selected, within which we selected five websites each. Our conjecture is that the participants in our study

had approximately equal exposure to these two context areas and thus would not show significant experience or gender bias. The ratings were given from 0 to 10 with 10 being the most similar and 0 being the most dissimilar. Since ALSCAL and INDSCAL algorithms expect dissimilarity measures, the results were converted into dissimilarity measures before being entered into a matrix. (Kruskal, 1984; Schiffman, Reynolds and Young, 1981).

Results

The three steps completed during the analysis phase of our study, namely ALSCAL, INDSCAL, and preference mapping, allowed us to determine four possible attributes which could explain the dimensionality of our stimulus configuration. In order to visually examine the resultant vectors, we plotted these four attributes. Studying this plot indicated that uniqueness and trustworthiness showed the closest match to two possible representative dimensions for our model. Interestingly, we could see domain clustering of the websites on two different sides of the uniqueness vector, i.e. the “C” websites on one side and the “T” websites on the other. The concept of uniqueness as a representation of this dimension, therefore, is intuitive. The remaining three vectors, classifying the website images as trustworthy, personalized, or educational, were all considered as possible attributes for the second dimension. We chose trustworthiness as the second dimension mainly based on its geographic representation.

There are several possible interesting implications when thinking of these two attributes as our dimensions. One of the interesting facets of the attributes we chose is their interpretation if viewed in terms of temporal significance, or what we are terming *dynamism*. Essentially, we are asking the question, “Does the consumer have to interact with the website in order to make this determination?”

Conclusions

The most interesting finding of this study centers on the relevance of several “non-dynamic” attributes as salient. This, given that we are making the web a static interface for the study, is a significant result. One may ask the question of whether or not it is effective to freeze a website and assess a consumer’s perception of it—or cognitive categorization of it. Our reasoning behind this study centers on what we see as a very important facet of the internet as an advertising medium. The fact that consumers constantly assess corporations using not only their websites, but the entire picture the consumer creates of that corporation. This assessment may consist of experience gleaned from other advertising media (television, magazines, newspapers, store presences, to name a few) as well as interaction with the website itself. But where does the consumer classify the website he/she interacts with? What motivates the consumer to interact with one website over another? These are questions we believe are at the foundation of the need to be able to classify key attributes consumers identify at an initial, static, level.

The quantitative analysis in this paper resulted in the finding of four salient attributes for mouse-free website impressions—uniqueness, educational value, personalization, and trustworthiness. The implications of this study are that we truly can freeze this otherwise interactive medium, allow consumers to categorize the images, and possibly use this information to help design the navigational aspects of a website.

The Use of Images of Dead Celebrities in Advertising—History, Growth Factors, Theory, Legality, Ethics and Recommendations

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Extended Abstract

A practice that has increased in frequency and scope in the advertising and merchandise licensing industries is that of the use of the images of dead celebrities. According to some in the advertising industry, this interest in dead celebrities is part of a larger trend that is currently taking place in America, namely an increasing interest by an aging baby-boom generation in imagery and experiences from yesteryear (Rodkin 1989).

One indication of the importance and significance of this practice is the annual exercise that *Forbes* magazines started in 2001, of compiling information on and ranking the “top earning dead celebrities” in America (see DiCarlo (2003), DiCarlo and Patsuris (2004), Fong and Lau (2001) and Kafka (2005) and Schiffman (2002)).

In this paper, we examine this practice, its history, growth, causes, dynamics, legality and ethics in detail.

First, we take the reader through a brief, but comprehensive survey of the most significant developments that have taken place in this area of the advertising (and the related law) industry, beginning in the mid-1800s and extending up to the present time. detailed time-line. We include a detailed time-line, to help the reader keep track of these developments and their sequence.

Next, we analyze some of the major demand-side and supply-side factors that have caused this practice to become so significant, especially lately. Some examples of these demand-side factors include the demographic ‘bulge’ moving through the American population, loosely referred to as the ‘baby-boom’ generation and their increasing (as they grow older) yearning for imagery and experiences from yesteryear (Rodkin 1989), which we refer to as ‘nostalgia’ in this paper.

Some examples of these supply-side factors include the increasing consolidation and shakeout that is taking place in the Archival (Digital) Image Acquisition, Storage and Licensing industry, as exemplified by the rise of Corbis, owned by Bill Gates (CNN 2006) and the challenge it is beginning to pose for the older, more established giant in the industry, namely Getty Images.

Following this, we look at two streams of literature to: (a) see how similar the practice we are interested in (i.e., consumer interest in dead celebrity images) is to the related practice, namely consumer interest in live celebrity images, and, (b) to see how different the

practice we are interested in (i.e., consumer interest in dead celebrity images) is different from the related practice, namely consumer interest in live celebrity images.

Nostalgia theory (e.g., Holbrook and Schindler 1994, 1996) is the first stream of literature we look at, because: (a) nostalgia is one of the most important factors driving demand for images of dead celebrities, and, (b) we wish to see if there are any new insights which this dead celebrity image preference trend can add to the extant base of theory on how Nostalgia drives consumption behavior.

A second stream of literature we look at is that pertaining to the use of celebrities (dead or alive) in advertisements (e.g., Kamins 1990). This stream of literature is important to look at because many of the principles/generalizations that dictate the use of live celebrities in advertising may not be substantially different from those that govern the use of dead celebrities as well. However, it must also be said that we are equally interested in seeking out those principles/generalizations/issues that: (a) must be different when the celebrity is dead (e.g., rights of heirs/estates), and (b) could be different (e.g., working with a static/time-frozen image versus a dynamic image).

Following this, we look briefly at some of the major legal issues in the area of dead celebrities' image rights. Because the state of the law vis-a-vis the rights of those who claim ownership of the images of dead celebrities' images is 'not as developed' in America as it is in other countries (e.g., France) we do the next logical thing: we examine some of the major ethical issues (i.e., harms and benefits) that surround the usage of images of dead celebrities. This is because in the absence of clearly-defined law (especially at the Federal level), the responsible user of these images must let their sense of ethics (i.e., who is harmed and who is benefitted) to guide how they use these images.

Finally, we conclude, by offering the reader a set of recommendations, for deciding when it is most appropriate, effective &/or efficient for using a dead celebrity's image in advertising and when it is not.

In conclusion, in this paper, we are interested in the issue of how and why images of dead celebrities are being increasingly used in Advertising (and Merchandise licensing), with a particularly close examination of: (a) the confluence of events (i.e., the history) that made this practice possible, (b) the factors (both demand- and supply-side) that are driving this trend, (c) two major streams of literature that could explain why this practice works and is growing, (d) the legal issues that are intertwined with this type (i.e., dead) of image-usage, (e) a set of ethical issues that must be noted, for those who are concerned with responsibly using these images, and (f) a set of recommendations, for those who are concerned with using these images effectively.

References available on request.

Coping with Mixed Emotions

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Consumer purchase decisions, particularly those that are important or highly involving, can be very stressful. The current research considers the effect of corporate social responsibility information on the dynamic relationship between consumer emotional responses and subsequent coping strategies in a purchase decision context. Discrete and mixed emotional responses are assessed and open ended responses are evaluated for the specific coping processes that consumers use when presented with either positive, negative, or conflicting information (i.e. both positive and negative information) about a company they are either considering a product purchase from or have already made a product purchase.

Theoretical Background

Coping occurs when a situation is sufficiently important to consumers and when they perceive a potential threat to their goals. This situation is often characterized by negative emotions, which have been the focus of the majority of coping research. Recently, however Folkman and Moskowitz (2000) considered positive affect in the presence of negative affect in the coping process. The relationship between emotions and coping is complex and people are likely to experience multiple and conflicting emotions (Folkman and Lazarus 1988). Our research focuses on coping in the context of positive, negative, and conflicting mixed emotional states.

Three coping strategies are emphasized in this research: problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and social support coping (Folkman and Lazarus 1988; Folkman and Moskowitz 2004; Duhachek and Iacobucci 2005). Problem-focused coping relates to ways the consumer can solve or manage the problem or change the conditions surrounding the stressful situation. Two specific examples of problem-focused coping include confrontive coping or planful problem solving. In confrontive coping, consumers stand their ground, try to get the company to change or express displeasure at the company, whereas with planful problem solving, consumers make a plan of action or make an effort or come up with solutions.

In emotion-focused coping, consumers attempt to change their understanding or the meaning of the perceived source of stress. There are four different areas of emotion-focused coping: distancing (e.g., acting as if nothing is wrong), self-control (e.g., keeping things to oneself), accepting responsibility (e.g., realized brought the problem on by oneself), and positive reappraisal (e.g., seeing the situation differently).

Social support coping is a form of coping where consumers seek either instrumental support, such as talking to someone who can do something about the problem or emotional support by accepting understanding from a friend (Folkman and Moskowitz 2004). This type of coping was identified by Duhachek and Iacobucci (2005) as important in consumer research because of its similarity to word-of-mouth behavior.

Method

Participants were undergraduate students enrolled in business administration classes. The information was presented via a series of internet websites and emotional responses and comments were collected with a web based survey. Participants were asked to read corporate social responsibility information about a fictitious company. The corporate social responsibility information was presented as if it were from an objective third party, The Calvert Group. This information was used to present positive information (e.g. the company was environmentally friendly, produced high quality and safe products, etc.), negative information (e.g. the company was not environmentally friendly, produce low quality and unsafe products, etc.), or mixed (e.g. the company was environmental friendly but produced low quality and unsafe products, etc.). Participants were either asked to imagine they were about to make a purchase from this company or they were told they had just made a purchase from this company. Their emotional response toward the purchase situation was assessed, and in an open-ended response format they were asked what thoughts and feelings they had, what decision they would make, and what they would do in this situation.

Results

As expected, respondents receiving positive information experienced significantly more positive emotion ($M=5.24$) than either the negative or the mixed conditions ($M=2.59$; $t(161)=10.79$, $p<.01$). Additionally, the negative condition was rated as being significantly more negative ($M=4.98$) than either the positive or mixed conditions ($M=2.66$; $t(161)=10.68$, $p<.01$). Finally, participants exposed to conflicting information experienced significantly higher levels of subjective emotional ambivalence ($M=3.59$) compared to participants in either the positive or negative conditions ($M=2.54$; $t(161)=4.68$, $p<.01$).

Based on the content analysis of three independent coders, consumers exposed to positive information did not seem to actively engage in coping strategies. However, consumers exposed to negative information engaged in problem-focused coping, both confrontive and planful problem solving, as well as social support coping. Those exposed to conflicting information seemed to engage in emotion-focused coping.

For participants exposed to negative information, specific examples of confrontive coping included statements about their displeasure with the company's behavior, switching companies, and writing letters to the local paper about the company's substandard levels or writing letters to the company or CEO to inform them of their displeasure. Planful problem solving strategies included plans to return the product, look for alternatives, or buy from another company. Following a purchase decision, respondents were still upset about their situation and engaged in similar coping strategies, however it seemed they were less likely to engage in complaining behavior and seemed more likely to keep the product.

Instances of social support coping were also found with the negative information. Participants stated intentions to engage in negative word of mouth or complaining behavior, stating they would talk to friends and family to tell them to about this company's negative business practices and to avoid this company and any of their products.

Consumers presented with conflicting information engaged in emotion-focused coping, mostly distancing and positive reappraisal. Some respondents were found to use social support coping. Prior to purchase, participants tried to see the company in a positive light, wanted the company to be good, and thought they weren't doing anything wrong by thinking about this purchase. Following a decision, participants tried to justify or rationalize their decision and continued to reappraise the situation.

These findings are consistent with research in the area of coping and emotions. Negative emotions have been found to be negatively related to some emotion-focused coping (reappraisal) and positively related to some forms of problem-focused coping (Folkman and Lazarus 1988). Coping responses related to conflicting mixed emotions have not been assessed in previous research but it is understandable that consumers would try to reappraise the purchase situation, especially after having already made a purchase decision. Future research should further examine the relationship between emotions and consumer coping responses.

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Website Image Transfer: Perception of Uninformative Online Ads

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Extended Abstract

This paper examines the role of context effects in online advertising, aiming to provide marketers with appropriate strategies to promote products in the new media. In the traditional media, effective ads typically provide vivid and specific information. An online ad is considered effective if it arouses curiosity and induces consumers to click through it. Thus, unlike traditional advertising, online ads often contain low level of information, due to high interactivity of the new media (Sicilia, Ruiz, and Munuera, 2005). Such ads may omit two types of information, product category related and personality related (Aaker, 1997).

Studies in social psychology have found that human judgment is highly context-dependent. Ad context can influence consumers' perception and evaluation of ads, and thus ad effectiveness (e.g. Singh and Churchill, 1987). In the present paper, we address one important emerging context on consumers' judgment due to the development of Internet–website image. From an associative memory net viewpoint, we define *website image* as “consumers' perception of a website as reflected by the associations related to the website (including sub-sites) held in memory.”

We study website image from two dimensions: function and personality. Function of a website refers to the types of products and services it provides, which is reflected in the context and design of the website. Following the literature, we use brand image of a website to define its personality.

In this paper, we propose that function and personality of a website will impact consumers' perception of and attitude towards online ads through an image-transfer process. Site image transfer is defined as “consumers use their perceived site image to infer product-category related- and brand-personality related-information in uninformative online ads.”

The first set of hypotheses is concerned with the contingency under which such image transfer occurs. Website function is more likely to influence consumers' perception of the product category of a brand, while website personality is more likely to influence their perception of brand personality in ambiguous online ads than in unambiguous ones.

The second set of hypotheses is related to the psychological process of website image transfer. We propose that consumers can “restore” or “interpret” the two types of omissions in online ads through either a systematic or heuristic way, depending on the level of cognitive resources.

The third set of hypotheses deals with specific context (website image) of an online ad. With a high (low) level of cognitive resources, consumers systematically (heuristically) interpret or “restore” the missing product category related-information in an ambiguous online ad. In contrast, when cognitive resources are highly available, personality-based image transfer is less likely to occur (Martin, 1991; Meyers-Levy and Tybout, 1997), while consumers engage in personality-based image, with a low level of cognitive resources at the time of ad exposure.

The last hypothesis indicates the consequences of site image transfer. Depending on the relevance between the actual and perceived (through a process of site image transfer) information, consumers' attitude-toward-website may vary. The higher is the relevance, the more favorable is consumers' attitude-toward-website, and vice versa.

An Influential Minority: Reaching the New Values-Based Consumers

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Introduction

According to Morris Holbrook (1996), consumer *value* refers to the experience of a relativistic consumption preference, while consumer *values* are “the standards or criteria on which the former depends.” Beyond this clarification, the exact definition of *values* remains fuzzy throughout the social sciences (see Rohan, 2000 and Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004). For the purposes of this paper, *values* will be defined as “desirable transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles” (Schwartz, 1994, p. 21).

As guiding principles, values operate in all consumption contexts. Yet the plurality of consumer values is not well understood. Much consumer behavior theory has assumed that “mainstream” American values are the ones that matter most. If we are concerned with trends, history would suggest that the “mainstream” is not the place to look. Significant social change begins not at the center but at the margins. There are many indications that a values-based social trend has been emerging in recent years, not from the center but from what was an initially a marginal edge. Evidence of this can be seen in the social responsibility clauses of corporate mission statements, the appearance of organic and fair trade food sections in “mainstream” stores, and consumer demand for hybrid cars.

One Quarter of American Consumers

To understand this trend, sociologists Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson analyzed the role of “transformational values” in American life (Ray & Anderson, 2000). Over thirteen years, they gathered more than 100,000 survey responses and conducted hundreds of focus groups. Ray and Anderson's 70+-item scale assessed consumer views related to gender, success, spirituality, altruism, optimism, financial solvency, corporate power, cultural diversity, violence, political polarization, environmental destruction, and global interconnectedness. This combination of values is not normally captured by national values surveys.

Ray and Anderson found that over 50 million adults in the United States (about one-quarter of American consumers), and approximately 80-90 million in Europe, hold values that are markedly different from the mainstream in the measured dimensions. These values drive consumption decisions for this mostly middle-class group. They have money to spend (\$228.9 billion per year, according to www.lohas.com/about.htm), but their spending is not typical of mainstream American consumers.

Ray and Anderson see these consumers as catalysts of cultural change, and thus call them “cultural creatives.” They are difficult to reach through typical media and publicity channels because they hold worldviews that are in opposition to most national media and are not covered by, or targeted by, mainstream media (Ray and Anderson, 2000).

Research Questions and Methodology

Interviews conducted during the initial phase of this study suggest that these new values-based consumers watch little to no television, read multiple independently published news sources, and get most of their news online. However, it is not clear what forms of marketing they consider valuable. Specifically,

1. What are the media habits of “cultural creatives”?
2. How do they understand the role of their values in their media habits?
3. What challenges would they expect marketers to have in reaching them?
4. What forms of marketing are consistent with their values?

The second phase of this study involves structured interviews with ten “cultural creatives.” Potential informants are being approached outside stores where organic foods are sold, and screened using Ray’s criteria. Demographic diversity is being sought for a theoretical purposive sample with maximum variation. Each interview begins with a written media habits questionnaire, addressing each media type, including new forms such as podcasting and online communities. Each of the four research questions guides a section of the interview, following McCracken (1988). In the final section, informants are asked to imagine a marketing environment consistent with their values and needs as consumers. They are then asked to compare this projected scenario with marketing resources currently available. Analysis is concurrent with data collection.

Preliminary Findings

Completed interviews confirm that these individuals consume media very selectively and that they are skeptical of mainstream media for values-based reasons. The most salient values informing their media consumption decisions relate to the importance they attach to truthfulness, spiritual purity, education, and connections with people around the world. These informants interpret financial incentives and corporate ownership as an inevitable loss of objectivity and credibility in media content. They want uncompromised honesty in reporting, and they believe that while marketers are not usually deliberately or overtly deceptive, accuracy is reduced because “there are motives that are not for the bigger picture.” These interviewees envision ideal media environments in which they can access accurate information easily via light or sound, without being “bombarded,” which is their experience of the current media environment.

Each of these informants spontaneously talked about personal transitions from former mainstream media consumption habits to more selective media habits. These transitions occurred 5-15 years prior to the interviews, and involved discoveries of specific information about media ownership and psychological impacts of mass media. These informants applied their values to this new information to arrive at new meanings of the role of media in their lives and in the world, catalyzing more selective search behaviors. This suggests a developmental process of personal evaluation of media use driven by the application of personal values to new information received about the media and its impacts. Parallel developmental processes may operate in other contexts where consumers apply personal values to new information received.

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Look Who’s Talking! Technology-Supported Impression Formation in Virtual Communities

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The growing availability of consumer-generated information on the Internet about products, services, and companies has increased market transparency. Power is shifting from producers to consumers who share their knowledge, experiences, and opinions via virtual communities, electronic discussion forums, online opinion platforms, chat rooms, and weblogs. However, this abundance of readily available information also comes at a cost. How do you distinguish an expert from a fraud? Who is credible and trustworthy, and who isn’t? We form impressions of others based on cues such as age, gender, manner of dress and speech (e.g., Hamilton & Huffman 1971). But how do we construct and evaluate impressions in an online environment that lacks social cues normally present in face-to-face settings?

Cyberspace is in many ways distinctly different from the physical world. Two characteristics stand out. Firstly, interaction takes place through a technological interface, i.e., a computer, mobile phone, or an interactive television with Internet access. This means that the primary relationship is not between the sender and the receiver of information, but rather with the technology-mediated environment (Hoffman & Novak 1996). The second defining characteristic of cyberspace is its textuality. Communication and interaction online is based on the written word, audio, images, icons, and hyperlinks to other Web sites. This allows for new ways of self-presentation in which the physical self does not necessarily have to coincide with the digital self (Schau & Gilly 2003).

Schau and Gilly (2003) have demonstrated that consumers make active use of signs, symbols, material objects, and places to construct a digital self on their personal Web site. In this paper, we want to extend their research into online self-presentational strategies by looking more closely at the receivers’ side. The objective of our research is to investigate how consumers form impressions of senders in the context

of word-of-web recommendations within virtual consumer communities (Kozinets 2002). Specifically, we focus on the role of the technological interface. According to Foucault (1977), technology can be considered as a disciplinary mechanism that is embedded in power devices. Examining how technologies are used to form and manage digital impressions, may help us to understand how individuals influence each other online. Gaining systematic insight in this process is necessary for improving and developing tools that aim to aid consumers in their assessment of online contributions (e.g., reputation systems, member profiles, contribution accounts).

Method

The virtual community that serves as our focal research site is broadly organized around health issues. Its topics of interest include health, medication, pregnancy, nutrition, beauty, psychology, and sexuality. The community has been developed by a French independent company that exploits it by means of advertising. The community generates a total of 60,000 new postings per day (posted by French-speaking users worldwide) in its many discussion forums, chat rooms, and weblogs.

Our exploratory inquiry consisted of 3 semi-structured interviews; with the CEO, a moderator, and a back office technician. These interviews have given us insight in how the technological interface is constructed, managed, and used to exert control over member profiles and contributions by the administrators. Furthermore, we have conducted two online focus groups and follow-ups with animators (total of 18 informants). Animators are members selected by the administrators to serve as volunteer moderators. They play an important role in the day-to-day problem detecting and solving related to member behavior. Their extensive knowledge of community dynamics due to their double role as members and moderators has proven a valuable source of information. Combined with detailed observations and content analyses of the virtual community under study, this first round of data collection has given us a deep understanding of the process of technology-supported impression formation in virtual communities.

Next, we will systematically examine technology-supported impression formation in the context of word-of-web recommendations. Which signals are consulted and how are they interpreted? Does the impression formation strategy differ between member types (e.g., long-time versus short-time members, posters versus lurkers). Does it differ with the decision process at stake? We intend to collect data by means of an online survey among the members of the community under study.

Preliminary findings

Based on our first round of data collection, we can draw some preliminary conclusions of the interplay between technology and impression formation.

Technology *uniforms* impression formation. All members have the same tools at their disposal that serve as common references to form impressions on others; e.g., username, avatar, signature, personal web page with photo's and hyperlinks, administrator-controlled member type label, orthography, emoticons.

Technology *speeds up* impression formation and makes it *more reliable*. Members have continuous and exhaustive access to all contributions of any member. Members' past on the community is transparent.

Impression formation technology are *self-nurturing*. Members share tips to master the technology and they develop new tools, e.g., introducing group labels aimed at impression management.

Technology *destabilizes* impression formation. Technology enables members to have multiple identities, while it simultaneously serves as an identifier by means of, for example, orthographic style or IP address. Members who build multiple identities that are too different risk to loose their reputation. Similarly, if technology shows that formed impressions do not correspond with reality, for example by exposing markers of true identity, the backlash may be severe and technology is used as a release tool to express extreme 'corrected' impressions.

It is clear that the administrators play an important role in the *dynamics* of the impression formation process. They interfere by creating status, e.g., by introducing member type labels based on the number of contributions (regular, loyal, bronze, silver, and gold member), and by appointing members to be forum animators. Understanding the differential effects of the various technologies (member-controlled, administrator-controlled, administrator-bounded) on impression formation will aid both managers and consumers in optimizing the power of virtual communities as credible, trustworthy, and expert information sources. Our final aim is to contribute to this goal.

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When A Good Impression Goes Bad: The Effect of Goal Changes on Repeated Attitudes Enquires

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Extended Abstract

Past consumer research has shown consumption goals impact product information processing, weighting and retrieving, which results in variances in the reported attitudes (Huffman and Houston 1993; Markman and Brendle 2000). However, the extant research has only examined how goals impact an initial attitude (Garbarino and Johnson 2001; Huffman and Houston 1993). In reality, a consumer's goal can change from time to time. It remains unclear whether attitudes formed under different consumption goals impact each other. For instance, when consumptions goals change, will the prior goal-driven evaluation influence the later evaluation? If yes, why and in which direction (i.e., assimilating or contrasting)?

We answered the above two questions by relying on Selective Accessibility Model (SAM, Mussweiler 2003) proposed in social judgment literature. The model suggests that whether the evaluation target is judged as similar or dissimilar to the comparison standard will decide whether the contrast or assimilation effect will be resulted. If the target is judged as similar, the assimilation effect will be observed, but if the target is judged as dissimilar to the comparison standard, the contrasting effect will happen. Based on SAM, we argue that an initial positive (bad) attitude formed under a certain consumption goal can be used as a comparison standard, makes the later evaluation of the same object under a conflicting goal worse (better) off.

The current paper suggests that consumers use the relationship between consumption goals as a way to judge similarity or dissimilarity between the current and prior evaluations, (not only judging the applicability of the stored attitudes as suggested in extant attitude literature). Such judgment can be made quite quickly and colors the new evaluating process. In particular, we predict when two conflicting consumption goals activated at different times, attitudes reported under the later consumption goal would be judged as dissimilar to the initial attitudes formed under the earlier consumption goal, resulting in contrast effect. Our prediction was supported with two lab experiments.

Experiment 1 was a 2 (Consumption goal: Best driving experiment vs. economy to drive) by 2 (Timing of the attitude: First time Initial attitude vs. Second time later Attitude) mixed-design experiment. All participants were asked to learn the information of a luxury car (faked brand) and reported their attitudes towards under one consumption goal (i.e., initial attitude), and after a 10-min filler task, they were asked to read information again, and reported their attitude under a different consumption goal (i.e., later attitude). We found that when evaluation was made under economy goal, the later attitude was poorer than the initial attitude; but when evaluation was made under performance goal, the later attitude was better than the initial attitude. A clear pattern of contrast effect between evaluations under conflicting consumption goals were demonstrated in Experiment 1.

In Experiment 2, we demonstrated that the contrast effect was more robust when the cognitive resource was limited. In this one factor (cognitive load: high-rehearsing 7 digits vs. low-rehearsing 2 digits) design experiment, all participants first reported their initial attitudes under performance goal (the same car information as in Experiment 1 was used), and after a filler task were asked to reported their attitudes under economy goal (i.e., later attitude). Cognitive load was manipulated before the second time evaluation. Results revealed that though the initial attitudes reported under performance goal remained same, compared to participants under low cognitive load, those under high cognitive load evaluated the car less positively under economy goal. Our results in experiment 2 suggested that the comparison to the initial attitudes happened as a default, which was consistent with SAM.

Taken together, the current research suggests that when contextual cues (in this research, consumption goals) are salient, consumers can depend on the relationship between those cues to come up with an initial judgment and adjust from there. More specifically, when contextual cues are in conflict, the prior evaluation can serve a comparison standard rather than an anchoring point, resulting in a contrast effect that impacts attitudes reported later.

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Understanding Consumers' Perceptions of Fashion

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Extended Abstract

Despite the prevalence of fashion in the consumer market, previous research on fashion has primarily focused on the characteristics, motivations and behaviors of fashion innovators/leaders (e.g., Cassill and Drake, 1987; Goldsmith Flynn and More, 1996; Goldsmith, Moore and Beaudoin, 1999). Therefore little is known about the meanings of fashion to the broader range of consumers and their perceptions of fashion. This research attempts to fill this void.

The major objectives of this article are twofold. First, we aim to provide a conceptual foundation for understanding consumers' perceptions of fashion. Second, as one of the first attempts in the literature, we develop and assess the validity of the consumer fashion orientation (CFO) scale that measures the different orientations toward fashion across consumers.

Based on a review of the literature as well as qualitative research inquiries (20 interviews), we identified three fashion orientations/focuses adopted by consumers toward fashion.

Brand focus: More than any other consumer brands, the fashion brand sustains itself on the image of the brand rather than aspects inherent to the product (Auty and Elliott 1998). It appears that many consumers use fashion as a way to communicate their status. In this regard, fashion serves as a symbol or sign. Moore (1995) stressed the positive association with brand, quality and status if the fashion brand is perceived to have a distinctive image. Auty and Elliott (1998) found that consumers perceive branded fashion items to be of higher quality therefore a better conveyer of their self-image.

Trend focus: Trend aspect is inherent in the definition of fashion. One of the very early definitions of fashion states that "Fashion is the prevailing style at any given time" (Nystrom, 1928). Adopting the current trend is a way for consumers to communicate their desire to be "a part of the community". According to Simmel (1904), social tendencies are essential for the establishment of fashion, namely the need of becoming a part of the group on the one hand and the need for uniqueness on the other. Miller et al. (1993) emphasized the desire of consumers to be current by adopting styles that will identify themselves as up-to-date with the people whom they admire in a given situation.

Design focus: It appears that for many individuals, the actual design is another important aspect of fashion and that is what they focus on when it comes to fashion consumption. Many consumers wish to communicate their uniqueness via what they wear (Tian, Bearden and Hunter, 2002). A unique design is usually the answer for individuals who have such concerns when approaching fashion.

A total of 5 studies were conducted in developing and validating the CFO scale.

Study 1: Item development. Besides gleaning on published research related to fashion consumption, we conducted 20 in-depth interviews with undergraduate students in a southeastern university to generate a pool of items for CFO. A total of 33 items were generated (11 items for each dimension).

Study 2: Initial item refinement. The content validity of these items was assessed according to Bearden et al. (1989). After eliminating items that did not receive the appropriate categorization by at least two of the three judges used in this study, 23 items remained (9 items for brand focus, 7 items each for trend and style focuses).

Study 3: Item refinement. Each item was formatted into a seven-point Likert-type response scale in the questionnaires. A sample 98 undergraduate business students (45 females) was used in this study. Based on the data, items that did not have corrected item-to-total subscale correlations above .40 were deleted. Items that did not have statistically higher correlations with the dimension to which they were hypothesized to belong in comparison with item correlations with remaining dimensions' total scores were also deleted (Bearden et al. 1989). These analyses resulted in a reduced scale of 15 items (5 items each dimension).

Study 4: Scale validation-latent structure, reliability and discriminant validity. A non-student sample of 133 consumers (64 females, average age 36) was used to validate the CFO scale. Respondents were recruited by students as an extra credit assignment. Using this data, first, the latent structure and reliability of the scale were assessed. Results show that the three-factor oblique model provided a better fit relative to five more restricted competing models. The hypothesized model was the only model to exhibit acceptable fit. Within the CFA setting, reliability of each dimension was calculated using the procedures outlined by Fornell and Larcker (1981) based on the work of Werts, Lin, and Jöreskog (1974). The reliabilities for the three dimensions ranged from .894 to .954 and the variances extracted ranged from 64 to 80.4 percent, which are highly satisfactory. In an effort to establish scale construct validity, we also conducted discriminant validity tests of the measure by analyzing CFO along with need for uniqueness and fashion innovativeness as pairs of constructs in a series of two-factor CFA models (Bagozzi and Phillips, 1982). The results provided evidence for discriminant validity.

Study 5: Further scale validation-nomological validity. A sample of 243 non-student respondents was used to further validate the scale by focusing on the nomological validity of the scale. We developed our tests based on the established models of fashion clothing consumption (e.g. O'Cass 2004). Age and gender of consumers were included as control variables in our tests. Our test of antecedents revealed that materialism and involvement were positively related to CFO. Moreover, our tests of the consequences found that individuals who are high on CFO scale also had higher self-confidence, tended to spend more and made more impulse purchases. Our results also showed interesting differential effects of the CFO dimensions. While all three dimensions of CFO were positively correlated with impulse buying tendency, only brand focus was significantly correlated with level of spending, and only design focus was significantly correlated with self-confidence.

This research offers both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study provides an important contribution to current fashion research by first attempting to focus on consumers' in general, rather than the limited number of fashion innovators/leaders' perceptions of fashion. CFO may fit into a broader theory of fashion and fashion consumption (Miller et al. 1993). As such, CFO should be useful in empirical studies of consumers' purchasing and consumption patterns of fashion products. This study also offers many important implications to fashion retailers to better understand and segment their market.

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Information Search due to Extended Separation

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Extended Abstract

Information search allows consumers to learn about relevant product dimensions, compare alternative options, and ultimately select the product they prefer. Many factors contribute to consumers' information search processes, including: uncertainty (Urbany et al., 1989), domain knowledge (Brucks, 1985; Ozanne et al., 1992), breadth of alternatives (Iyengar & Lepper, 2000), and the magnitude of perceived difference between choice options (Russo & Carlson, 2002). Oddly, little is known about how expectations influence search in situations where consumers know very little about the choice options.

Expected separation is the non-directional anticipated difference between the overall values of choice alternatives. As a belief that relates to the choice set, expected separation can exist even when consumers have too little information about the specific choice options available to warrant a clear directional prior belief. For example, sometimes consumers confront: really new products, as in the constantly changing realm of consumer electronics; product categories that are new *to them*; new choice options in existing categories, like major redesigns of auto models, or restaurants in a new city. Broadly speaking, any situation where the choice options are novel to the consumer is one where clear directional priors may not exist, but where expected separation may operate.

The effects of beliefs on product evaluation and choice have been demonstrated in numerous domains within consumer research (Allison & Uhl, 1964; Moorthy et al., 1997; Carlson & Russo, 2001). However, we know of no work that has focused on how expected differences among options influences information search. There are two possibilities in this regard, leading to opposite predictions.

It is well-known that the closer options are in value, the longer and deeper consumers will search, at least when they have sufficient expertise to evaluate the acquired information (Bockenholt et al. 1991; Huber and Klein 1991). Thus, if expected separation operates in the same manner as actual separation between choice options, then greater expected separation may lead to less overall search.

The prediction of less information search as expected separation increases is intuitively appealing. After all, if two options are expected to be very different from one another, one would expect to be able to easily tell the options apart, and thus, require less extensive information search to pick one.

However, when expected separation is high the anticipated costs of selecting the wrong option should be high. Thus, consumers may be more likely to fear making a mistake than under conditions of low expected separation. Consequently, search depth may increase as expected separation increases.

Two studies were conducted to test these competing predictions. To begin, we pre-tested expected separation manipulations in a variety of product domains. The manipulation effectively altered expectations of differences between options, as measured by perceived differences among options.

Study 1 employed a mixed 3*3 full-factorial design. The first factor included three levels of expected separation, manipulated by telling participants that the options given in the domain are either “very different,” “slightly different,” or “almost the same”. The second factor consisted of three product domains chosen following pre-testing.

Participants saw descriptions of three simulated scenarios, one in each product domain (hotels in a foreign city, vacation destinations, and imaginary products called gimpers). Each domain was coupled with an expected separation condition. Following each scenario participants answered a series of questions regarding their projected information search behavior.

Results showed that across product domains participants anticipated they would engage in more information gathering the greater the expected separation among alternatives. Participants expected to spend more time gathering information, examine a greater number of options, and use more choice criteria in higher expected separation. Our hypothesis regarding perceptions of cost of picking the wrong option was borne out by higher ratings of risk perception under higher expected separation.

Study 2 was designed to examine actual, rather than anticipated, information search behavior. In addition, the study was designed to allow us to examine potential interaction effects between expected separation and actual (objective) differences between options. Participants were given a simulated scenario where they were asked to choose between two potential date candidates for a friend. The study employed a between subjects 2*3 (expected separation*actual separation) design. Expected separation was manipulated by referring to the two candidates as either very similar or very different. Actual separation was manipulated by varying the average difference in candidates' ratings across a variety of traits.

Participants read a description of the task and examined information about the two candidates. A trait “menu” listed different trait categories where evaluation information was available. Participants were asked to look through traits until they've gathered enough information to make a choice. The main DV was number of trait categories participants chose to examine.

As predicted by participants in study 1, participants in this study examined significantly more trait categories under high rather than low expected separation. While expected separation yielded a main effect on information search, no similar effect was found for actual separation, even though power analysis revealed sufficient power to detect an effect. Additionally, there was no interaction between expected and actual separation on information search.

Participants were more certain of their choice in high rather than low expected separation. This might demonstrate compensatory conviction in response to greater uncertainty during the search process (e.g., McGregor et al., 2001).

To sum, our studies thus far show non-directional expectations of difference between options lead consumers to search for more information. This is borne out in both expected and actual information search. Effects were demonstrated across a variety of consumer domains, adding to the generalizability of the findings.

Further steps in this research include an examination of the effect in real choice, to establish ecological validity, and an investigation of possible mechanisms underlying consumers' extended search for information when expecting greater differences between options. We also wish to clarify the causal role of uncertainty in prompting greater information search following expected separation. This, and other factors, may play in as boundary conditions on the effects of expected separation.

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Do We Really Need a Reason to Indulge?

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Extended Abstract

Consumers often need (seek) reasons to justify their decisions or choices (Shafir, Simonson, and Tversky, 1990). More importantly, decisions to indulge oneself (e.g., purchasing luxuries, going on a cruise) may require legitimate reasons because hedonic indulgences may be construed as wasteful and are likely to evoke guilt and (anticipated) regret (Kivetz and Simonson, 2002; Lascau, 1991). As a result, consumers are more likely to choose utilitarian/necessity items over hedonic items because it is easier to justify their purchases (necessities are simply needed as opposed to wanted). But do people actually enjoy more when indulging with a reason than without a reason? Do people enjoy more when indulging with a better reason? The answers depend on how consumers' hedonic experience is assessed, with important implications for research methods and consumer decision making.

A large body of research has studied the decision inconsistency: i.e., people make decisions that do not seem to maximize their experienced utility and alternative explanations have been offered. One of the account on which this paper is based argues that people may hold incorrect beliefs or naïve theories that are rarely updated about how they will feel in certain consumption situations and that this belief or expectation does not correspond to their actual hedonic experience (Robison and Clore, 2002). According to Robison and Clore's accessibility model, when people report on their current feelings, the feelings themselves are accessible, allowing for accurate reports. When they report their feelings during a specific past episode, they can often draw on episodic memory, retrieving specific moments and details of the past. In contrast, global reports of past feelings and predictions of future feelings are based on semantic knowledge. In this case, people draw on their general beliefs about the event class to infer what their feelings "must have" been or will be. These different sources of information give rise to systematic differences in people's self-reports of emotion.

Study one is 2 (reason: yes vs. no) by 2 (reports type: global vs. episodic) between subjects design. We asked half participants to imagine they are consuming a hedonic item either with a reason (as a reward for hard work) or without a reason and to report their affective experience in that situation (*global report condition*). Half participants were directed to recall their most recent hedonic consumption episode and to report their feelings (*episodic report condition*). They then indicated whether there was a reason associated with that last consumption episode and how much they spent on this indulgence occasion. Our study shows that participants expect to experience more negative affect (e.g., guilt) if consuming a hedonic item without a reason than with a reason when asked in a global report fashion. However, when asked in an episodic condition, their hedonic enjoyment was unrelated to reasons or justifications. This is consistent with Robison and Clore's (2002) accessibility model, which suggests that the information that is chronically or temporarily accessible at that point in time drives the differences in emotional reports. Interestingly, we did find that people reported higher spending on indulgence occasions where a reason was present ($M=\$127$) than those where a reason was not present ($M=\$98$). This provides empirical support for consumers' willingness to spend more on an indulgence when it is justified for than when it is not justified.

Study two is a 2 (reports type: prediction vs. experience) by 2 (reason: reward vs. consolation) between subjects design. We hypothesize that people expect to enjoy an indulgence more as a reward (e.g., passed the exam) than as a consolation (e.g., failed the exam). We predict, however, actual consumption experience would not differ when indulging with different reasons. Participants in one condition (consolation) worked on some difficult GMAT math problems and were told that these problems are indicative of their success at a future GMAT test. We expect participants in this condition to feel bad about their performance and seek indulgence as a consolation. Participants in the other condition (reward) worked on the same math problems but were told that these were very difficult math problems (aimed for math major students) and were asked to give a shot at it. We expect them to feel good about their performance and seek indulgence as a reward. All subjects received feedback (right or wrong) after finishing each individual problem. Participants were then asked to choose between two items, two pieces of chocolate truffles or toothpaste (at equal dollar value) as a token of appreciation for their participation. Participants in prediction condition were asked to imagine that they are consuming the truffles (only those who chose the truffles) and report their affective experiences of eating the truffles. Participants in experience condition actually received their choice. Those who chose to have chocolate truffles were asked to eat as much as they want and report how they feel while eating the truffles. Consistent with previous work (Shafir et al., 1990), participants were as likely to indulge (i.e., choose the truffles) when they think they did well in a test

(i.e., reward condition) as when they think they didn't do well (i.e., consolation condition). As expected, the predictors in consolation condition expected to enjoy the truffles less than those in reward condition. However, the experiencers' actual enjoyment did not differ systematically between the two conditions.

Our findings suggest that a lack of justification does not limit the immediate pleasure of indulging and that a better reason does not make an indulgence more enjoyable, in contrast to what consumers expect.

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Effects of Self-Affirmation and Individualistic-Collectivistic Appeals on Open-mindedness and Advertising Effectiveness

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Background and Scope

Psychological research has demonstrated how self-affirmation in one domain leads people to be more open-minded and acknowledge the merits of counterattitudinal messages they would otherwise reject. Affirmation-induced openness to counterattitudinal information works because open-minded people are more objective (less biased) and more sensitive to argument strength, and thereby judge an argument on its merits. (Correll, Spencer and Zanna, 2004). Little research has been published within the consumer research or marketing literature about self-affirmation and its effects on consumer cognitions and behavior. It is hypothesized that self-affirmation will result in more open-mindedness and elaboration on information about an advertised product.

Theoretical Basis:

Psychological literature suggests close-mindedness stems from an individual's concern for self-regard; in effect, a person resists and rejects conflicting information to protect a sense of self-worth derived from their "right" beliefs and attitudes. Self-Affirmation Theory (Steele, 1988; Steele, Spencer and Lynch, 1993), suggests that every person strives for positive self-regard, and draws on personal successes within a constellation of domains for its achievement. One of its crucial tenets is that the ultimate goal of a defensive reaction is the security of the global sense of self-worth.

Individual differences among consumers in their Need for Cognitive Closure (Kruglanski and Webster, 1996) may differentially affect consumers' responses; people who have a strong Need for Cognitive Closure often will "seize" and "freeze" without elaborating on the full information available. It is expected that NFCC will moderate the relationship between self-affirmation on open-mindedness and advertising effectiveness.

Potential Contribution

This research contributes to extant literature in several ways. First, it expands what little is currently known about how self-affirmation works to influence consumer behavior. Second, it adds to literature focused on information processing in high involvement product categories. Finally, this research contributes to the understanding of the circumstances in which there is an opportunity for more unbiased consideration of products by considering the cognitive processing of the open-minded consumer.

Research Methodology

A sequence of experiments has been conducted to test the affects of self-affirmation on consumers' responses to advertising regarding high involvement products. Respondents were recruited to participate in an experiment about the effects of advertising content on consumer elaboration, cognitions, and intentions. Subjects were randomly assigned to a treatment cell, received a disclosure sheet about the study, and then were asked to view an ad promoting a high involvement product. (The actual headings and phrases in the ad stimuli varied based on cell assignment). Reactions to the advertisement and trait and state measures were then collected.

Study 1 was designed test the impact of positive self-affirmation (ego inflation) on consumers' responses to advertising. A hypothetical on-line job search portal was selected as the advertised product representing high involvement categories. Study 1 involved the use of a 2 x 2 experiment of the Self-affirmation treatment condition versus a neutral condition by high/low Need for Cognitive Closure. After viewing one ad, subjects first performed an open-ended thought listing. They next rated the advertising as to its effectiveness and were then asked to simulate a job search by rating their interest in a series of job postings. Next they were asked a series of questions about their attitudes and beliefs. Students from undergraduate business classes participated in the research in exchange for class participation credit. A total of 160 respondents completed Study 1.

Study 2 further examined the impact of self-affirmation on advertising effectiveness. A total of 52 undergraduate marketing students received only the affirmation treatment advertisement, and were also asked additional questions related to self-esteem and locus of control

in addition to the other dependent variables and ratings from Study 1. This phase allowed more in-depth analysis of the relationship between individual differences related to self-esteem and effects of self-affirmation on advertising effectiveness.

Study 3, which is in process now, is designed to examine self-affirmation's effects on advertising, in conjunction with individualistic/collectivistic appeals. In a 3 x 2 x 2 experiment, consumers will react to advertising that includes self-affirmation by individualistic or collectivistic appeals by high/low Need for Cognitive Closure. A minimum of 30 respondents per cell is planned (240 respondents.) The study is being conducted for hybrid/alternative fuel vehicles as the context for a public service announcement ad. The approach will be identical to that used in Study 1. Medialab software is being used to administer the survey in Study 3, allowing the ad to be presented as a prototype for a 30-second television ad. After viewing one ad, subjects are being asked a series of questions related to their attitudes and beliefs about hybrid/alternative fuel vehicles. Then they will give reactions to the advertising's effectiveness and asked a series of questions about their general attitudes and beliefs, including an individual difference measure related to individualism/collectivism.

Variables of Study:

The following variables will be included.

- Independent Variables of "Affirmation Condition (positive affirmation, control)" and "Type of Appeal" (Individualistic, Collectivistic) will be tested.
- A Mediating Variable (Openness/Skepticism) will be assessed.
- The Dependent Variable is "Persuasion to Consider the Advertised Product."
- Moderating Variables are:
 - o Individual Trait Differences related to Preference for Individualism/Collectivism
 - o Individual Differences on Need for Cognitive Closure (NFCC)

Analysis involved using ANOVA/ANCOVA and special procedures to test for mediation/moderation as outlined in Baron and Kenny (1986).

Hypotheses

The hypothesized relationships among variables are as follows:

- H1: Affirmations will lead to more openness.
- H2: More openness leads to more elaboration.
- H3: More elaboration leads to more persuasion.
- H4: "Individualism" will intensify the results: Individualistic appeals will be stronger than collectivistic appeals among "Individualists", and Collectivistic appeals will be stronger than individualistic appeals among "Collectivists."
- H5: People low in NFCC will respond better to positive affirmations.

Experimental Stimuli

All advertising stimuli were pretested prior to conducting the experiments. The following headlines are being provided as illustrations of the advertising conditions to be tested.

Studies 1 and 2: On-line Job Search Portal

- Self-Affirmation Treatment Condition 1: "Smarter People Find the Best Jobs" (positive self-affirmation treatment condition)
- Neutral Control Condition: "People Find the Best Jobs" (represents non-affirmation condition)

Study 3: Hybrid/Alternative Fuel Vehicles

- Affirmation Treatment Condition/Individualistic Appeal: "You can work hard and do whatever it takes to overcome challenges and to accomplish your goals. You are smart. When faced with difficult and important decisions, you carefully analyze which choice is the right one for your unique situation. You can make more informed decisions. You can act now to make a difference for your future."
- Affirmation Treatment Condition/Collectivistic Appeal: "We Americans work hard and we do whatever it takes to overcome challenges and accomplish our goals. Americans are smart. When faced with difficult and important decisions, we carefully analyze which choice is the right one for our unique situation. We can make more informed decisions. We can act now to make a difference for our future."
- Control: No affirmation language

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Consumer Weighting of Hedonic and Utilitarian Dimensions across Judgments

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Extended Abstract

A fundamental assumption in the theory of choice is that of procedure invariance which suggests that individuals have well-articulated preferences and beliefs that remain constant regardless the method of elicitation. However, studies of decision and judgment show that people do not have well-defined values and beliefs and often construct these during the elicitation process (Fischhoff, Slovic & Lichtenstein, 1980; Shafer & Tversky, 1985; Tversky, Sattah and Slovic, 1988; Schkade and Johnson, 1989). Thus, different elicitation procedures highlight different aspects of options and may result in inconsistent responses, or preference reversals.

In two studies we examined situations that involved trade-offs between utilitarian and hedonic dimensions across three elicitation methods: choice, pricing and liking. Previous work by Hsee et al. (2003) shows that when decision makers are faced to trade-offs between cold and hot factors they exhibit a systematic inconsistency between predicted experience (i.e., a liking judgment) and choice. They suggest that individuals weight more hot factors when predicting their experience, but place more emphasis on cold or rational factors in choice. Hsee and Zhang (2004) provide further evidence that easy-to-quantify attribute differences (i.e. quantitative differences) are weighted more in a joint evaluation mode (e.g., choice) than in single evaluation mode (e.g., predicted happiness judgments). For example, individuals overpredict the experiential difference between easy to quantify differences such as having an annual salary of \$60,000 and an annual salary of \$70,000 and between living in a 3,000 sq. ft² house and a 4,000 sq. ft² house, but are less likely to overpredict the experiential difference between doing an interesting and a tedious job or between having to walk to work and having to drive to work.

In study 1 we used a stimulus composed of two attributes, a utilitarian and a hedonic attribute. Individuals made 240 judgments of three types: choice, pricing (essentially a matching judgment when participants had to price one of the option with the objective of matching a second option in value) and liking. The decisions were made in two consumer categories, cars and apartments, and were framed as acquisition decisions. In addition, we manipulated the size of the trade-off by including three levels of utilitarian and hedonic attributes. Consistent with the prominence hypothesis, we expected that utilitarian attributes would be weighted more in choice than in pricing (matching) and liking decisions, since they seem more important and provide a better justification for choice. In agreement with Hsee et al. (2003), we predicted that options described as high on hedonic dimensions, would be rated higher in liking judgments than options described as high on utilitarian dimensions. Our first prediction, the prominence of utilitarian attributes in choice in comparison to pricing and liking, was confirmed when the size of the trade-off was large. Thus, utilitarian attributes were weighted more in choice than in pricing ($t(79)=25.93, p <.001$), or liking ($t(79)=5.19, p <.001$). However, when the size of the trade-off was small, individuals placed greater weights on utilitarian attributes in liking judgments than in choice ($t(79)=10.95, p <.001$) or pricing ($t(79)=10.25, p <.001$). In conclusion, although decisions were largely driven by high utilitarian values, the size of the trade-off had an impact on the weights assigned to hedonic attributes in a joint evaluation context. Hence, smaller trade-offs resulted in increased weighting of hedonic attributes in choice and pricing decisions.

Study 2 tested whether framing a decision in terms of a loss (forfeiture) or a gain (acquisition) may further moderate attribute weighting across elicitation procedures in situations when the size of the trade-off is large. Dhar and Wertenbroch (2000) suggest that in choice, hedonic attributes receive a greater weight in forfeiture than in acquisition decisions, due to more extensive elaboration in a forfeiture context. In agreement with Dhar and Wertenbroch (2000), we expected that in forfeiture, options described as high on hedonic attributes would better predict preferences across elicitation methods in comparison to options described as high on utilitarian attributes. Our data presented only partial support for this hypothesis. We found that framing a decision as a forfeiture results in a greater weighting of hedonic attributes in liking judgments ($t(83)=9.50, p <.001$), consistent with an elaboration hypothesis. It can be concluded that individuals anticipate more regret associated with forfeiting a high hedonic option than with a high utilitarian option. This effect was not present in choice or pricing judgments. However, we found that, hedonic attributes were weighted more when individuals made pricing judgments in an acquisition context ($t(83)=7.44, p <.001$) than in forfeiture. This suggests that in acquisition, individuals expect to pay more for high hedonic options than for high utilitarian options. However, it is possible that the null effect for choice was caused by the nature of the stimulus. On each choice screen, participants were presented with three options: a reference option, which provided the acquisition or forfeiture frame, and two choice options. It is possible that individuals used decision short-cuts and failed to take into consideration the reference item in choice. Further studies are necessary to rule out this potential explanation.

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Dimensions of Attitude Towards A Sales Promotion Offer

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Extended Abstract

Walk into a supermarket and you will not be surprised to see a great many products on promotion of one kind or the other. Promotions have rightfully become the ubiquitous element of consumers' shopping experience with US marketers spending more than \$100 billion in the form of annual promotional expenditure (Kerin et al, 2003).

The present study contends that consumers' responses towards various sales promotions depend on their attitudes towards a given sales promotion and such attitudes depend on the intrinsic characteristics of a given promotional offer. Blattberg and Neslin (1990). They define a sales promotion as "an action-focused marketing event whose purpose is to have a direct impact on the behavior of the firm's customers."

Different sales promotional tools serve different objectives. Some promotions such as in-store display and 'two-for-one' help generate un-planned purchases (Inman et al, 1990; McClure and West, 1969) and Mulhern and Padgett (1995) show how retail promotions induce consumers to buy regular priced merchandise. Sales promotions are also used to increase store traffic (Grewal, Manroe and Krishnan, 1998; Lichtenstein and Bearden, 1989) increase number of visits to the store (Walters and Rinnie, 1986) and reduce retailers' inventory carrying costs by inducing consumers to stockpile (Blattberg, 1981; Soo Ong, 1999).

Prior research has studied the variations in consumers' responsiveness to deals by product category, market, and type of consumer (Blattberg et al 1995). Evidently, there hasn't been much of an attempt, bearing a few exceptions, to study the differences in consumers' responsiveness to different promotions arising out of variation in the intrinsic characteristics of a promotional offer. We propose that consumers view promotions as a bundle of some combination of these attributes and each promotional offer represents a unique bundle of attributes. Based on literature review, the initial set of attributes viz. monetary benefits, non-monetary benefits, efforts needed, risk involved, ambiguity of benefits, imprecision in benefits, benefit delay, and effort delay were identified.

Monetary benefits are defined as the economic incentive offered by a promotion, the basic purpose of promotions is to offer an economic inducement to consumers for making the purchase of the product on promotion (Blattberg and Neslin, 1990). Many research findings suggest that consumers do respond to sales promotions for benefits other than monetary savings viz. joy of getting a good deal, the hedonic value of a free gift etc. (for a comprehensive analysis see Chandon et al, 2000). Some promotions involve immediate expense of efforts at the time of availing promotional offer e.g. early bird incentive, clipping coupons, entering in a lucky draw (sometimes entries for draws can be sent at a later date) etc. Sometimes consumers exert efforts in advance of the promotional benefit viz. registering for frequent flyer programs. Research in behavioral decision theory explicates procrastinating behavior by reasoning that future efforts are substantially discounted (Akerlof, 1991; Loewenstein, 1996). A promotional offer may offer an incentive at future date after the purchase is made with or without any additional conditions. Promotions like price-discounts are instantly received at the time of purchase but the benefits of many promotions arise only at a later date. The winners of contests, sweepstakes etc. are determined much after they have made their purchases. The 'worthiness' of all promotions is not easily determinable e.g. win a dinner with a TV star. Ambiguity also arises when the promotion is attached with many qualifications. Some promotions like lucky draws are risky where in the consumer may not gain anything and finally, in some instances the benefits offered are imprecise e.g. all items with red tags on sale, up to 75% off etc.

A composite scale representing all eight dimensions was developed and presented to 57 undergraduate students. The same scale was used for each of the seven most widely used consumer promotions viz. Coupons, Mail-in-rebates, Lucky draws, free gifts, price breaks, Contests, etc. The popularity of different sales promotions was assessed through literature review and consultations with an expert. The underlying dimensions were then identified by factor analysis techniques. The study also incorporated measures for testing convergent validity and criterion / predictive validity.

Based on the recommended scale development procedures (Gerbing and Anderson, 1988), the data analysis began with checking the dimensionality underlying the attitude towards sales promotions. The procedure undertaken involved factor analysis (both exploratory as well as confirmatory factor analysis), inter-item correlations (across entire scale and more importantly within each facet) and validity tests for criterion and convergent validity. The six components derived by factor analysis have eigen values of more than 1 and collectively they explain 67% of the total variance. All the components have alpha more than 0.6 except monetary benefits, which has alpha of 0.56. To ascertain the criterion validity the correlations between perceived dimensions (six components) and the predicted likelihood of use of that sales promotion were measured. Except Effort-delay (.05 level) all the correlations are significant at .01 levels providing a strong support for criterion validity. Finally, based on the empirical analysis the identified factors are 1) Perceived effort-return benefit, 2) Benefit transparency representing the degree of precision in stating the promotional benefits and the clarity with which the promotional benefits are communicated 3) Non-monetary benefits 4) Effort delay 5) Risk impact and 6) Perceived monetary benefits. We also discuss the explanation and interpretation of these derived dimensions.

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Affect, Affective Precision, and Primacy Effect in Stock Choices

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Extended Abstract

The role of affect in everyday decisions has received an increasing amount of attention in recent literature. Epstein's (1996) dual processes describe that we have analytical and experiential systems that are interrelated, and most of the time we use both of the systems to make decisions. Slovic et al. (2002) proposed the idea of the affect heuristic, which states that we often use affect as a shortcut to guide judgment and decision making processes. Zajonc (1980) claimed that all perception contains some affect, and it is capable of influencing the ensuing cognitive process to a significant degree.

However, until recently, numerical information was considered to be processed purely cognitively, therefore, free from affect. A few exceptions exist. Peters et al. (2006) demonstrated that affect can be calculated from numbers and used to guide decisions. Kida et al. (1998) also suggested that affect guides choices that involve numerical information. In their study, they presented two sets of stock information. When asked, about 80% of the participants chose the clearly better firm in the first set, although two firms from the second set were actually better. Combining this with other findings in their study, they concluded that participants chose the best firm in the first set because they did not remember the actual financial characteristics of stocks. Instead, they remembered having a higher affect toward that stock option, due to its clear superiority within its own set. An alternative explanation for this finding, however, is an order effect, specifically, participants may feel greater positive affect and choose the best options in a set presented first.

In our study, we investigated the role of affect in stock choice by replicating and extending Study 3 of Kida et al. (1998).

Hypotheses

H1a: The majority of participants will choose the best firm in Set A when the options are presented in the same order as those in Kida et al. (1998).

H1b: The majority of participants will *not* choose the best firm in Set A when the sets are presented in a reversed order as those in Kida et al. (1998).

- H2: Participants have significantly higher positive affect toward the best choice in each set.
 H3a: Affect toward stock choices will significantly predict choices independent of set order.
 H3b: Affective precision toward stock choices and its interaction with affect will significantly contribute to the prediction of choices above and beyond affect and option order.

Method

We replicated the methodology used in Study 3 of Kida et al (1998). As in their study, each of two information sets (Set A and Set B) contained financial characteristics of five firms. The best firm in Set A was far better than the rest of the firms in its own set, and the best firm in Set B was not as clearly the best within its set. However, the best and second best firms in Set B were better than the best firm in Set A.

In our study, half of the participants were presented with Set A first, then Set B (a replication of Kida et al.); the other half of participants were presented with Set B first, then Set A. All participants were then asked to choose their most preferred stock from either set. They also rated their affect and affective precision towards each firm.

Results:

Hypotheses 1a and 1b were supported. Although the majority of participants (83%) chose the best stock in Set A when Set A was presented first, only 25% of participants chose the best stock in Set A when Set B was presented first; the remaining 72% chose the best from in Set B.

Hypothesis 2 was supported. Affect toward the best firms in each set was calculated by subtracting the mean of the raw affect ratings toward the rest of the firms from raw affect ratings toward the best firm. Affective precision was calculated in a similar manner. Participants had significantly higher positive affect and affective precision toward the best firms in Set A and Set B compared to affect toward the average of the rest of the firms.

Hypotheses 3a and 3b were also supported. Logistic regression indicated that affect and the order in which information sets were presented significantly predicted choices. Our new construct, affective precision, and its interaction with affect significantly contributed to the prediction of choices above and beyond the affect and primacy effects. These findings indicate that people developed higher affect and affective precision within the local context of each set and that they used their affect to guide their decisions.

Conclusion

Over the last couple of decades, research has demonstrated that decision makers use affect to guide decisions: to decide where to go to vacation or which car to buy. However, numerical information in decisions is still thought to be processed very cognitively. Results of our study demonstrated that people develop affect not only to events, persons, and material objects, but also to numbers. Decision makers appear to draw affective meaning from numbers and to use this affect to guide their decisions. They may be even more likely to rely on affect when information is unavailable at the moment of choice and they have to make decisions from memory. Our findings can also be applied to many other decisions that involve numerical information, such as prices, nutritional facts about food and drinks, and drug information.

Our study also suggests that people are very susceptible to primacy effects with numerical information. This may be because once people develop affect toward a particular option, they tend to stick with it. Therefore, they are not very open to other choices. Further investigations are needed for clearer explanations. Affect's role in judgments and decisions that involve numerical information is ubiquitous in everyday decisions. Yet, not many studies have been done on this topic. It is important to understand how people rely on affect to make choices and decisions so that we can facilitate better choices and decisions among managers and consumers.

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The Role of Emotional Attachment in Consumers' Responses to Service Changes

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Extended Abstract

Consumers are often faced with changes to services they consume; their ability to adapt to changes is moderated by their emotional attachment to the service. We explore the following research questions: (1) What is the relationship between a consumer's emotional attachment and the level of human interaction the service provides? and (2) How does the level of emotional attachment to the service influence a consumer's satisfaction, word of mouth, and repurchase intentions, in response to service changes?

For consumers, the "human interaction" element is an important service factor (Zeithaml and Bitner 2003). The level of human interaction consumers receive from services ranges from higher levels (e.g. financial advising) to lower levels (e.g. ATMs) (Schmenner

2004; Mersha 1990). Consumers develop strong emotional attachments to consumer packaged goods (Fournier 1998), as well as fulfill complex emotional needs through service consumption (Rosenbaum 2003). We propose:

H1: There is a positive relationship between the consumer's perceived level of human interaction with the service provider and the consumer's level of emotional attachment to the service.

Loss aversion and the status quo bias predict that consumers are reluctant to change and prefer the status quo (Samuelson and Zeckhauser 1988; Tversky and Kahneman 1991). We examine changes as gains (positive service changes) and losses (negative service changes).

In a service failure context, Mattila (2004) finds that high affective commitment consumers exhibit higher post-failure behavioral intention ratings than low affective commitment consumers. We propose a Favoritism Effect in which consumers with higher levels of emotional attachment (HEA consumers) have a positive bias toward service providers and would therefore rate the same services higher, after a gain, than low emotional attachment (LEA) consumers do.

In Mattila's (2004) study, low affective commitment consumers are more "forgiving" with a successful recovery effort, while high affective commitment consumers feel "betrayed" from the failure. We propose that HEA consumers seek validation of their emotions through the reinforcement of service gains. Fiske (2004) notes that in interpersonal relationships people expect reciprocity. HEA consumers expect the service to exhibit gains that reciprocate the consumer's high emotional attachment. We propose:

H2a: In the case of gains, consumers with high levels of emotional attachment to a service provider will have a higher level of favorability, than consumers with low levels of emotional attachment, to a service provider.

When HEA consumers experience service losses, the favoritism effect is positive, but invalidation of emotions is negative. The effects are in opposing directions, effectively canceling each other out. Consequently, HEA and LEA consumers have comparable ratings. We propose:

H2b: In the case of losses, consumers with high and low levels of emotional attachment will have comparable levels of negative responses to service losses.

Study 1

A 1-factor (gain, loss) between subjects field study was conducted ($N=32$, 71% male, mean age 37) in a sandwich shop. Emotional attachment was measured using the Thomson et al. (2005) emotional attachment scale, dividing high and low with a median split. The dependent variables were satisfaction, word of mouth, and repurchase intention. Purchase frequency and perceived level of human interaction were also measured. For example, the "gain" level was manipulated as follows:

"Imagine that [this restaurant] is extending its hours of operation. Specifically, it would be open 2 hours earlier each morning and close 2 hours later each evening. In total, [this restaurant] would be open 4 additional hours each day."

In addition to hours of operation, product selection, and number of available servers (both gains and losses) were examined. Results are presented in aggregate.

The test of H1 showed that the level of human interaction perceived by the consumers has a small positive effect on how emotionally attached consumers feel. These results are directionally consistent with H1; pearson correlation=.334, ns.

Supporting H2a, in the case of a service improvement (gain), high emotional attachment consumers have higher levels, than low emotional attachment consumers, of satisfaction (LEA $M=3.0$, HEA $M=4.8$, $n.s.$), word of mouth (LEA $M=3.0$, HEA $M=5.6$, $p=.034$), and repurchase intention (LEA $M=3.0$, HEA $M=6.0$, $p=.007$) levels.

When there is a service reduction (loss), high and low emotional attachment consumers have comparable satisfaction (LEA $M=3.67$, HEA $M=3.67$, $n.s.$), word of mouth (LEA $M=4.67$, HEA $M=5.50$, $n.s.$), and repurchase intention (LEA $M=4.67$, HEA $M=4.83$, $n.s.$) levels, supporting H2b.

Study 2

A 1-factor (gain, loss) between subjects lab experiment was conducted ($N=155$, includes respondents who have visited the Starbucks coffee shops in question at least once in the last 30 days). Measured variables and dependent variables were consistent with Study 1. An example of the "loss" level manipulation is as follows (hours of operation and product selection were also examined):

"The Starbucks on campus typically have two cash registers and three employees available at a given time. Imagine that the Starbucks on campus now had only one cash register and two employees during busy times. This would be a staff reduction to two employees. The result is that it takes longer to get your order."

The results for study 2 replicate the results of study 1 in a more controlled environment. H1 was supported with a pearson correlation=.467, sig (2-tailed)=.000.

When there is a service improvement (gain), high emotional attachment consumers have higher levels, than low emotional attachment consumers, of satisfaction (LEA $M=5.57$, HEA $M=6.46$, $p=.002$), word of mouth (LEA $M=5.43$, HEA $M=6.41$, $p=.002$), and repurchase intention (LEA $M=5.83$, HEA $M=6.70$, $p=.002$) levels, supporting H2a.

In the case of a service reduction (loss), high and low emotional attachment consumers have comparable satisfaction (LEA $M=2.39$, HEA $M=2.11$, $n.s.$), word of mouth (LEA $M=2.39$, HEA $M=2.89$, $n.s.$), and repurchase intention (LEA $M=2.74$, HEA $M=3.00$, $n.s.$) levels, supporting H2b.

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Inferential and Perceptual Influences of Affective Expectations on Judgments of Experienced Affect

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Extended Abstract

Marketers often instill either positive or negative expectations for how an experience with a product will make consumers feel (i.e., affective expectations). After all, doing so will often congruently influence attitudes toward, and intentions to purchase, a product. However, one limitation of focusing on expectations is that the *actual experience* with the product is a fundamental attitude determinant (e.g., Regan and Fazio 1977). That is, the consumer attitudes created from implanting an affective expectation for a product are likely weaker and less predictive of behavior than are the attitudes formed following a direct experience with a product. Thus, the present research is an attempt to fill gaps in our knowledge about the interface between affective expectations, affective experiences, and the actual judgments of those affective experiences as well as resultant attitudes and intentions among consumers.

We propose that both inferential (conscious; Clore and Schnall 2005; Wyer, Clore, and Isbell 1999) and perceptual (nonconscious; Sherif and Hovland 1961) processes can govern the effects of affective expectations on judgments of affect. Further, we suggest that both processes often lead to an "ironic effect" by which negative, relative to positive, affective expectations produce more positive affective reactions following an encounter with a product. Critical for the manifestation of this ironic effect is that the consumer is able to sufficiently identify, or focus on, their feelings (Albarracín and Kumkale 2003).

Whether an inferential or a perceptual process predominates depends on whether people endorse a naïve theory that affective expectations congruently influence affective experiences. Individuals who hold this belief may arrive at judgments of experienced affect in a predominantly inferential or reasoned manner. This naïve theory can lead consumers to believe that their affect resulting from an encounter with a product has been influenced by their expectation. Thus, they likely conclude following a negative (positive) affective expectation that the affect they currently experience is actually more (less) positive, producing the ironic effect. Further, individuals holding this naïve theory should spontaneously identify their feeling because they attempt to determine the influence of their expectations on their feelings. Thus, ironic effects should be commonly observed for these individuals unless they are artificially distracted from identifying their feelings.

Alternatively, individuals without this naïve theory may arrive at judgments of experienced affect only in a perceptual or nonconscious manner because they do not consider the influence of their expectations on their experiences, nor should they spontaneously focus on their feelings. Thus, these individuals will not demonstrate ironic effects as readily as will endorsers of the naïve theory. Rather, their judgments of affective experiences should be assimilated to their expectations. This prediction is consistent with research (e.g., Stapel, Koomen, and Ruys 2002) which suggests that judgments of an object (product) tend to be assimilated toward a context (or expectation) when the object and context are not seen as being distinct. However, if these individuals are experimentally induced to focus on the affect induced by the product, this affect will be seen as discrepant from an inconsistent expectation. In this case, contrast effects should be observed, producing perceptual ironic effects.

In two reported studies, participants received information instilling a positive or negative affective expectation for a "mood-altering" simulated-alcohol product, and then, a short time later, sampled the beverage. This beverage was associated with pleasant or unpleasant affect because it was immediately preceded by a mood induction in which participants wrote a letter about a happy or angering event to a friend. This mood induction (positive for Experiment 1, and positive or negative in Experiment 2) was presented to assure that participants had some affect identifiable since the beverage did not actually alter mood. Finally, participants reported judgments of their affective state,

beverage attitudes, and intentions to use the beverage. As well, we measured participants' endorsement of the naïve theory and conducted a median split to isolate high and low endorsers of this theory.

Importantly, in Experiment 1, some participants were distracted by an audio-taped conversation from identifying their affect while they completed the main dependent measures, whereas others were not. For high endorsers of the naïve theory, we predicted that an inferential ironic effect would emerge under normal affect-identification conditions, but that no effect would be observed when a distraction was present. By contrast, under normal affect-identification conditions, low endorsers should perceive their experienced affect as being consistent with their expectation, but this effect should disappear when a distraction was present. The results of an analysis in which affect, product attitudes, and intentions to drink the product were combined confirmed these predictions.

In Experiment 2 we tested our prediction that consumers without a naïve theory may demonstrate perceptual ironic effects, but only when they are led to focus on their feelings. To do this, some participants were prompted to focus on their feeling just prior to completing the main dependent measures, whereas others were not. In these conditions, we expected low endorsers, and all high endorsers, to manifest the ironic effect. Otherwise, low endorsers were expected to demonstrate expectation-consistent effects. The results of an analysis in which affect, product attitudes, and intentions to drink the product were combined confirmed these predictions.

The proposed model is unique in positing two processes by which judgments of affect, and resultant consumer attitudes and intentions, are influenced by affective expectations. Importantly, this model predicts an ironic effect, which is related to other effects observed in the consumer behavior and social psychological literature (e.g., Oliver 1980; Mellers, Schwartz, Ho, and Ritov 1997; Wegener and Petty 1997) but also predicts an expectation-consistent effect under some conditions. Thus, the present model accounts specifically accounts for a variety of effects following affective expectations. Therefore, this model can prove useful in predicting when, and with whom, marketers will find most advantageous the creation of consumers' positive or negative expectations for how a product will make them feel. Notably, careful advertisements may alter individuals' naïve theories, and marketers can vary the extent to which consumers are likely to identify their feelings, thus controlling what effects are observed.

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Consumer Evaluation of Brand Deletion and Feedback Effect: A Motivational Approach

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Introduction

Companies are increasingly deleting brands to rationalize their portfolios. This is usually a financial decision with little to no consideration for the consumer who actually bought the brands. An important question is to identify the repercussions of deletion decision on the existing consumers. This gap in the academic literature and management practice on brand deletion is addressed in this research, with the studies focusing on brand extension deletion.

Most new products, typically 80-90% in any year, are extensions. Many researchers studying consumer evaluation of brand extensions have followed a categorization perspective (e.g. Broniarczyk & Alba, 1994), much of which is driven by using the consumer learning approach. For example, a successful brand extension contributes to parent brand image by improving the strength, favorability, or uniqueness of its associations (Aaker & Keller, 1990.) Parent brand dilution has been shown to occur as a result of the introduction of an extension that has attributes inconsistent with consumer beliefs about the parent brand, but the flagship products have been shown as less vulnerable to dilution (John, Loken, & Joiner, 1998; Loken & John, 1993.)

This current research utilizes a motivational approach to study consumer evaluation of brand deletion and feedback effects. It is hypothesized that deletion of a brand extension, if it is the most preferred brand in the extension category, generates psychological

reactance (Brehm, 1966) in consumers. This reactance can be conceived as goal-directed motivational state (Brehm & Brehm, 1981; Wicklund, 1974.) It is proposed that liking towards the parent brand and the brand extension would be adversely affected by the brand extension deletion. One key variable moderating consumers' evaluation of parent brand and its brand extension is consumers' attribution of the responsibility of the extension deletion. If consumers believe that the transgression, i.e., deletion decision is made by the manufacturer, it is proposed that liking towards the manufacturer and the parent brand would be lower (as compared to no deletion controls). However liking towards the deleted brand extension would be higher as compared to no deletion controls, as the reactance generated leads to increased liking for the lost freedom (e.g. deleted brand extension).

Method

A lab based, primary experimental setup was utilized. The studies used a 'before-after with control group' design. In Study 1, mouthwash as the extension category was used, whereas in Study 2, ketchup as the extension category was used. All participants were exposed to credible information conveying that their preferred brand extension in a category had been deleted. A no-deletion group served as control. Pre-tests were conducted to identify participants' involvement with multiple product categories. For a conservative test, categories with relatively low involvement were used. Pre-tests also confirmed that availability of most preferred extension was perceived as offering greatest freedom, and that Consumer Reports was perceived as the expert source to communicate deletion news. Additional data (e.g. close substitutes, usage etc.) was also collected.

In both the studies, all participants initially rated their preference for brands and extensions in multiple categories. Only relevant category information (mouthwash and ketchup respectively) was then used to manipulate deletion. Participants read a scenario informing them that their favorite extension had been deleted by the manufacturer due to financial performance. Finally the participants re-rated their liking towards the manufacture, parent brand and the deleted extensions.

Major Findings

The findings from Study 1 (mouthwash extension category) are reported here. These were replicated in Study 2 (ketchup category). The initial and final attitudes towards manufacture (e.g. P&G, Pfizer), the parent brand (e.g. Crest, Listerine) and the brand extension (e.g. Crest mouthwash, Cool Mint Listerine mouthwash) were measured using either three 11-item measures or points allocation from 1-100. Paired-sample t-tests were conducted on the pre-manipulation and post-manipulation scores. There were *no differences* in the no-deletion pre-post control group scores.

For the *deleted extension*, this difference was significant, $t(64)=2.27$, $p<.05$ for Cool Mint Listerine, indicating that the preference for Cool Mint Listerine mouthwash post deletion was significantly *higher* as compared to their initial preference for Cool Mint Listerine mouthwash ($M_s=88.63$ & 91.80 , pre-post deletion.) Similar findings were observed for the deleted Crest mouthwash. This indicates that consumers liking of their favorite brand extension *increases* after they become aware of the deletion, irrespective of it being line or category extension.

For the *manufacturer*, this difference was significant, $t(64)=11.36$, $p<.001$ for Pfizer, indicating that the subjects attitude towards Pfizer post deletion was significantly *lower* than their attitude towards Pfizer pre deletion ($M_s=8.36$ & 5.24 , pre-post deletion.) Similar findings were observed towards P & G, manufacturer of Crest mouthwash. This indicates that consumers' attitude towards the manufacturer of their favorite brand extension *decreases* strongly after they become aware of the decision of the manufacturer to delete the mouthwash brand.

For the *parent brand*, this difference was significant, $t(64)=4.04$, $p<.001$ for Listerine, which indicates that the subjects attitude towards Listerine brand post deletion was significantly *lower* than their attitude towards Listerine brand pre deletion ($M_s=8.41$ & 7.32 , pre-post deletion.) Similar findings were observed for Crest brand. This indicates that consumers' attitude towards the parent brand, whose extension is deleted, *decreases* strongly after they become aware of the decision of the manufacturer to delete the mouthwash extension.

Discussion

Evidence from initial experiments suggests that awareness of brand extension deletion leads consumers to develop negative attitude towards the manufacturer and its core brand. On the other hand, the liking towards the deleted brand extension increases significantly after awareness of deletion, if the deletion decision does not lead to quality questions. However, the attributions towards the company are only generated when the company is held responsible for the deletion.

This research implies that companies with multiple brands require a systematic consumer-focused brand deletion process in place. This would control the adverse impact of brand deletion on parent brand, as well as limit damage on corporate reputation.

The initial studies have focused on brand extensions to study brand deletion. Brand extensions are unique in their associations and future research would delineate extension specific effects from consumer evaluation based on the loss of a choice option.

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Motivational Reasons for Misremembering Past Negative Events

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Extended Abstract

In recent years, a significant amount of research attention has been focused on documenting the relationship among experienced, predicted and remembered utilities of negative experiences. Much of this work points to discrepancies between how much an event is actually enjoyed and how much it is predicted to be enjoyed (Gilbert, Pinel, Wilson, Blumberg, & Wheatley, 1998; Redelmeier & Kahneman, 1996; Wilson, Meyers, & Gilbert, 2003). Across these papers, findings indicate that people expect future negative events to be even more negative than they actually are. Two conceptually distinct sets of mechanisms have been proposed to explain these findings. One set of theories (Trope and Liberman 2000) suggests that a perceptual mechanism underlies these findings. Specifically, these authors propose that people have a tendency to focus on the “central” aspects when events are far in the future and on more peripheral aspects when events are closer. Since a central aspect of negative events is, by definition, their negativity, these events appear more negative in the future than in real-time.

The work by Gilbert et al. (1998) hints at a motivational mechanism underlying the discrepancy between actual and predicted utilities. These authors offer a “psychological immune system” perspective to suggest that once a negative event has occurred, a series of mechanisms are triggered with the objective of ameliorating the negative feelings. These mechanisms work to protect the individual from harmful effects of negative feelings. Because people do not have an intuition about the functioning of the immune system, they expect future negative events to be even more negative than they actually are.

In this research, we advance the past research by examining the relationship between actual and *remembered* (rather than predicted) utilities of negative events. In doing so, we document the moderating role of the self-relevance of the negative event (events are high in self-relevance when they are diagnostic for assessing a relevant aspect of the self, such as one’s ability in math for a math student). Specifically, we find that past negative events portrayed as being more (vs. less) self-relevant are remembered as being less negative than they actually were. Because the functioning of the immune system should be especially appropriate in situations where the negative experience is more (vs. less) self-relevant, this pattern of findings suggests that a motivational mechanism biases memory for past events in a more palatable direction. Results from a second study provided further directional support for the idea that a motivational mechanism underlies the discrepancy between remembered and actual utilities for negative events.

Experiment 1

In order to test this effect of self-relevance on the recollection of negative experiences, we conducted a pilot study (Study 1) with 158 undergraduate students. Each student was randomly assigned to two experimental conditions—low self-relevance and high self-relevance. In both conditions, participants were asked to hold a plastic bag full of ice cubes for 120 seconds. This activity was chosen as a manipulation for two reasons. First it is a non-invasive pain-induction procedure (Chapman, 1976). Second, it is an unambiguously negative experience.

In the high self-relevance condition, participants read a mock article from a medicine journal, right after the ice cube task. This mock article reported high correlations between immune system strength and cognitive performance. The article also reported that the longer an individual can hold a plastic bag full of ice cubes, the stronger the individual’s immune system. In the low self-relevance condition, participants read a mock medicine article, from the same journal, with the exact same story. However, no link was made between the ability to hold ice cubes and the strength of the immune system in this condition. Consistent with these manipulations, the article was thought to be more relevant in the high vs. low relevance conditions ($M_{high\ self-relevance}=5.02$ and $M_{low\ self-relevance}=4.20$, on a 7-point scale, $F(1,156)=11.33$, $p=0.001$).

After the relevance manipulation, participants proceeded with an unrelated filler task for about 7 minutes. Finally, participants were asked to rate how painful the ice cube manipulation was. They did so by marking a point in a straight line, with no markers, anchored by not at all painful and very painful, with somehow painful as the midpoint on this scale. The intensity of remembered pain (our dependent variable) was calculated by measuring the distance to the point that the participant marked on the line-scale from the (left) point of origin of the line.

The ice cube task was remembered as being less painful in the high self-relevance condition than in the low self-relevance condition ($M_{high\ self-relevance}=7.74$ and $M_{low\ self-relevance}=8.89$, on a 15.2 cm scale, $F(1,130)=3.89$, $p=0.05$). These results are consistent with our initial predictions. However, they also impose a series of further questions. First, one may argue that holding a plastic bag full of ice cubes is an unusual task, and one that involves physical, rather than emotional distress. As such, one may wonder whether the effects would be obtained in more cognitive tasks. Experiment 2 was designed with this aspect in mind. We also wished to provide additional evidence that people’s memories of negative events are revised through a motivational mechanism by using the tenets of the mood-as-a-resource (cf. Raghunathan & Trope 2002) hypothesis.

Experiment 2

According to the mood-as-a-resource hypothesis, positive moods act as a buffer against the affective costs of negative (but useful) information, enabling individuals to better cope with such negative information. On the flip side, the theory holds that negative mood decreases the ability to cope with negative information (Raghunathan & Trope, 2002). As such, we predict that, under positive mood, individuals in the high self-relevance condition will not remember the experience as having been less unpleasant than those in the low-self relevance condition. This is because the positive mood would have provided the buffer necessary to cope with the negative event, and, as such, allowed these participants to accurately remember the intensity of the past negative event. By contrast, we expect that individuals in the negative mood condition would continue to revise their memory of the intensity of the past negative event downwards. In this study, 347 undergraduate students were assigned to one of the 2 (low self-relevance, high self-relevance) x 3 (negative mood, neutral mood, positive mood) between-subjects condition.

The negative task consisted of a problem solving exercise, which was borrowed from Raghunathan and Trope (2002). The task consisted of responding to six multiple choice questions that purportedly measured the participants' "Lateral Thinking Ability". After responding to each of the six questions, participants received the same negative feedback (a "below average" score). Subsequent to this, participants in the high self-relevance condition read a paragraph in which they were informed that people with greater lateral thinking ability were better placed in better jobs, perform better at work and earn higher salaries. Participants in the low self-relevance condition were not exposed to this information. Confirming that the manipulation worked, the LTAT was rated more relevant ($M_{high\ self-relevance}=3.71$ and $M_{low\ self-relevance}=3.05$, on a 7-point scale, $F(1,345)=16.56$, $p<0.01$) in the high self-relevance condition.

Following this task, participants' mood was manipulated using a procedure adapted from Trope and Neter (1994). More specifically, participants described, in details, a situation where they had performed either well (positive mood) or bad (negative mood) in an exam. Participants in the neutral mood condition were asked to describe, in details, their daily routine. Confirming that the mood manipulations worked as intended, participants in the positive mood condition reported significantly less negative ($M_{positive\ condition}=2.61$, $M_{neutral\ condition}=3.02$ and $M_{negative\ condition}=4.44$, on a 7-point scale, $F(1,345)=65.10$, $p<0.001$) and more positive moods ($M_{positive\ condition}=5.13$, $M_{neutral\ condition}=4.52$ and $M_{negative\ condition}=2.70$, $F(1,326)=152.16$, $p<0.001$). After the mood manipulation, participants proceeded with a filler task and, finally, reported their memory for the overall unpleasantness of the LTAT experience, using a 12-point scale, anchored in "not unpleasant at all" and "very unpleasant".

Consistent with our predictions, initial analyses point to a two-way interaction between relevance and mood (linear) ($F(1,321)=4.21$, $p=0.04$). Under negative mood, individuals in the high self-relevance condition remembered the experience as being less unpleasant than individuals in the low self-relevance condition. However, consistent with our predictions, the results were reversed under positive mood.

Concluding Remarks

This paper sheds light on the accuracy of remembered utility and its antecedents. More specifically, it clarifies the importance and pervasiveness of motivational mechanisms influencing the memory for negative events. More important, the results of our first study contradict the predictions made by the literature focusing on perceptual mechanisms. This literature predicts that individuals would remember negative, self-relevant, events as being more unpleasant than they actually were.

This relationship between self-relevance and remembered utility is further qualified by an interaction. Specifically, the effect of self-relevance on remembered is moderated by mood valence.

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Marketing Leisure Services to Sensation Seekers: The Relationship between Personality and Emotional Response in Novices Using an Artificial Climbing Wall

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Abstract

The market related to so-called extreme sports, such as rock climbing and sky diving, has burgeoned since the 1990s. Consumer behavior research has linked the personality trait of sensation seeking (SS) with involvement in the above sports. However, work on participation in risky sports has not thoroughly examined the influence of personality and subsequent emotional response, on behavioral intentions in this context.

The current study investigated the effects of the SS personality trait, along with demographics, on novice artificial wall climbers' ($n=241$) emotional responses (PAD scale: pleasure-arousal-dominance) and related behavioral intentions to climb again. Results suggest participants' emotions (e.g., arousal) and future intentions to climb are both a significant function of personality and gender.

Theoretical Background

The consumption of risky sports has dramatically increased over the past few years (Shoham, Rose, & Kahle, 1998). For instance, participation in artificial climbing walls has grown by roughly 60% in the three-year period from 1999 to 2001, while participation in some classic team sports, such as baseball, dropped by 6% (Flagg, 2005).

Arousal theory suggests that every individual has a characteristic optimum stimulation level (OSL) and this is the foundation of personality (Raju, 1980; Zuckerman, 1988). Based upon the OSL paradigm, Zuckerman (1979) defined sensation seeking as a trait

characterized by “the seeking of varied, novel, complex, and intense situations and experiences and the willingness to take physical, social and financial risks” (1979, p. 10). Furthermore, research findings have indicated high sensation seekers are more likely to participate in risky sports, such as hang-gliding, and rock climbing (e.g., Jack & Ronan, 1999; Zuckerman, 1983).

Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) suggested that consumers’ multi-sensory and emotive aspects of consumption experiences are crucial motivation for leisure and sport activity. Arnold and Price (1993) also argued that seeking emotional arousal drives sport consumers to participation in risky sports. Further, there have been evidences that enduring personality traits play a significant role in organizing transient emotional states (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1985). Although Shoham, Rose, and Kahle (1998) provided support for the notion that the sensation-seeking trait is related to intentions to participate in risky sports, it is important to note that their study did not include the potential additive effects of emotions on behavioral intentions. Moreover, little empirical research has examined emotional experiences provided by risky sport (e.g., post-consumption emotions) and their relationship to OSL traits and behavioral intentions.

The advent of artificial climbing walls has created the possibilities for extreme sports to be marketed to consumers in urban settings. Moreover, it provides a relatively controlled setting, in which to study this form of hedonic consumption. To date, consumer psychology research on extreme sports has not thoroughly examined the potential additive effects of personality and emotion on participation. Therefore, the focus of the present research is to explore the influence of sensation seeking and consumption-related emotions (Pleasure-Arousal-Dominance) on novice (artificial wall) climbers’ behavioral intentions for using the facility again.

The following hypotheses were created, based on the literature dealing with consumption-related emotions and personality in this context:

H₁: Respondents’ climb-related arousal level is a function of age, gender and ImpSS ($\alpha < .05$).

H₂: Respondents’ climb-related level of pleasure is a function of age, gender, ImpSS, arousal and dominance ($\alpha < .05$).

H₃: Respondents’ behavioral intentions for using the artificial climbing wall again are associated with their age, gender, ImpSS, and PAD, after controlling for prior level of climbing experience ($\alpha < .05$).

Research Methods

Data for this study were collected at the artificial climbing wall facility of a large university in the eastern United States, over a several week period, during “Beginner’s Night.” Novice climbers (n=241) 18 years of age and older were chosen for this study, in an effort to examine how their initial experiences with this activity, along with their OSL, might influence their future usage of the facility (cf., Shoham et al., 1998). In an effort to gauge their experience and expertise (cf. Shoham et al., 1998; Holbrook, Chestnut & Oliva, 1984), respondents were asked to rate their level of climbing experience on a scale from one (inexperienced) to five (experienced). Based on responses to this question, 55 of the 296 climbers queried were excluded from the final analyses as they rated their experience levels higher than two.

Respondents’ Impulsive Sensation Seeking (Zuckerman, 1991) and demographics (e.g., age, gender) were also reported before they ascended the artificial climbing wall. Immediately upon completing their climbs, participants filled out self-reports of their emotional response to their consumption experience, by responding to an abbreviated version of the PAD (Holbrook et al., 1984) and multi-item scaled estimates of their future intentions to use the wall again (at both similar and more difficult grades).

Results

The sample was comprised of 55.6% males (n=131) and 44.4% females (n=110), with a mean age of 26.2 years old (S.D.=10.19). Reliabilities for ImpSS, PAD, and behavioral intentions were .82, .73, and .89 respectively. To check the construct validity of ImpSS, a two-way (age x gender) analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedure was used. The results showed significance differences by both age ($F=7.36, p < 0.05$) and gender ($F=4.64, p < 0.05$), which is in line with research on the above psychobiological trait (Zuckerman, 1994).

The results of multivariate linear regression analysis provided partial support for H₁, as gender and ImpSS significantly predicted post-climb levels of arousal (df=3/238, $F=7.45, p < .001, R^2=.10$). The directionality of the beta coefficient for gender indicated that females reported higher levels of the above emotion.

The second hypothesis also received partial support. Regression results indicated that respondents’ gender (being female), post-climb levels of arousal and dominance were significant predictors of post-climb levels of pleasure (df=5/236, $F=14.99, p < .001$). The model explained 25% of the adjusted variance in the dependent variable.

Multivariate linear regression results for intentions to use the wall again at a similar degree of difficulty (H₃) showed that and post-climb levels of Arousal and Pleasure were significant (df=7/234, $F=10.76, p < .001$). The model accounted for 25% of the adjusted variance explained. Results for predicting intentions to climb at steeper angles showed that age, gender, ImpSS, climbing experience, and post-climb levels of Pleasure and Dominance were significant (df=7/234, $F=17.32, p < .001$). This model explained 35% of the variance in behavioral intentions.

Discussion

Findings suggest that climb-related emotions and future intentions are significant functions of personality (i.e., sensation seeking) and demographic factors. Furthermore, the more participants experience post-climb arousal and pleasure, the more they are likely to use the wall again. The results of the empirical research support the notion that personality and consumption-related emotions are significant predictors of hedonic consumption (e.g., participation in risky sport) (Holbrook et al., 1984). In addition, this is the first known work to examine the relationship between personality and emotional responses in participation in so-called extreme sports. The research also contributes to the literature for sport marketers in that the use of personality variables might prove useful as a segmentation tool in marketing facilities, like climbing walls, to sensation seekers (Shoham et al., 1998).

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Lost in Translation: Consumers Difficulty in Estimating Expiration Time with Redemption Caps

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Extended Abstract

More and more, firms are using redemption caps as a form of promotional restriction. For example, GM ran a promotion tied in with a television show (the Apprentice) for their new vehicle, the Solstice. The offer was available for the first 1000 callers. The promotion cap was reached within hours of the show ending, yet a large number of consumers called for days after the promotion expired. In another example, a regional health club franchise ran a promotion for membership upgrade good for the first 100 responses. The promotion cap ran out on the second day, yet many members were still trying to redeem the offer weeks later. In this research, we examine how consumers process promotions that have redemption caps.

Prior research on promotional restrictions has focused on concrete and well-defined time limits (e.g., Raghubir, Inman, and Grande 2004). The findings have been mixed. Some studies find that consumers perceive short promotion durations as inconvenient, thus lowering their purchase intentions (Sinha, Chandran, and Srinivasan 1999), while other studies find that shorter durations can increase purchase intentions by increasing perceptions of deal scarcity (Inman, Peter, and Raghubir 1997) or by heightening the anticipated regret associated with not acting (Inman and McAlister 1994; Simonson 1992).

We propose that consumers evaluate redemption cap promotions, in part, by estimating the reach, response rate, and duration of the promotion. The reach of the promotion refers to the number of other consumers exposed to the promotion and the response rate refers to the percentage of exposed consumers who will act on the promotion. We argue that consumers' estimates of these quantities are anchored off of the redemption cap itself. Thus, the larger the redemption capsize, the larger the estimates of reach, response rate, and duration. However, since the actual promotion duration will be negatively related to the reach and response rate of the promotion, consumers may tend to overestimate how much time they have to redeem. If this reasoning holds, we would expect that providing consumers with the actual reach of a promotion should diminish the anchoring effect.

We conducted an exploratory study using a 3 x 2 between-subjects design with redemption cap size (40, 400, and 4000) and promotion reach (known vs. unknown) as between-subjects factors. Participants were 145 undergraduate business students and were randomly assigned to one of the six experimental conditions. Prior to receiving the stimulus promotions, the participants were provided with a brief scenario asking them to imagine that they had just received a coupon via email from MostlyPosters.com. The stimulus promotions were for a 30% discount off any poster, and contained one of the three redemption cap size treatments. Participants in the known market size conditions were told that the promotion was only sent to the 9000 undergraduate students of their university. Those in the unknown market size condition were not provided with any information regarding the reach of the promotion. Participants evaluated the coupon and were asked a series of questions regarding purchase intent, deal evaluation, promotion reach, and redemption timing.

When the promotional reach was unknown, participants' estimates of promotional reach (9500, 114000, 128000), response rate (.147, .248, .300), and duration (51.7 hours, 84.3 hours, 161.5 hours) all increased with redemption cap size, respectively. We also scaled the participants' self-reported redemption timing estimates (e.g., the percent that said they would redeem in 1 minute, the percent that said they would redeem in 1 hour, etc.) to their estimates of promotional reach and response rates. This allowed us to determine actual expiration times in each condition by cumulating the number of responses. We found that in all three redemption cap size conditions, the actual coupon would expire in less than five minutes. Given that the participants' estimates of response rates may be overestimated, we ran the same

analysis using only the proportion of subjects that stated they would definitely redeem this coupon (8.2%). We found that the 40 cap promotion would still expire in less than 5 minutes, but that the 400 and 4000 cap promotions would expire in approximately one hour. The results are not significantly different when even more conservative estimates of response rates are used. Thus, we conclude that at all levels of redemption cap size, participants grossly overestimated the duration of the promotion.

By comparison, when the promotional reach was known, participants' estimates of response rates (.116, .247, .309) and duration (14.7, 25.6, 157.9) increased with redemption cap size, respectively. Although the estimated duration increases with redemption cap size, the actual estimates are significantly smaller in this condition than for the unknown promotional reach conditions. However, the estimated response rates for the known and unknown promotional reach conditions differ only slightly with the largest difference between the estimates for a redemption cap size of 40. Thus, providing participants with the actual promotional reach removed the anchoring effects from estimates of promotional reach but not from estimates response rates and duration. Computing the actual redemption time as before, we again find that the redemption cap of 40 would expire in less than 5 minutes. However, the redemption cap of 400 would take 1.5 hours to expire and the redemption cap of 4000 would only be half used after two months. Again if we use a more conservative estimate of response rate (8.2%), the redemption cap of 40 would still expire in less than 5 minutes, while redemption caps of 400 and 4000 would take 10 hours and over 2 months to expire, respectively. Thus, while the estimated expiration time is overestimated for the redemption caps of 40 and 400 (14.7 hours vs. <5 minutes and 25.6 hours vs. 10 hours, respectively), the expiration time for the redemption of 4000 is grossly underestimated (157.9 hours vs. more than 1440 hours). Additionally, subjects reported greater confidence in their ability to redeem the coupon as the redemption cap increased, regardless of whether the promotional reach was known or unknown.

It would appear that estimates of duration are disconnected from estimates of reach and response rates. In the examples mentioned earlier, Solstice sold out within hours of the show ending. Many more continued to call for days after the promotion expired. Similarly for the health club; this promotion ran out in the second day yet consumers tried to redeem the offer weeks later. However, questions still remain. We intend to extend this research to examine the impact of risk aversion on estimation. Additionally, we will investigate perceptions of fairness, scarcity, and blame.

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The Role of Expectations in Set-Size Evaluations

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Extended Abstract

There has been a surge of research in recent years re-examining the effects of choice set size and alternative proliferation on a number of issues from choice confidence to perceived responsibility. Most of this research uses objectively limited and overwhelming sets in a direct manipulation design. But what effect do expectations of set size have on set-size perceptions? While research has begun to examine how set sizes affect expectations (Diehl and Poynor 2005), there remains a need for research exploring how expectations can affect judgments of set size (Van Raaj 1991).

It is proposed that set-size expectations create a sort of anchor. If one expects a limited set, the expectation is bounded by two, the smallest set possible. If one expects an extensive set, the expectation is bounded by an estimate of the total number of products available in that category, usually a quite high number. When the actual set size is truly limited or very extensive, reality should win out over expectations and the set should be perceived accurately as the set size should be near one of these perceptual boundaries and thus easy to put into a particular perspective. However, when the actual set size is of a moderate nature, the set will appear less like the expectation being held. So will the moderate set be assimilated or contrasted with expectations (Biernat 2005)? Prior work has suggested a general trend towards contrast instead of assimilation, but this was conducted in a more hedonic setting and did not explore set sizes (Zellner, Stickhouser, Tornow 2004).

To explore this issue, an online study was conducted using choice sets of digital cameras at a fictitious online electronics store. 106 undergraduates at a large east-coast private university participated in the experiment. A 2*3 (expectations by set size) fully-crossed factorial design was conducted. Before exposure to the online choice set of digital cameras, participants were randomly assigned to an expectation condition and read a page telling them "Please note, the product selection at this online store is known to be very limited (extensive), and you will probably have to pick from only a few (a very large number) of alternatives." Then participants were exposed to a set of digital cameras that was very limited at four alternatives, moderate at twelve alternatives, or very extensive at twenty-four

alternatives. These set sizes had been extensively pre-tested and shown to be considered too small and quite limiting (four), an average or moderate number of products in this category (twelve), or far too large and overwhelming (twenty-four). After making their selection, participants were asked to record the degree to which they found the set restrictive, overwhelming, difficult to choose from, incomplete, and the likelihood they selected a non-optimal choice (all multi-item Likert scale measures collapsed into constructs). The data was then analyzed by way of a multivariate ANOVA, and planned-contrast t-tests for specific comparisons.

First, there was a main effect for expectations on all outcome variables ($F > 8$ for all, $p < .01$ for all). Planned-contrast t-tests reveal that participants who expected an extensive set viewed choice sets in general as more incomplete ($p < .01$) and restrictive ($p < .05$), less overwhelming ($p < .01$), and felt they were less likely to pick a suboptimal choice ($p < .05$) than participants who expected a sparse set. There was also a significant expectations by set-size interaction effect in the ANOVA ($F > 5$ for all, $p < .01$ for all). Planned-contrast t-tests here reveal that the effect of expectations is actually largely confined to the moderate set size. When the actual set-size is limited or extensive, no differences between extensive and limited expectations participants on the outcome variables is significant above .05. When the actual set-size is moderate, however, all outcome variables are significant.

Consistent with our propositions, the pattern of results in this moderate-set conditions suggests that the actual set size is viewed in contrast to expectations, rather than assimilated to expectations (Fiske & Taylor 1984). When participants were expecting a limited set, they view the moderate set as having reduced incompleteness and reduced choice restriction, but elevated error likelihood and increased perceptions of being overwhelmed. In short, the results looked not significantly different from when the limited expectations participants viewed the actually extensive set (all $p > .05$), but significantly different on all variables from the actually limited set (all $p < .02$). A similar pattern emerges for the extensive set expectations participant. When expecting an extensive set, participants view the moderate set as very restricted and incomplete, but not overwhelming with little choice error. In short, they view the moderate set as not significantly different from the actually limited set (all $p > .05$), but significantly different from the actually extensive set (all $p < .01$).

In summary, when participants viewed a truly limited or extensive set, reality trumped any expectation-based effects on size judgments. But when the choice set was of moderate size, participants expecting either a limited or extensive set exhibited a contrast effect, where extensive expectations made the moderate set appear limited while limited expectations made the moderate set appear extensive. This not only has implications for retailers and consumers in how they react to common moderate set sizes, research suggests that the act of expectation disconfirmation itself can lead to lowered satisfaction regardless of the positivity of the outcome (Bennet, Ordonez & Gilliland 2003).

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Investigating the Additive Effects of Demographics, Lifestyles, and Personality on Physical Activity Levels in Adult Consumers

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Extended Abstract

Obesity and its related health problems are a growing concern in the U.S. and abroad, which has prompted a call for transformative consumer research in this area (Mick, 2006). For example, it was recently reported that nearly 40% of adult consumers in America are sedentary and 65% of adults are overweight (body mass index $\geq 25.0 \text{ kg/m}^2$) (National Center for Health Statistics, 2005). Given that engaging in regular vigorous physical activity is not only beneficial for the general wellbeing of consumers but also important in terms of the related financial cost to government and businesses, it is imperative for health marketing professionals to understand various determinants of physical activity levels. The objective of the current study is to investigate the additive effects of demographics (e.g., age, gender, and ethnicity) lifestyle (e.g., TV watching, smoking, and drinking) and personality (e.g., sensation seeking) on physical activity levels, which can have implications to effective segmentation and targeting of health communications about the latter.

A growing body of evidence suggests that age and gender are the most consistent determinants of physical activity levels in adults (Caspersen, Pereira, & Curran, 2000; Ingram, 2000; Nelson, Gordon-Larsen, Adair, & Popkin, 2005; Sallis, 2000). Studies have found males tend to exercise more vigorously than females and overall exercise levels decline with age. Age-related decline in exercise levels has been well supported in non-human studies as well, indicating that age-related decline has a strong biological basis (Ingram, 2000; Sallis, 2000). In addition to age and gender, ethnicity has also found to be related with exercise levels in adults. Caucasians are reported to be more physically active than non-Caucasians (Caspersen & Merritt, 1995). Lifestyles characterized by certain types of consumption

(i.e., drinking, smoking and excessive TV viewing) can adversely affect physical activity levels as well (Sale, Guppy, & El-Sayed, 2000; Tucker, 1986; Tucker & Bagwell, 1991). The current study builds upon the literature which has found the above demographic and lifestyle variables to impact physical activity levels. In addition, the biologically-based personality trait, sensation seeking (Zuckerman, 1994), is also examined given its negative relationship to age and its use as a segmentation tool in other health marketing research (Palmgreen, Lorch, Donohew, Harrington, D'Silva, & Helm, 1995).

A telephone survey methodology was employed here, to investigate the relationship between adult respondents' demographics, lifestyles and personalities and the reported physical activity levels (n=790). A stratified random sampling technique was used to generate a list of names and telephone numbers for adults 18 years of age and older, from two top 25 DMAs in the eastern United States. Demographic data were collected on respondents' age, gender, and race (Caucasian/minorities). Respondents were also questioned about certain consumption behaviors, including the amount of time they spent watching TV (average hours of daily viewing and average days viewed) and health related behaviors such as smoking (smoking/non-smoking) and drinking (drinking/non-drinking). The personality trait of sensation seeking was measured using the 19-item Impulsive Sensation-Seeking scale (ImpSS, Zuckerman, 1994; 1996). Finally, respondents' level of physical activity was gauged by asking them how many days during the past week that they engaged in vigorous physical activity that lasted 20 minutes or more (0 to two days per week/three or more days per week), based on the recommended criterion suggested by the Healthy People 2000 (U.S. Public Health Service, 1991).

Caucasians made up 69% of the sample, which had a mean age of 42.5. Slightly over half of the study participants were female (56%). Logistic regression analyses were used here and findings are as follows: Males were significantly more likely than female to exercise three or more days per week. Caucasians were significantly more likely than non-Caucasians to report that they exercise three or more days per week. Non-smokers were significantly more likely to report exercising three or more days per week. Heavy TV viewers were significantly less likely to report exercising three or more days per wk, compare to those who are light viewers. Lastly, high sensation seekers were significantly more likely to report exercise three or more days per week than low sensation seekers.

In line with previous studies, results suggest that demographic variables (i.e., gender, race), lifestyle (i.e., smoking, TV watching), and personality (i.e., sensation seeking) were significantly related to self-reported levels of physical activity among adults. For high sensation-seekers, they were more likely to involve in regular physical activity than low sensation-seekers. This finding suggests that a biological-based trait such as sensation seeking might account for the age-related decline trends in physical activity levels. Moreover, this biosocial phenomenon is in line with what Sallis (2000) and Ingram (2000) found with physical activity declines in non-human species. This suggests that more research in this area should be conducted looking at the relationship between optimum stimulation level (OSL) constructs like ImpSS, and physical activity. The present study also provides some practical implications as well. Along with demographic segmentation, targeting consumers via psychographic and lifestyle patterns can advance the goals of public health communication (Albrecht & Bryant, 1996; Maibach, Maxfield, Ladin, & Slater, 1996). Thus, studies in this area might help answer the call for transformative consumer behavior research in this context (Mick, 2006).

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The Effects of Recurrent Mortality Salience Mediated by the Availability Heuristic on Risky Behavior and Subjective Probability

Evidence from AIDS Related Cognition and Sexual Behavior of Indian Truckers

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Extended Abstract

Cognitions related to HIV/ AIDS as well as sexual behaviors of Indian truckers have been the targets of attention from social marketers, as well as the foci of research by academic researchers yielding intriguing results. For example, it was found that only 14% of Indian truckers were aware that using condoms reduces their chances of contracting HIV/ AIDS, yet 79% of them were aware that AIDS is incurable. These and other findings suggest that Indian truckers demonstrate better knowledge of HIV/ AIDS in general than of the specific knowledge that condoms are effective in preventing the spread of the disease. In addition, 75% of Indian truckers believed that the women they had casual sex with could have HIV/ AIDS, but 92% of them believed that there was "no chance" that they would contract the disease in their lifetimes (Bryan, Fisher and Benziger, 2001). It can be assumed that persuasive messages targeted at Indian truckers would urge them to use condoms and such messages would be placed in media patronized by them. Why then, do Indian truckers exhibit low awareness of the protection against HIV afforded by condoms, demonstrate low usage of condoms and believe that they are immune to HIV despite their beliefs that their partners are highly susceptible to HIV? The answer may lie in the high rate of fatalities among Indian truckers on the highways.

The highway network in India is comparatively unsafe with the majority of accidents involving dilapidated trucks driven by truckers who are often either intoxicated or under the influence of cheap narcotics. Major accidents result in wrecks of trucks that are pushed to the side of the highway where they are visible to other truckers (Mohan, 2004). As a result, death due to a highway accident is made much more salient to Indian truckers than that due to diseases such as HIV/ AIDS. In general, death as a result of an accident is highly visible as opposed to death as a result of disease-which claims one victim at a time in a private space.

People who are non-professional drivers judge accidents to cause as many deaths as disease, although disease causes 16 times as many deaths as accidents (Slovic, Fischhoff and Lichtenstein, 1982). This effect might be exacerbated for Indian truckers due to the visibility of instances of fatalities resulting from truck accidents, which would probably increase truckers' subjective probability of death due to accident, owing to the operation of the availability heuristic (Tversky and Kahneman, 1973). Support theory (Tversky and Koehler, 1994) describes subjective probability as a relation between the judgment of the support for a focal hypothesis (description of an event) and that of the alternative hypothesis (description of the other event). Refinements of support theory suggest that if truckers judge the focal hypothesis of death due to accident as highly probable, it would result in discounting of the alternative hypothesis of death due to causes other than accident, as a result of the enhancement effect (Koehler, Brenner and Tversky, 1997). Unpacking the alternate hypothesis into components such as death due to HIV/ AIDS would result in implicit subadditivity. Implicit subadditivity results when the aggregate of the subjective probabilities of the components of the alternate hypothesis exceeds that of the alternate hypothesis. However, a reminder of the typicality of the behavior for the trucker population may result in implicit superadditivity for oneself, since the individual trucker would like to distance himself from the delinquent behavior and implicit subadditivity typical of the trucker population (Sloman et al, 2004) based on a finding related to terror management theory (Arndt et al, 2002).

It is likely that seeing wrecks of trucks by the side of the highway would induce mortality salience in Indian truckers. It would also seem plausible that seeing a number of accidents and wrecks of trucks would result in recurrent mortality salience. Mortality salience effects have been explained by terror management theory. According to terror management theory (Greenberg, Pyszczynski and Solomon, 1986), self-esteem serves to protect individuals from anxiety under conditions that remind them of their mortality. Individuals seek to deny their mortality by embracing a cultural worldview and deriving self-esteem from living up to its values. When mortality salience occurs, individuals seek to defend their cultural worldview as well as to increase their self-esteem. An example of the former effect would be resistance to persuasion that carries messages counter to their worldview (Shehryar and Hunt, 2005) especially if the source of such messages was seen to be a member of an out-group (Harmon-Jones et al, 1997). The latter effect could be seen in efforts to reinforce self-esteem in domains that are held to be most relevant to the level of self-esteem of individuals (Goldenberg et al, 2000; Ferraro, Shiv and Bettman, 2005).

Due to the perceived deficiency in self-esteem as a result of mortality salience, it is likely that Indian truckers perceive a loss in self-esteem relative to their subjective reference points. As a result, Indian truckers might be exhibiting risk-seeking behavior due to their perception of relative loss as described in prospect theory (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979). Risky driving behavior has been induced as a result of mortality salience in those for whom driving is important to their self-esteem (Ben-Ari, Florian and Mikulincer, 1999). Similarly, risk-seeking hedonic behavior of unprotected casual sex would probably result due to recurrent mortality salience. Further, it is suggested that release from recurrent mortality salience would serve to boost self-esteem resulting in risk-averse behavior as described in prospect theory.

It is expected that this paper will contribute to social marketing. Apart from Indian truckers, there are myriad other groups who labor under recurrent mortality salience such as the military on active service and even the general population living under threat. It might be seen that the military on active service display a greater frequency of non-combat injuries and fatalities. An understanding of the attitudes toward risk and risky behavior will enable description of risk behavior and cognition under recurrent mortality salience.

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The Director's Cut: Exploring Cultural Implications in HIV/AIDS Communication from the Producer's Perspective

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Abstract

Negotiating the challenges of communicating HIV/AIDS messages, which include stigma, conflicting cultural ideals, and politically-charged resource constraints, requires a systematic stream of research. Using a series of phenomenological interviews in our exploration of the main constituencies in successful message development and delivery, namely the creative producers, the message developers, and the target audience, we acknowledge the contributions of Cultural Studies theory (Hall 1993) and to a lesser extent the Political Economy of Media (Schiller 1995).

Summary

According to UNAIDS, in 2003 approximately 38 million people globally were estimated to be living with HIV and nearly 3 million died from the disease (www.unaids.org). In fact 95% of the people living with HIV/AIDS are in the developing world with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries suffering the most. Although awareness and knowledge of AIDS levels are steadily increasing among targeted populations, the spread of AIDS in these countries continues to rise at alarming rates.

In response to repeated calls for transformative research and to the moral mandate for a compassionate response to the world's AIDS crisis, this paper—on an admittedly micro level—investigates the impact of culture and government in mediated communications about HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention in the Caribbean (Rothschild and Anderson 1998; Nowak and Siska 1995; Hill 1993; Mody 1991). Negotiating the challenges of this sensitive topic, which include stigma, conflicting cultural ideals, and politically-charged resource constraints, requires a systematic stream of research. Using a series of phenomenological interviews in our exploration of the main constituencies in successful message development and delivery, namely the creative producers, the message developers, and the target audience, we acknowledge the contributions of Cultural Studies theory (Hall 1993) and to a lesser extent the Political Economy of Media (Schiller 1995). This study focuses on the perspective of the producer of the messages (i.e., creative personnel).

Conceptualization

Cultural Studies theory's most applicable assertion in the context of this study is its challenge to the linear "sender-message-receiver" pattern of traditional communication theory. According to Hall (1993), there are several complex relationships within each step of the communication process and they are often iterative and vulnerable to what is termed that "oppositional readings" where the intended

meaning of the message is lost or misinterpreted. As a result the audience is empowered and can now be seen as active participants in the communication process. This concept of audience participation is not new to the marketing literature and has been addressed in terms of message comprehension (Burnkrant and Unnava 1995; Greenwald and Leavitt 1984), ascribing meaning (McQuarrie and Mick 1992, Mittal 2002; Thompson, Pollio and Locander 1994), and experiential consumption (Arnould and Price 1993; Bitner 1992) among other concepts.

Additionally, Cultural Studies theory holds that in the course of communication another series of relationships determine what is produced and how it is produced. It is this aspect of the process that is the focus of this particular endeavor—the relationship between the message producers (i.e., advertising agencies and creative shops) and the message developers (i.e., government and community-based organizations). The cultural background of the message designers themselves is significant as the collective experiences of the message designer may help or hurt the message production process. For example, a message producer who belongs to the same cultural background of the audience “...may be more knowledgeable about their problems, but may share their caste and class prejudices...” (Mody 1991, 105). Those prejudices may very well be the ones which contributed to adverse conditions for the audience—conditions which the communication campaign may be designed to reverse or eradicate (e.g., HIV/AIDS stigma).

As Johar, Holbrook and Stern (2001) have duly noted, creativity is appreciated in the marketing discipline, but rarely studied. Much of the literature surrounding the creative aspect of advertising revolves around consumers’ response to various forms (Stewart and Koslow 1989; McQuarrie and Mick 1992; Clow, Roy, and Hershey 2001), the interpersonal relationships among agency personnel and between client and agency (Thompson and Haytko 1997), or the motivational perspectives of a career in art direction or copywriting (Kover, James, and Sonner 1997; Young 2000). The call for scholars and practitioners to think more about the “creative spark, which drives much of advertising” remains virtually unanswered (Zinkham 1995). Consequently, it behooves marketers to gain a richer understanding of the lived experience of the creative personnel who bring these messages to fulfillment.

Method

The proposed study will take place in May 2006 and is in response to an initial round of research by a native graduate student, which dealt with three key issues: 1) assessing the baseline knowledge of key HIV/AIDS issues among the producers and recipients of the message, 2) determining the degree of experiential overlap between these two groups, and 3) gauging the effectiveness of message communication. It considered three main constituencies: 1) the producers and developers of the work (via 11 interviews), 2) the target audience (via a five-person focus group), and 3) the crafted messages themselves (via content analysis of 17 posters). No formal hypotheses were submitted. All activity took place between January and June 2003; however the communication artifacts were used island-wide between 1999 and 2003.

The results showed there was acceptable baseline knowledge of key HIV/AIDS issues among the producers and selected recipients of the message; however the degree of experiential overlap between these two groups was ambiguous as target audience participation was decidedly problematic. In a similar vein, the lack of a structured research instrument made the task of evaluating messages effectiveness difficult to ascertain. Before developing a subsequent round of research to address the gaps in the preliminary study and collect more statistically compelling data, the study has been reduced into smaller segments, the first being conversations with the producers.

Participants will be asked to describe the events that led up to involvement with this project per the guidelines put forth in Thompson, Locander, and Pollio (1990) for phenomenological interviewing. Interviews will be conversational in nature with the interviewee leading the exchange (both researchers will be present whenever feasible and appropriate). Rather than include explicit inquiry about the professional relationship with non-profits and public sector organizations or the impact of cultural heritage on their work, those lessons are expected to emerge from the data. The interview transcripts will be revisited using a deliberately iterative interpretative approach (Thompson 1997).

Current research objectives revolve around gaining a richer understanding of the following areas of inquiry 1) each participant’s personal journey in their career, 2) the knowledge of key HIV/AIDS issues among the producers, and 3) the process of negotiating form and content of the HIV/AIDS production project. This should help to develop a more theoretical understanding of the process used in message production and uncover any latent patterns in both the content and construction of the mediated communication.

Two frameworks will likely guide the retrieval of meaning from these narrative accounts. The first is the Social Adaptation of Thompson’s Hermeneutic Framework, which includes the following constructs: 1) perception of benefits; 2) consumer resistance; 3) countervailing consequences; and 4) countervailing socio-cultural forces (Rothschild and Andreasen 1998). The second is the UNAIDS/Penn State framework, which affirms five inter-related, behavior-shaping contextual domains—government policy, socio-economic status, culture, gender relations and spirituality (Airhihenbuwa, Bunmi, and Obregon 1999).

Findings/Implications

Preliminary findings from the first study suggest a possible relationship between “consumer resistance” (from the Thompson framework) and “gender relations” (from UNAIDS/Penn State framework), which may help explain, for example, why messages that feature a woman purchasing condoms lack credibility within the Caribbean context. Other issues such as the use of Jamaican patois (a national dialect of broken English), the challenge to solicit the insight of political influencers without obligation to physically represent them in posters, and the need to honor both legislative and cultural restrictions on the type of information shared (e.g., fear appeals or heavily rational, numbers-driven tactics are discouraged and likely will not be funded), exemplify the intersection of theory and practice within a social marketing context and offer tactical routes to improving message effectiveness. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that a richer understanding of the producer’s perspective will further illuminate the meaning of the preliminary findings.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Understanding Reactions To Assortments: A Process Perspective

Kristin Diehl, University of Southern California, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

More than 20 years of consumer research have demonstrated how changes in the assortment affect variety perceptions, satisfaction and choice. This session adds to our understanding of the psychological processes leading to these outcomes by revealing: 1) How variations in the structure and organization of assortments change psychological processes, and, 2) How these decision processes are linked to important outcomes such as assortment perceptions and WTP. Specifically, the papers focus on two mechanisms that underlie different reactions to assortments: similarity vs. dissimilarity processing and consumers' beliefs regarding their ability to preference match.

Poynor and Diehl investigate how different types of externally provided category structures (taxonomic or goal-based) impact the decision process. They demonstrate that taxonomic groupings cause consumers to focus on dissimilarities among items, while goal-based groupings increase the focus on similarities. As a result, participants selecting from goal-based groupings perceive the items in the assortment to be more similar and choose less expensive items from goal-based than from taxonomic sets.

Schlusser and White examine how removing items from a choice set affects opinions of the remaining items. Contrary to predictions based on reactance theory and halo effects, they show that consumers' reactions to available items depend on the reasons provided for the unavailability and on whether assortment characteristics highlight the similarities among items within the assortment. If similarities are focal, judgments of the remaining items are more favorable when unavailable items were sold out rather than discontinued, but the opposite is true when dissimilarities are focal. Further, choice process satisfaction mediates and individual differences in market knowledge moderates these effects.

Griffin and Broniarczyk investigate the effect of alignable versus nonalignable options on search effort and satisfaction. Nonalignable compared to alignable options trigger greater search. Initially such heightened search effort increases satisfaction because consumers feel they are more likely to find a good preference match. However, further search among nonalignable options makes necessary trade-offs salient, decreasing perceptions of preference match and reducing satisfaction.

These three papers focus on 1) similarity vs. dissimilarity processing and 2) consumers beliefs about preference match as drivers of consumers' reactions to assortments. Their findings demonstrate that 1) Similarity vs. dissimilarity-based processing alters consumers' reactions to assortments. Engaging in greater dissimilarity testing decreases perceived substitutability among items which affects perceptions of the assortment (P&D), leads to higher WTP (P&D) but also to more negative reactions to stock-outs (S&W). 2) Further, consumers' beliefs about their ability to preference match also affect reactions to assortments. How consumers react to stock-outs is affected by whether they believe they will be able to choose advantageously from the remaining items (S&W). In addition, consumers' beliefs about their ability to preference match determine whether an increase in search effort increases or decreases satisfaction (G& B).

These three papers investigate consumers' reactions to assortments from very different perspectives; however, their findings

converge on a few common psychological mechanisms that help improve our understanding of the psychological processes that drive substantive outcome reactions to assortment differences.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“The Psychology of Category Design: The Impact of Goal-Derived Structures on Consumer Information Processing and Choice”

Cait Poynor, University of South Carolina

Kristin Diehl, University of Southern California

The enormous variety available in retail settings has alternately fascinated and frustrated both consumers and researchers (e.g. Iyengar and Lepper 2000, Schwartz 2004). Recent trends in retailing suggest that major retailers hope to manage such large assortments through reorganization rather than reduction of their stock (Anderson 2005). Our research investigates how different types of externally-provided categories (taxonomic or goal-derived) impact choice by prompting the consumer to adopt different information processing strategies. Particularly, we compare the information processing strategies adopted in taxonomic groupings, which are organized around shared attributes of the alternatives, to the strategies adopted in “goal-derived categories” (Medin and Barsalou 1981) which group items sharing benefits or occasions of use (Desai and Ratneshwar 2003). In one pilot study and two lab experiments, implicit and explicit measures provide evidence for the proposed shift in processing strategies, as well as effects on variety perceptions and prices paid.

Since taxonomic groups highlight structural similarities among options, we propose that consumers adopt an information processing strategy which facilitates discrimination among seemingly similar alternatives. Thus, we expect that consumers will accentuate existing differences and, in line with the classic model of contrast (Mussweiler 2003, Schwartz and Tversky 1980) will create both local and global contrast among these items when options are organized in taxonomic groups.

In goal-based groups, however, consumers face a different processing task: Goal-grouped items do not highlight structural similarities and may even be characterized by attribute dissimilarities. We expect that consumers will first determine a basis for comparison in goal-based groups, by engaging in similarity testing. That is, they will ask themselves, “In what way are these alternatives similar, and therefore, on what basis can I make my decision?” (Johnson 1989). With the identification of each additional basis of comparison, alternatives should become progressively *assimilated* to one another (Mussweiler 2003). As such, even if the underlying assortment from which choices are made is identical, inter-item as well as overall assortment similarity should be perceived as higher in goal-based groups (assimilation) but lower in taxonomic (contrast) groupings.

Prior research also demonstrates that as perceptions of similarity and product parity increase, individuals are less willing to pay higher prices. Therefore, we predict that as a consequence of the assimilative processing in goal-derived sets, participants will pay lower prices than will participants who make choices from taxonomic sets.

Pilot study In a pilot study, undergraduates imagined that they had a job interview and were shopping for a new pair of shoes. We then directed them to an actual online shoe retailer, Zappos.com, where they browsed the shoe selection organized either in terms of taxonomic identifiers (e.g., high heels, flats, sandals) or occasions of use (e.g., “The Office”, “Rodeo Drive”, “Country Club”). After browsing as long as they wished, participants chose their first and second choice of shoes. They then rated the variety of the website’s overall assortment and the similarity between their first and second choice shoes. Controlling for age and gender, participants who made their selections from the taxonomically-organized site reported significantly higher variety in the set as a whole, as well as less similarity between their first and second choice shoes, than did those who browsed the goal-derived sets. Since this pilot was undertaken in an ecologically valid yet noisy environment, where little control could be exerted over the actual similarities of products viewed, study 1 further investigates our predictions in a very controlled setting.

Study 1 In this study, students chose teas from a simulated online retailer. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three between-subjects conditions. Teas were organized either by taxonomic characteristics (Black, Green, Mint, and Rooibos), by the goal they help achieve (Energy-Boost, Stress-Relief, Cardio-Health, and Weight-Loss), or, for the control condition, grouped randomly into four pages (Page 1, Page 2, Page 3, Page 4). Importantly, *the same 32 teas* appeared in all conditions and were available to all participants.

After reading basic information about tea, participants browsed the site, selected at least 4 teas which interested them for consideration, and identified a first and second choice from their consideration set. They then rated the perceived similarity of items in the assortment and the perceived similarity of their first and second choice. We used two implicit measures to investigate the underlying decision processes. As such, participants were presented with their consideration set and asked to sort the set into two groups as they saw fit. Assimilation processes triggered by goal-derived groupings should create closer associations among options resulting in greater psychological cohesion. When assortment are organized along goal-derived categories it should therefore take longer to sort items and the proportion of items sorted into the two groups should deviate from a 50-50 split.

As predicted, assimilation processes in goal-derived groups are found both relative to taxonomically-organized sets and relative to the control group of randomly-organized alternatives. Participants in the goal-derived condition reported greater similarity between their first and second choice items as well as among all the items in the assortment, compared to participants who chose from taxonomic organizations and participants who chose from the randomly-ordered sets. In addition, analyses of the time taken to sort the individuals’ consideration sets and the balance of the sorted groups suggest that choosing from goal-derived sets results in higher levels of psychological cohesion among alternatives than choosing from taxonomically-grouped sets, supporting the proposed psychological process.

Study 2 Study 2 adapted the basic experimental paradigm used in Study 1, adding a within-subjects covariate trial, prices for each tea and an incentive compatible payment scheme. This adaptation allows us to examine the effect of external categorization on prices paid. In this study, all participants first selected a tea from a randomly-ordered set, providing us with an individual-level willingness-to-pay measure. They were then assigned to either the goal-derived or taxonomic condition. As anticipated, participants choosing from the taxonomic organizations chose options at a signifi-

cantly lower price than participants choosing from the goal-derived sets.

This research demonstrates that different external category structures can generate both theoretically interesting and managerially important effects. We demonstrate that taxonomic and goal-based organizations alter the way in which consumers process information, and thus that differences in category structures impact perceptions of inter-item similarity, change perceptions of assortment variety and prompt consumer to pick lower priced products. Future research may compare these findings to situations where preferences are held more strongly and in particular consider how other types of groupings, such as those based on brands, may impact consumers’ perceptions and choices.

“The Company They Keep: The Influence of Reasons for Option Limitation on Assortment Judgments”

Ann Schlosser, University of Washington

Tiffany White, University of Illinois

Prior research has demonstrated that adding alternatives to existing choice sets can influence judgments of original items in the set (e.g., Huber, Payne and Puto 1982; Simonson 1989). Receiving far less direct attention is the effect of removing alternatives from a set on judgments of the remaining items in the set (Zhang and Fitzsimmons 1999). Research has shown that compared to having all alternatives available to choose from, removing items from a choice set (option limitation) can negatively affect satisfaction with the choice process (Zhang and Fitzsimmons 1999) and can increase store-switching behavior (Fitzsimmons 2000; Broniarczyk, Hoyer and McAlister 1998). Yet, option limitation can have positive effects as well. For instance, option limitation can lead to higher decision satisfaction when the consideration set is large than small, presumably because it reduces the difficulty in making a choice by decreasing the number of alternatives that need to be compared (Fitzsimmons 2000). We argue that the effect of option limitation on assortment judgments also depends upon the reasons firms provide for item unavailability, namely whether unavailability is attributed to high demand (sold out) or low demand (discontinued), as well as characteristics of the assortment that highlight similarities between items in the assortment. Specifically, if the reasons for unavailability are favorable due to high demand (sold out), then judgments of the remaining items should be higher to the extent that the assortment is perceived as likely to contain other similar items. This can occur when the assortment is large or when the assortment is organized in a way that causes individuals to process the choice options in terms of their similarities rather than differences. However, the reverse should occur when the reasons for unavailability are less favorable due to low demand (discontinued).

Our predictions qualify those of reactance theory. Brehm’s (1966) framework suggests that when one’s freedom to choose is threatened (e.g., items from an assortment are no longer available to choose), individuals experience a strong motivation to restore that freedom, often by derogating the source of the restriction (Fitzsimmons and Lehmann 2004). Moreover, reactance is often greater to the extent that the removed item is preferred (Clee and Wicklund 1980). Hence, consumers may feel greater reactance when the reason for the removed item suggests that it would have been preferred (it was in high demand) than when it would not be preferred (it was in low demand). Consequently, judgments of the available items may be lower when the reason for option limitation suggests that the unavailable alternatives would have been preferred (sold out) than not preferred (discontinued).

Alternatively, responses to option limitation may exhibit a halo effect (Thorndike 1920). Specifically, the favorableness of the

reasons for option limitation may spill over to affect the judgments of the remaining items in the assortment. Existing research suggests individuals' general impression about a target causes them to judge the target similarly on other dimensions (Solomonson and Lance 1997). As a result, individuals' general impressions are relatively homogeneous across their evaluations. Likewise, the reasons for option limitation may influence individuals' general impressions of the assortment such that consumers' opinions of the remaining items in the set should reflect the favorability of the reason for option limitation. That is, judgments of the remaining items in an assortment should be higher when the reasons for option limitation are favorable than unfavorable (i.e., sold out vs. discontinued).

We test our predictions against these contrasting accounts in three experiments in which we vary the reasons for option limitation (i.e., sold out or discontinued) and assortment characteristics (i.e., assortment size and organization). In study 1, we reasoned that individuals would perceive greater similarity among items when the assortment size is large than small. In study 2, we held fixed assortment size and manipulated assortment organization, specifically the extent to which assortment items were organized in a manner that facilitated item-specific (i.e., attending to the differences between alternatives) or relational (i.e., attending to the similarities between alternatives) processing. Finally, in study 3, we tested an important moderator of these effects. Specifically, if our findings are indeed driven by consumers' intuitions about relative demand for sold out versus discontinued items, then our effects should hold only for those with relatively high versus low knowledge about market forces (e.g., the economic logic of supply and demand). Across these studies, we find that judgments of the available items depended not only on the reasons provided for option limitation but also upon factors influencing the likelihood that assortment items were similar. Specifically, when assortment was perceived as containing similar items, judgments were more positive when the unavailable items were labeled as sold out versus discontinued. However, when the assortment was perceived to contain *dissimilar* items, judgments were more favorable when unavailable items were discontinued versus sold out (study 3). Furthermore, we find that this interactive effect is mediated by participants' beliefs that they were able to choose the best option from the remaining items (study 2) and moderated by individual differences in market knowledge (study 3).

Theoretically, we contribute to the choice literature, which has examined the influence of adding items to a choice set on attitudes towards existing items in the set, but has devoted far less attention to understanding the impact of removing items from the choice set on evaluations of the existing choice items. We also contribute to the choice reduction literature by demonstrating that the influence of option limitation on judgments of the available assortment is moderated by the reasons for the reduction and whether other similar items are likely to exist in among the remaining alternatives.

“Search Paradox: The Role of Feature Alignability in the Rise and Fall of Satisfaction”

Jill Griffin, University of Evansville
Susan Broniarczyk, University of Texas at Austin

“Man is the only animal whose desires increase as they are fed; the only animal that is never satisfied.”

Henry George (1839-1897)

This research seeks to identify situations where people are compelled to search further in spite of diminishing satisfaction. Specifically, we examine the role feature alignability plays in

search quantity and search outcomes. A set of options can be considered alignable when it contains options that vary along a comparable feature. In contrast, a nonalignable set contains options that vary along non-comparable or unique features (Markman 1999; Gourville and Soman, 2005).

Searching among nonalignable options can increase learning about different features and benefits, whereas searching among alignable options provides information on just a single dimension. Consequently, it is argued that search among nonalignable options is more informative and engaging than is search among alignable options. Therefore, we expect greater search among nonalignable options than among alignable ones.

The impact of search on satisfaction is subject to a dual effect. Considering more options increases the chances of finding a close match to preferences (Baumol and Ide 1956). This is the basic argument for the cost-benefit tradeoff to search (Stigler 1961) where more effort leads to greater reward, in this case higher satisfaction. However, increased search can also increase desires for various features of a product. When physical product constraints or budget constraints require difficult tradeoffs to be made, an increase in desires can increase the psychological cost of choosing, decreasing satisfaction. We anticipate that both effects occur simultaneously. Which effect will dominate depends on the type and the number of options considered.

Regardless of alignability, we expect an initial increase in satisfaction from search as a person finds the feature or level of the feature that is most appealing. Nonalignable options are inherently more dissimilar than alignable ones, so we would expect a greater initial increase in satisfaction as the chance of finding a good match to personal preferences increases substantially with the first few nonalignable options searched.

As search continues, desires increase and the psychological cost of choosing begins to mount as tradeoffs must be made. When choosing among alignable options, a person receives some level of the alignable feature regardless of the choice, so the psychological cost of choice is not too great. In contrast, a choice among nonalignable options is inherently associated with feelings of loss as people pre-attach to various features of the options during search (Carmon, Wertenbroch, and Zeelenberg 2003) but cannot have them all. This would predict a greater decrease in satisfaction resulting from search among nonalignable than among alignable options.

The results of two studies support this dual effect of search on satisfaction for nonalignable but not for alignable options. Specifically, people experience an initial increase and then decline (inverted U shape) in satisfaction with continued search among nonalignable options, whereas satisfaction remains fairly flat for alignable options.

Study 1 is a mixed design: 2 (feature alignability) x 3 (number of options) x 2 (category). Feature alignability is a between-subjects factor with features being either alignable or nonalignable. Number of options is a between-subjects factor with participants viewing 3, 9, or 15 options in a category with negative attribute correlation. Category is a within-subjects factor including the categories of computers and mp3 players with order counterbalanced. Participants are directed to a website and instructed to examine options and select the one they would be most likely to purchase.

The results demonstrate that people are inclined to search further among nonalignable than among alignable options. Furthermore, alignability of options moderates the impact of search on desires congruency. An inverted U shape for satisfaction with respect to search is found for nonalignable options but not for

alignable options. Thus, we find evidence that people are more likely to continue searching even when choice satisfaction is declining as a result.

Study 2 extends Study 1 by examining free search where subjects can examine as many or as few options as they want. Additionally, we gain insight into the process underlying the effect of search on satisfaction by varying the timing of feature exposure. If the increase in desire resulting from search is due to feature exposure, we predict that exposure to features prior to search will negate the inverted U of satisfaction.

Participants in this study are assigned to one of three alignability conditions: alignable (A), nonalignable (NA), and nonalignable with feature pre-exposure (NAF). Participants are directed to a website containing 15 negatively correlated options. They search as few or as many options as they want and make a choice in the category of computers.

Corroborating Study 1, the results of Study 2 demonstrate that people search more when options are nonalignable than when they are alignable. Additionally, satisfaction initially increases and then declines as search progresses among nonalignable options. As predicted, there is no such inverted U shape for satisfaction when people search among alignable options or when they search among nonalignable options with prior exposure to features. Taken together, these analyses provide support for the idea that exposure to features during search among nonalignable options drives the inverted U for satisfaction.

In summary, the results of two studies demonstrate the paradox of search, indicating that people desire to continue expending resources in search among nonalignable options even when they begin to feel worse as a result. Our findings have a number of theoretical implications for search behavior as well as option alignability. There are also significant implications for consumers hoping to maximize satisfaction with their choices and for retailers trying to determine which products to offer and what type of information to provide.

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ROUNDTABLE
How To Do (Better) Web-Based Research
Dan Goldstein, London Business School, UK

SUMMARY

Collecting data over the Internet seems like a solution to all an experimentalist's problems. Responses can be collected from the far corners of the world, from people in all walks of life. Experiments that would take months and cost thousands in person can now be carried out in days for a pittance. But ours is not an ideal world. Researchers wrestle with fickle software and participants who falsify identities, respond randomly, and worse. This roundtable gathers together seven active Web-based researchers to share tips, tricks, and long-run strategies for building, running, and maintaining an online laboratory.

The roundtable will be structured by the moderator opening seven different topics for discussion. During discussion, the seven panelists as well as members of the audience can share experiences and ask questions.

The first topic will be online lab construction, and the following questions will be opened for discussion. How have the panelists constructed their online labs? What percentage of software used is built and what percentage purchased? Which hosting companies are being used? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using various online survey companies? How are the issues of joining data and transferring responses to statistical packages being carried out?

The second topic is subject recruitment. What is the approximate size of the various panelists' pools? How were these participants recruited into the pool? How effective is advertising in building a pool? How effective is word of mouth? What is the impact of being listed? What strategies have been employed in reaching participants in other countries, of different age groups, and of different wealth levels?

Third is panel management. What percentage of emails bounce? What means are being used to clean dead entries from the database? How can a pool of participants be shared by many researchers in a department without causing conflict or ruining effects? How can one keep track of which participants have completed which studies?

Fourth comes payment. What means of payment are being used by the panelists? What are the pros and cons of direct payment, lotteries, or prizes? Are there types of studies that cannot have performance-based payment when carried out online? What means of direct payment are being employed? How best to pay participants in countries without online payment mechanisms? How can participants who wish to remain anonymous be paid?

Next comes an issue sure to get an emotional response: rule enforcement. How can we tell when participants are taking an experiment multiple times? How can we tell when participants aren't reading instructions? How can we tell when respondents are responding randomly? How can we prevent unauthorized participants from taking an experiment? How can we make sure participants take the desired path through the experiment? Is there a way to ask general knowledge questions online, where subjects have easy access to all the knowledge of the Internet at their fingertips? How can we prevent participants from sharing answers and making parts of the experiment public? What are the various kinds of "angry customers" and what is the best way to handle them?

Sixth is data cleaning. What methods can we employ for detecting random responses? What methods can we use to enforce the one-submission-per-person rule? What methods are being used

to clean data by response time? Should multiple responses per household be allowed? How can we treat incomplete surveys? At what point is a survey incomplete and at what point is it not started? Can we generate a priori rules for cleaning online data? What methods are most defensible from a journal's point of view?

Last and perhaps most importantly experimental integrity issues. How best to pseudo-randomly assign participants to conditions? How to organize and re-use blocks without compromising the flow of the participant experience? What processes of item-level randomization are being employed? Can accurate response-time data be best collected online? How should we be reporting response rates: based on emails, visits to the site, or some other measure? What techniques can be used to obtain consent and to keep data private?

There will be an opportunity at the end of the session for panelists and attendees to exchange information and discuss collaborative possibilities. A signup list will be circulated for attendees to easily exchange contact information.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Using or Losing Self Control: Antecedents of Regulatory Strength and Regulatory Depletion

Minjung Koo, University of Chicago
Angela Y. Lee, Northwestern University

SESSION OVERVIEW

Recent research on self regulation suggests that the process of self control involves various motivational, affective, and cognitive mechanisms geared toward securing the unfettered pursuit of high priority goals (e.g., Gollwitzer 1990; Kuhl 1986; Mischel 1984; Trope and Fishbach 2000). In particular, research on the limited-resource model of self control depicts self-regulation as being governed by self-regulatory resources, which are a global (meaning that they aid in all types of self-regulation) but finite pool of energy that enables self-control. Acts of self-control consume self regulatory resources and may lead to subsequent self-regulation failure. The research discussed in this session contributes to the literature by examining some important antecedents of self control. All four papers explore distinct antecedents (regulatory orientation, emotional orientation, tradeoff difficulty, and exerting cognitive control) that lead to self control success or failure. Additionally, the last two papers show unique consequences of regulatory depletion (avoiding choices, increased passivity).

In the first paper, Koo, Labroo, and Lee examine the effects of two distinct motivational systems (prevention vs. promotion regulatory orientation) on self control. Across four studies, they show that a prevention (vs. promotion) orientation enhances self control. In particular, relative to those with a promotion orientation, participants with a prevention orientation were more likely to stay focused on their goal pursuit activities. They reported having more positive thoughts related to the goal and fewer positive thoughts related to the temptation; they also anticipated greater regret from goal failure. A thought listing task also showed that goal-related thoughts were more accessible and were listed earlier than temptation-related thoughts among the prevention- vs. promotion-oriented participants.

In the second paper, Eyal and Fishbach examine the effects of two distinct affect-based self regulatory systems on self control. The authors argue that one system involves low-level, hedonic affect (e.g., happiness, sadness) that cues the pursuit of short term goals whereas the second system involves high-level, self-conscious affect (e.g., pride, guilt) that cues the pursuit of long-term goals. They demonstrate that whether people adhere to a long-term goal over a short-term temptation may depend on the emotion that is made salient. In particular, participants primed with high- vs. low-level emotions persisted longer on a handgrip task and a verbal reasoning test.

In the third paper, Novemsky, Wang, Dhar and Baumeister examine the consequences of making choices on self control by investigating the mechanism underlying depletion in making choices. Across six studies, the authors demonstrate that regulatory depletion arises not because choosing per se is difficult but because consumers have to make difficult tradeoffs between alternatives. Interestingly, consumers seem to have insight into what their choices would be when they are depleted, but have little intuition as to the depleting nature of making choices.

Whereas most research on self control examines the disinhibitory effects of self-regulatory depletion, Vohs and Gailliot argue that depletion can also produce passivity. In the final paper, they demonstrate that controlling one's attention and suppressing distracters, as opposed to not controlling attention and responding naturally, causes subsequent depletion, which in turn reduces

participants' engagement in goal-directed behaviors, increases their passivity, and reduces their creativity. Across three studies, the authors find that participants who were depleted performed poorly as a golf instructor, were more tolerant of things going wrong, and less willing to participate in a creative task.

Taken together, the four papers provide a clear illustration of the big picture of self control. Specifically, the paper by Koo et al. investigates the motivational system that is associated with making better choices in light of temptations, and the research by Eyal and Fishbach examines the affective system that is associated with better self control. Whereas both papers examine how motivational and affective systems within the individual influence self control, the paper by Novemsky et al. contributes to the literature by examining task related characteristics that impair people's ability to self regulate. Across these three papers, disinhibitory behaviors are used to illustrate the consequence of a lack of self control. However, manifestation of lack of self control is not limited to disinhibitory behaviors. The paper by Vohs and Gailliot wraps up the session by showing passivity rather than disinhibition as a key characteristic of depletion.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"Against the Odds: Prevention Focus Stands Firm in the Face of Temptations"

Minjung Koo, University of Chicago
Aparna A. Labroo, University of Chicago
Angela Y. Lee, Northwestern University

Regulatory focus theory (e.g., Higgins 1997) posits that the pursuit of higher order goals is marked predominantly by a desire for advancement and growth (promotion) or by a desire for safety and security (prevention). More recent studies showing high level construals being associated with better self control (Fujita, Trope, Liberman, and Levin-Sagi, in press) would suggest that people with a promotion focus (who tend to construe information at a high level) are more successful self-regulators. However, one could also argue that those with a prevention focus are more vigilant in their goal pursuit behaviors and thus have better self control, as demonstrated by increased task enjoyment in the presence of distractions (Freitas, Liberman, and Higgins 2002) and greater ability to suppress alternative goals (Shah, Friedman, and Kruglanski 2002). The current research tests these alternative predictions and investigates how regulatory orientation affects self control. We present evidence that supports the latter premise whereby prevention focus facilitates goal-compatible thoughts and behaviors and suppresses temptation-related thoughts and behaviors.

Experiment 1 demonstrates that participants primed with a prevention-focused academic goal that emphasizes duties and responsibilities indicate higher purchase intent for goal-compatible (professionally suited magazines) vs. goal-conflicting temptation targets (leisure magazines). The reverse was observed for those primed with a promotion-focused academic goal that emphasizes their hopes and aspirations. Experiment 2 demonstrates that participants on a diet evaluated a goal-compatible target (a health drink) presented in a prevention- vs. promotion-focused frame more favorably; whereas frame had no effect on those who were not on a diet. Experiment 3 replicates and extends the results of experi-

ments 1 and 2 by demonstrating that the effect of regulatory orientation on self control is mediated by increased positive goal-related thoughts. Undergraduate participants primed with a prevention (vs. promotion) focus using a mouse maze task also were more likely to stay focused on their goal (i.e., studying) rather than yield to temptation (i.e., taking a break with friends), even though they indicated that they would value taking the break more than promotion-primed participants. Furthermore, the results showed that positive goal-related thoughts mediated the effect of regulatory focus on choice. A thought listing task showed that goal-related thoughts were more accessible and came to mind sooner than temptation-related thoughts among the prevention- vs. promotion-oriented participants. In addition, prevention- versus promotion-oriented participants reported more regret in case of goal pursuit failure, but indicated no difference in how they felt if they were to forego the temptation. Finally, experiment 4 employed an actual choice measure and found that diet-primed prevention- vs. promotion-focused participants were more likely to choose the goal-compatible target (low fat pretzels) over the goal-conflicting temptation target (potato chips).

Taken together, these studies provide convergent evidence that self-regulatory focus influences self-control in that prevention focus leads to greater self control. People with a prevention orientation are more focused on the goal and less focused on temptations relative to those with a promotion orientation. Our results show that prevention-focused participants favored goal-related products more, have more positive goal-related thoughts, and express deeper regret in case of goal failure.

“Affect as a Cue for Self Control”

Tal Eyal, University of Chicago

Ayelet Fishbach, University of Chicago

Is the good feeling after having a rich and delicious chocolate cake the same as the good feeling after successfully restraining oneself from having fatty food while on a diet? Past research and theory on motivation and emotion commonly share the assumption that goal attainment is marked by positive affect and that part of the reason that people engage in goal related behavior is because they want to feel good (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1990; Higgins, 1997). We believe that the role of affective processes in goal pursuit is more complex and propose that the relationship between positive affect and goal attainment depends on the type of goal that is being pursued. In particular, we focus on self-control dilemmas, posing a conflict between two goals; one that has short-term benefits and another that offers long-term benefits. We propose that the attainment of both short-term goals and long-term goals is associated with positive affect. However, the quality of this affect differs for these two types of goals such that short-term goals are associated with low-level affect (e.g., happiness) and long-term goals are associated with high-level affect (e.g., pride).

Emotion researchers typically identify affective responses with low-level, concrete processing and contrast them with cognitive responses, which are considered to be more abstract, high-level (Loewenstein, 1996; Metcalfe & Mischel, 1999). We suggest a different distinction between high vs. low level of emotions, according to which higher-level emotions are those that follow the attainment of long-term goals, whereas lower-level emotions are the outcome of the attainment of more immediate goals. We further suggest that because an association is established between specific affect and goals, affect becomes a cue for the pursuit of the corresponding goal, such that high-level affect motivates the pursuit of long-term goals and low-level affect motivates the pursuit of short-term temptations.

We present data in support of two predictions of our model regarding the role of affect in self control. The first prediction of our model is that high-level affect is associated with long-term goals and low-level affect is associated with more short-term goals or temptations. In support of this prediction, participants expected a chocolate cake (representing a short-term desire) to make them feel more happy than proud. At the same time, participants expected a vegetable salad (representing the means of a long-term goal) to make them feel more proud than happy (Study 1). The first prediction of our model also implies that the same action should lead to different affective experiences when considered from the near (making the temptation more salient) and from the distance (making the long-term goal more salient). In Study 2, participants with an accessible health goal who chose chocolate over baby carrots, reported feeling more happy than proud while eating the chocolate than while evaluating their choice later on. However, those who chose baby carrots over a chocolate bar reported feeling more proud than happy after a while than while having the carrots.

Finally, our model suggests that these two affective systems have motivational consequences for situations in which long term goals conflict with more specific, short term goals, like in self control dilemmas. We propose that since people associate actions with specific types of affect, this affect serves as a cue for engaging in an action that would result in the equivalent experience. Thus, we propose that low-level affective cues motivate succumbing to temptations whereas high-level affective cues motivate adhering to long term goals. Support for this prediction comes from two studies. In Study 3, participants with an accessible achievement goal were primed with either positive high level affective terms (e.g., pride, self-worth) or positive low level affective terms (e.g., happiness, pleasure) via a lexical decision task. We then measured the time they spent on completing a difficult verbal reasoning test. We found that participants who were primed with high-level affective terms exercised more self control by persisting longer on a difficult task than participants who were primed with low-level affective terms. Study 4 found similar results using a different self control measure. In this study participants with an accessible health goal were primed with positive high level affective terms or positive low level affective terms using the same lexical decision task as in Study 3. We then measured participants' ability to resist temptation by means of the number of chocolates they chose from a bowl of chocolates. Here, again, participants who were primed with high-level affect exerted more self control by taking less chocolate than those who were primed with low-level affect.

Taken together, our findings support the existence of two distinct affective systems in self regulation and demonstrate its implication to self control dilemmas. We show that low level, hedonic emotions are associated with short-term goals whereas high-level, self conscious emotions are associated with long-term goals. These associations have consequences for behavior such that high-level affect cues self control and low-level affect cues succumbing to temptations. We believe that the proposed model sheds light on the complex and unique functions of emotions as self regulatory feedback for goal pursuit.

“Self-control, Depletion and Choice”

Nathan Novemsky, Yale University

Jing Wang, Yale University

Ravi Dhar, Yale University

Roy Baumeister, Florida State University

Recent research by Baumeister and colleagues has revealed that individuals have a limited pool of resources available for exerting self-control (Baumeister 1998). One important task that

requires self control is choice. Baumeister and colleagues have shown that making choices can deplete one's self-control resources. We follow up this research by examining why choices are depleting and the effects of depletion in successive choices.

In our first study, we examine a real choice between a chocolate bar and a granola bar. We find that individual leaving the library are more likely to choose a chocolate bar (80%) over a granola bar than individuals entering the library (50%). We propose that this occurs because studying in the library requires self-control and therefore depletes self-control resources. When faced with a choice between a healthy and a tasty snack, choosing the healthy snack also requires self-control. Since those leaving the library have less self-control available when making the choice they are less likely to resist the chocolate bar.

The choice observed in study 1 could be the result of several differences between those entering and leaving the library. For example, those leaving the library could be more depleted of blood sugar and choosing the chocolate bar to quickly replace that blood sugar. In study 2, participants chose between high-brow and low-brow movies to see on a weekend that is several days away, a choice that is not relevant to immediate consumption. High-brow movies typically offer less immediate pleasure (or even some pain), but provide long-term benefits in the form of educational or cultural enrichment. Low-brow movies fall more into the temptation category because they are fun but forgettable (Read and Lowenstein, 1999). We expected that choosing a high-brow movie would require self-control and we found that participants were more likely to choose this type of movie when entering (72%) as compared to leaving the library (11%). This finding reveals that depletion can affect choices whose outcomes will only be experienced later (presumably after the current depleted state is dissipated). This study also suggests that study 1 was the result of depletion rather than some other immediate need that may have been more pronounced for those leaving the library.

In subsequent studies we further examine how one choice can affect subsequent choices through the depletion of self-control. In study 3, we have half of our participants make several choices between similar items (e.g. between two different pens, two different snacks). The remaining participants saw the same set of items, but instead of choosing, their task was to determine whether they had used each product in the last year. All participants then faced a choice among a set high-brow and low-brow movies, as in study 2. We found that many more participants chose a low-brow movie among those whose first task involved choice (40%) than among those whose first task did not require any choosing (10%).

In study 4, we investigated what aspect of choosing is more depleting of self-control resources. Again, we use our choice among movies to measure depletion. In this study, we tried to distinguish between tradeoff difficulty and choice difficulty. Choices can be difficult because the trade-offs are difficult (e.g. I want a cheap apartment, but I also want one near school—which am I going to give up if I can't have both?) or because the options are difficult to distinguish (e.g. all these apartments are very similar, making it difficult to differentiate and choose among them). We propose that only trade-offs lead to depletion, so if we construct two choices where one involves large trade-offs and the other involves very similar options, both may be equally difficult, but the former should be more depleting than the latter. Using this design, we found that small trade-off choices were rated as slightly more difficult than large trade-off choices. However, as predicted, following the large trade-off choices, 54% chose a low-brow movie, while only 39% chose a low-brow movie following the small trade-off choices. This design provides evidence that trade-offs are a depleting aspect of

choice, beyond any effect these trade-offs have on perceived choice difficulty. This is consistent with the notion that self-control involves giving up desirable things and accepting undesirable things. That is exactly what is involved in making trade-offs in choice.

Lastly, we investigated individuals' beliefs about depletion and choice. We described several of our studies and asked participants to intuit what would happen. We found that they could intuit that studying would lead to more depletion and they also predicted that more low-brow movies would be chosen after as opposed to before studying. However, when we described the choice versus ratings study (study 3 above), and asked participants who would be more depleted and who would choose more low-brow movies, we found that they did not predict any differences in depletion, nor any difference in preference for low-brow movies. That is, participants could intuit the effects of studying on depletion and subsequent choice, but they had no idea that choices could also deplete and thereby affect subsequent choices. If individuals were made aware of the interaction of successive choices through depletion, they might avoid making decisions about temptations following other choices and increase their ability to self-regulate in situations that require such regulation.

“A Loss of Self-regulatory Resources Makes People More Passive”

Kathleen D. Vohs, University of Minnesota

Matt Gailliot, Florida State University

The current research expands upon a model that portrays self-regulation as being governed by a set of finite resources. Self-regulatory resources are used when people modify, alter, or otherwise change their responses. The supply of self-regulatory resources is depleted after being taxed by a preceding act of self-control, the result of which is that ensuing acts of self-control are less successful. The results of over 60 published experiments support the self-regulatory resource model (see Vohs, Baumeister, and Tice, in press, for a review). Temporary depletion of self-regulatory resources has been shown to elicit a variety of disinhibited behaviors, such as impulsive spending, overeating among dieters, low emotional control, and narcissistic self-perceptions (see Vohs et al., in press). Hence, when people lack the ability to maintain control, they may behave disinhibitedly, which is to say that behaviors that otherwise would be regulated are released and emerge uncontrolled.

In the current research, we investigated whether depletion of self-regulatory resources may also lead people to become more passive. A look at research in this area hints of increased passivity after self-regulatory resource depletion. In one study, for instance, after participants made a series of choices, they were more likely to dazedly stare into space than were participants who did not make choices (Vohs et al., under review). Other research suggests that a loss of self-regulatory resources results in less variety seeking, relative to when people have a full complement of self-regulatory resources (Vohs and Kim 2006). In short, we hypothesized that depletion may result in passivity, a prediction that was supported in three experiments.

In Experiment 1, participants engaged in task that either did or did not require self-regulation; subsequently, they performed a physical task that involved learning to putt a golf ball. This formed the dependent measure of physical passivity. First, participants watched a six minute video (without sound) of a woman talking (modified from Gilbert, Krull, & Pelham, 1988). In the bottom corner of the screen, words (e.g., hair, hat, pulse) appeared individually for ten seconds each. Participants in the depletion condition were instructed to focus their attention only on the woman's face

and to resist looking at the words. If they happened to look at the words, they were to immediately re-focus attention to the woman. Participants in the no depletion condition were instructed to watch the video and were given no additional instructions. The physical activity task was adapted from Pryor (1987), and involved a confederate and the participant ostensibly learning how to putt a golf ball. The confederate and participant were told that one person would act as the instructor and the other as the learner, and then they completed a rigged drawing in which the participant was assigned the role of instructor. The participant was handed instructions on how to putt and asked to use this information to teach the confederate. They were reminded that the confederate was to follow all of the instructor's directions to the best of her ability. The experimenter left the room and for the next four minutes, participants instructed the confederate how to putt. Subsequently, participants and the confederate parted, and confederate (who was blind to depletion condition) rated the participant on eight traits indicative of passivity (*active, talkative, shy, socially skilled, sensitive, aggressive, hostile*). These traits were included among other filler items. Analyses showed that participants in the depletion condition were rated by the confederate as having been more passive than participants in the no depletion condition. Differences in passivity were not due to mood differences on the part of the participants, as measured by a commonly-used questionnaire.

A second experiment also used the attention control manipulation to deplete self-regulatory resources, similar to that described in Experiment 1. The dependent measure, however, measured passivity in a new way. After watching the video of the woman talking, participants completed mood questionnaires. Then the experimenter put in a new video, and told participants that they would be answering questions about it later. Instead of playing the video, however, the television only showed a blue screen. The dependent measure of passivity was the length of time before participants alerted the experimenter of the problematic video. Analyses showed a significant effect of prior engagement in self-control. Participants who had been depleted of their volitional resources were more passive (i.e., waited longer to alert the experimenter) than participants who had not been depleted of their resources. A third experiment manipulated emotion control demands and subsequently measured passivity in the form of a building task. Participants first watched a humorous video involving a Bill Cosby standup routine to which they were either instructed to suppress their emotions or watched naturally. The former condition has been found to deplete self-regulatory resources whereas the latter does not. Subsequently, participants were given a bucket of Legos with which to build a structure. There was a stipulation, however, and it was that they were only allowed to retrieve five blocks at a time from the bucket; participants could use as many blocks as they wanted, but would have to get up and walk over to the bucket to take another five (or fewer) blocks. The dependent measure was number of blocks used, and an ancillary criterion of passivity was the creativity of the structure, as rated by the experimenter and a second person. Results showed that participants who had earlier suppressed their emotions used fewer blocks in their creations than did participants who watched the video naturally. Furthermore, depleted participants' structures were rated as less creative, relative to structures built by nondepleted participants.

In sum, a loss of self-regulatory resources can lead to passivity. This insight provides a more nuanced approach to understanding self-regulatory resources and their role in controlled and uncontrolled behavior. Future research should work to illuminate under what conditions people behave passively versus disinhibitedly when lacking regulatory resources.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Did You Know that Questioning Consumers Can Change Behavior?: New Research and Future Directions on the Question-Behavior Effect

Patti Williams, University of Pennsylvania, USA

David Sprott, Washington State University, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

Asking consumers a question about their behavior has been demonstrated to change the performance of that behavior in the future. Sherman (1980) initially demonstrated this effect by using self-predictions to alter socially desirable and undesirable behaviors. Since that time, two sets of researchers have demonstrated the importance and nature of this *question-behavior effect*. While both sets of researchers have demonstrated the real-world importance of the question-behavior effect (most often by showing questions able to influence actual behaviors), each literature stream has generated a unique set of knowledge about the phenomenon.

One group of scholars—publishing research on the mere-measurement effect—employ scaled intention measures to influence consumer-related behaviors (e.g., Chandon, Morwitz, Reinartz, 2004; Dholakia & Morwitz, 2002; Morwitz & Fitzsimons, 2004; Morwitz, Johnson & Schmittlen, 1993; Williams, Fitzsimons, & Block, 2004). These researchers have demonstrated question-behavior effects with various actions, including: first time and repeat purchase of durable and non-durable goods, product choice, transactions with and defection from service providers, flossing, drug and alcohol consumption. These researchers have proposed and found support for an attitude accessibility explanation for observed findings such that the question makes attitudes accessible which in turn guide performance of behaviors in the future.

Other researchers—referring to their work as the self-prophecy effect—use self-predictions to affect behaviors with clear social norms (e.g., Greenwald, et al., 1987; Spangenberg, 1997; Spangenberg & Greenwald, 1999; Spangenberg, et al., 2003; Sprott, Spangenberg, & Fisher, 2003). These authors have demonstrated that a self-prediction can reduce the incidence of non-normative behaviors like cheating on an exam and increase the performance of normative behaviors like health club attendance, donating to a charity, recycling, voting and gender stereotyping. These researchers contend that the effects of self-prediction are due to cognitive dissonance generated by the question. In particular, these researchers contend that the self-prediction reminds a person of failures to perform and norms associated with the behavior. Inconsistency between prior behavior and social norms creates dissonance which in turn motivates behavior change.

While much has been learned about the question-behavior effect since Sherman's seminal work 25 years ago, there are many unanswered questions. The objective of the current special session is to address (with new and unpublished research) three research questions that have not been adequately addressed in the literature:

- (1) Do question-behavior effects always lead to positive outcomes for firms who question consumers about behavior?
- (2) What types of cognitive processes are activated when someone is presented with a question about future behavior?
- (3) Are there other theoretical mechanisms underlying the question-behavior effect in addition to attitude accessibility and cognitive dissonance?

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Rethinking Drama in Consumer Culture Research

Gülnur Tumbat, Oregon State University, USA
Markus Giesler, York University, Canada

SESSION OVERVIEW

Drama permeates consumer culture. Since Deighton (1992) pioneered the study of performance in consumption and marketing, consumer researchers have extensively explored the persuasive role of drama in advertising (e.g., Deighton, Romer, and McQueen 1989; Stern 1994; Escalas and Stern 2003) and services (e.g., Grove and Fisk 1992; Price, Arnould and Tierny 1998; John 1996; Moisisio and Arnould 2005). Consumer culture theorists in turn have developed the dramatic underpinnings of consumption practices and consumer lifestyle orientations. Celsi, Rose and Leigh (1993), for instance, have analyzed consumers' dramatic worldview in the context of skydiving. Likewise, Arnould and Price (1993) have portrayed white water rafting clients and guides as dramatic performers. Belk and Costa (1998, p. 234) in turn have portrayed the mountain man rendezvous as a "drama of living." Most recently, Holt and Thompson (2005) have illustrated how American middle-class men construct themselves dramatically as "men-of-action-heroes" in mundane and improvisational consumption domains.

While these prior elaborations are most relevant to our understanding of the dramatic underpinnings of consumption practices and consumer lifestyle orientations, they also suffer from a key theoretical oversight. Underlying these prior studies is a pervasive dramatic idealism that renders the performances of consumers and marketers as surprisingly playful, harmonious, and apolitical. Consequently, prior studies fail to recognize that social actors with competing dramatic motives sometimes struggle to negotiate, and resolve certain dramatic tensions, uncertainty, and risk. Perhaps this theoretical oversight stems from the fact that consumer culture theorists have too rashly adopted the marketing perspective on drama and performance. As Holt (2002, p. 70) observed, "academic marketing theorizes away conflicts between marketing and consumers." In this view, marketing "scripts, produces and directs performances *for* and *with* consumers" (Deighton 1992, p. 362, italics added). However, by accepting this marketing cohesion as the dramatic norm, consumer researchers have tended to overstate the playful dimensions of drama and overlook cultural conflict in dramatic consumption.

The purpose of our special session is to redress this theoretical imbalance. Specifically, we seek to contribute to extant consumer literatures on performance and drama by empirically specifying cultural conflict, tensions, and contradictions in dramatic consumption, by developing a conceptual understanding of these empirical instances, and by situating these findings within the broader marketing and performance literatures. We anticipate that our discussant, Eric Arnould, will help the audience to frame, question and debate important issues such as: What is the specific role of conflict in performance? How do certain cultural tensions translate into particular dramatic narratives, roles, and behaviors? How do consumers and producers dramatically construct or modify their personal and symbolic boundaries and social roles? What is the relationship between dramatic performance, cultural legitimacy, and social identity? The presentations are arranged as presenting current investigations on the dramaturgical performances focused on different research perspectives within CCT-perspectives that situate, challenge, and extend prior drama frameworks and knowledge.

First, Markus Giesler and Marius Luedicke develop and present empirical evidence for the process of marketplace drama. Based on a five-year ethnographic investigation on the war on music downloading including interviews, historical data, and cultural observation, they develop a marketplace drama as a series of antagonistic ritualistic performances among opposing groups of consumers and producers, through which their divergent ideological goals are attained and the normative patterns of social interaction in the marketplace are changed. In addition to showing that previous attempts to look at all marketplace performances in terms of purely theatrical, purely experiential, or self-oriented dimensions miss much of what impels consumers and producers to perform, they also extend fundamental Victor Turner's (1984) social drama theory by showing that no social drama can take place outside of the systems of meanings and interpretations that guide dramatic actors in particular ideological directions.

Building on experiential consumption, Gülnur Tumbat then explores and develops how risk taking and risk management in the case of dramatic leisure consumption and its commodification play a role in characterizing and further maintaining boundaries within and across groups of participants with competing motives. She argues that ideal notions of dramatic frameworks such as liminality and *communitas* have little value in explaining the essentially complex and divisive qualities of performances of marketers and consumers in contexts where stakes are high.

Finally, Risto Moisisio and Mariam Beruchashvili reexamine cultural contradictions as fuel for drama. Focusing on the relationship between performance and identity, his research looks at the performance of the griping ritual in the Weight Watchers brand community. They argue that griping, an underappreciated social ritual in consumer research literature, constructs a vulnerable self defined by traumatic experiences of stigma insinuated childhood that wound the self. Performance of the griping ritual constructs the vulnerable self in need of therapy and outside help.

The proposed session is a timely one with particular relevance to researchers interested in the relations of drama, performance, and consumer research. This session will help these researchers to consider the value of divergent perspectives on consumer performances and dramaturgical consumption. We believe that the presentations are, in themselves, exciting studies conducted by a diverse group of consumer researchers that merit further attention and that may inspire an increased interest in the complex interrelations between marketing, consumption, drama, and performance.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"The War on Downloading: A Music Marketplace Drama in Four Acts"

Markus Giesler, York University

Marius Luedicke, York University

Although originally conceptualized in classic anthropological, sociological, and theatre studies as *performed cultural conflict* (e.g., Turner 1969; Goffman 1959; Schechner 1977), drama in consumer culture theory has been traditionally conceived of as a harmonious impression management exercise. Rooted in the marketing idea that the dramaturgical interests of producers and consumers align, this

dramatistic experiential view is underlying existing consumer culture theory on dramatic consumption (e.g., Arnould and Price 1993; Celsi, Rose and Leigh 1993; Belk and Costa 1998; Holt and Thompson 2004). Consequently, conflict as a driver of dramatic consumption has remained a rare topic in consumer research.

To redress this theoretical oversight, we advance the process of marketplace drama. A marketplace drama is defined as a series of antagonistic ritualistic performances between divergent groups of consumers and producers through which their conflicting ideological goals are attained and the patterns of power relationships in the marketplace are transformed. The empirical context of this research is the music marketplace. Using five years of ethnographic data, we explore and develop the dramatic social interactions between music downloaders and producers following the emergence of music downloading in 1999.

Our findings reveal multiple producer performances that idealize corporate music production and stigmatically link downloading with social categories of theft, crime, and defiance. Poised alongside these articulations are multiple downloader performances that demonize corporate music production and link downloading to cultural ideals of freedom and egalitarianism. In the music marketplace, antagonists' dramatic social interactions are permeated by these different cultural meanings and interpretations as well as by the need to promote or destabilize particular socially constructed systems of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions. Through their ritualistic performances, music downloaders and producers justify their particular ideological positions and locate their own source of cultural identity and power.

Conceptually, the findings of this ethnography have the potential to enrich our understanding of social drama, dramatic consumption and marketplace conflict. First, we show that previous attempts in consumer culture theory to look at all marketplace performances in terms of purely theatrical, purely experiential, or self-oriented dimensions miss much of what impels consumers and producers to perform. Second, we confirm, extend and situate extant literature on marketplace conflict. Thompson (2004, p. 173) has recently conceptualized consumer conflict as a "Sisyphian struggle against polymorphic power structures" between two groups of ideological stakeholder groups. We show that the cultural success of these standpoints is also very much driven, shaped, and constrained by dramatic considerations. Finally, we present a theoretical critique and extension of Victor Turner's classic social drama concept. Under the functionalist influence of Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown, Turner has conceptualized social drama as a mechanism to sustain a social order and to secure solidarity among its members. However, we build the alternative case that no social drama takes place outside the systems of meanings and interpretations that guide dramatic actors in particular ideological directions. This alternative view accepts that there is no clear-cut distinction between where the drama begins and the "official social order" ends. Instead the marketplace serves as the central stage on which divergent groups of social actors engage in a dramatic interplay of structure and agency to legitimate their own ideological positions of identity and power. In summary, the consumption issues presented in this presentation provide an attractive theoretical platform for developing further theoretical linkages between dramatic performance, consumption, culture, and marketplace conflict.

"Four Ds of Risky Leisure: Drama, Divinity, Deservingness, and Deliverance"

Gülner Tumbat, Oregon State University

Few studies conducted about the so-called high-risk leisure activities in consumer behavior field used a dramatic approach to understand participants' experiences. Celsi, Rose, and Leigh (1993),

for instance, investigated the "dramatic and self-enhancing" activity of skydiving. According to the authors, the Western dramatic worldview through dramatic story lines and images of dramatic behaviors constitutes the socio-cultural context for participation. They reported the hedonic and transcendental benefits as self-realization, self-transformation, and *communitas* among some others. Arnould and Price (1993) reported similar benefits and called the river rafting experience as "extraordinary" and focused on the "magical" aspects and emotional content (Arnould, Price, and Otnes 1999). Although these studies provided valuable accounts of participation by using dramatic perspectives, they embraced a quasi-utopian idealism. In doing so, they neglected the economic, political, and structural dynamics that shape and drive the performances of marketers and consumers in such contexts. In order to address this oversight, I investigated the context of high-altitude mountaineering expeditions that are characterized by risk and stress elements.

Using data from ethnographic work at the Everest base camp in the Himalayas of Nepal and 23 in-depth interviews with high-altitude climbers and guides, I present evidence that ideal notions of dramatic frameworks such as liminality and *communitas* (Turner 1969) have little value in explaining the essentially complex and divisive qualities of performances of marketers and consumers in such experiences. The consumption of high-altitude climbing is not necessarily fun, play, and pleasure but rather a complex articulation of risk taking with a style, control, and empowerment through pushing one's limits and suffering in order to achieve or maintain status and boundaries. Furthermore, the same boundaries facilitate and shape the recognizing and negotiating of risk and uncertainty over both space and time. Furthermore, although it is from a perfect (and extreme) example of an extended service encounter, the data suggest that there are no boundary-open transactions among participants and that the experience does not transcend its commercial nature. There are four identified discourses in operation that account for these differing findings. Specifically, these are (i) discourses of deservingness (e.g., who deserve to climb here?), (ii) discourses of deliverance (e.g., how is a purchased experience made into something money can't buy?), (iii) discourses of divinity (e.g., what happens when the actors act like bricoleurs when it comes to include spirituality into yet another commercial experience?), and (iv) discourses of drama (e.g., how do clients as main actors negotiate risk with the service providers as the directors of their performance?).

The findings of this ethnography have the potential to enhance our understandings of social drama and consumer/marketer performance. I show that prior studies in consumer culture theory that look at high-risk leisure experiences in terms of hedonic and transformational dimensions do not capture the competitive, contradictory, and power dimensions involved in such performances. Building on and extending these studies, I present a critique of the constraining dramatic idealism underlying their theoretical considerations. In summary, my study shows that even in an extraordinary consumption context, the ideal notions of liminality and *communitas* are not achieved as statuses, roles, and boundaries are constantly maintained and seen necessary as a way of negotiating and managing risk.

"We Just Gripe'n Gripe...That's All We Do!": Performing the Griping Ritual in the Weight Watchers Brand Community"

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In this presentation we report the findings from a study examining the performance of the griping ritual in the Weight

Watchers brand community. We extend the consumer culture theoretic (Arnould and Thompson 2005) understanding of the role that performance of ritual plays in brand communities by investigating the griping ritual in the Weight Watchers. As a form of negatively toned communication that enables members of a respective community to address a cultural problem through speech (Katriel 1991). The purpose of the griping ritual is to release frustration through expressive communication that manifests therapeutic qualities, coordinate blame, and to enforce solidarity (Katriel 1985).

To study the performance of the griping ritual, we use data collected over a two-year period focusing on the Weight Watchers brand community using observation and interviews. To triangulate across online and offline communities (Wallendorf and Belk 1989), we used a combination of online and offline observation to gain insight into the ritual aspects of the Weight Watchers members' collective communicative exchanges (e.g., Wallendorf and Arnould 1991) at Weight Watchers meetings. For the online community data, we collected data through the Weight Watchers online discussion boards (www.weightwatchers/community.com) (Kozinets 2002). We also conducted 30 interviews over two waves. In the first wave, we conducted 15 interviews with the Weight Watchers members. The purpose of the first wave of phenomenological interviews was to understand broader contours of weight loss experiences among the Weight Watchers members (Thompson, Locander, and Pollio 1989).

Our presentation highlights that the Weight Watchers brand community prospers because it harbors the performance of a social ritual of griping. Our results suggest that performances may be motivated by cultural contradictions. We show how the performance of the griping ritual enables Weight Watchers to counter cultural contradictions (Holt 2002) between the normalized thin body ideals pervading media (Richins 1991) and the overweight body images of dieters (Thompson and Haytko 1997, p. 32; Thompson and Hirschman 1995). Gripes enable Weight Watchers to construct a solution in the form of a vulnerable self, defined by traumatic experiences of stigma since childhood that wound the self. The performance of the griping ritual constructs the vulnerable self as powerless, lacking agency and suffering from addiction (Furedi 2004). Deploying the therapeutic vernacular as a cultural resource enables Weight Watchers to construct a self in need of outside help and support. Guided by our findings, we posit the Weight Watchers brand community is an opportune therapeutic institution and the facilitator of the griping ritual (Katriel 1985; Katriel and Philipsen 1981). We conclude that while cultural contradictions seem to fuel performance of a ritual as suggested by Holt (2002), Weight Watchers draw vigorously upon the therapeutic culture as a rich vernacular to develop solutions to the existential tensions they experience (Swidler 1986).

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Currency of Search: Time Versus Money

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Search is integral to consumption. Consumers search for the best products, the lowest prices, the most convenient locations and, in general, any information that can improve their consumption experience. Sometimes the currency of search is money (e.g., paying an agent to search for the best price) and sometimes it is time (e.g., spending time on websites to search for a specific product). In this research, we try to understand how search behavior varies depending on whether the currency of search is monetary or temporal.

In Stigler's (1961) seminal paper, search is analyzed as an "optimization under constraints" problem in which greater search leads to a higher likelihood of success, but involves greater costs as well. Following from this, the standard experimental paradigm is that of an individual performing a sequential search for a homogeneous good, the prices of which are assumed to be dispersed in the market with a known distribution function. Although each search has an associated cost, it can potentially lead to a better (lower) price. The overall finding from the experimental literature is that people rationally increase their search intensity when incentives to perform search are high (e.g., search costs are low). And if this were to translate to the real marketplace, one would expect to see the following: Price dispersion should be lower (reflecting high search behavior) when product prices are high (reflecting higher incentive to search). However, empirical data from naturalistic settings does not agree with this. Increase in the incentive to search does not reduce price dispersion (Carlson and Pescatrice 1980, Pratt, Wise, and Zeckhauser 1979). Furthermore, even though search costs are believed to be lower in the Internet era of "friction-free capitalism" (*The Economist*, 1997), the price dispersion in online markets is found to be comparable to that in offline markets (Brynjolfsson and Smith 2000, Schlotten and Smith 2002).

Although there could be numerous reasons for this discrepancy between the experimental and the real-world results, the current research focuses on one plausible explanation—the currency of search. Search experiments have traditionally employed a monetized value per unit search as a measure of search costs. In real-world settings, however, consumers rarely pay the costs of search in terms of money. More frequently than not, they spend time, rather than money, on activities such as searching within stores for the lowest price and scouring websites for product information. Could it be that people are less sensitive to search costs that are in terms of time (as in real-life settings) rather than money (as in experimental settings)? If it is so, that could explain why the relationship between search costs and search behavior emerges in experimental but not in real-world settings.

Relative to money, time is not as fungible or substitutable (Leclerc, Schmitt, and Dube 1995), is more ambiguous and, therefore, more prone to accommodation and rationalization (Okada and Hoch 2004), and is harder to account for, because accounting for time is not a routine activity for most people (Soman 2001). If time is indeed less concrete relative to money, consumers may be relatively less sensitive to changes in time versus money. Prior research seems to support this idea of differential sensitivity in that people have been found to be more sensitive to past investments of money than of time. This has been found in research related to sunk costs (Soman 2001) as well as in research related to satisfaction from an experience acquired by spending either time or money (Okada and Hoch 2004).

We propose that this general tendency of consumers to be less sensitive to time than to money ought to translate to search costs in the following manner. The extent of search done by a consumer is based on a tradeoff between the payoffs and the costs of increased search. Therefore, given fixed payoffs, search behavior ought to increase as the costs of search decrease. However, if the costs of search are in terms of time rather than money, people should be less sensitive to the costs. Consequently, a change in search costs should change search behavior less if those costs are that of time rather than money.

We test the above prediction in three experiments. In the first two experiments, we manipulate the currency (i.e. time vs. money) as well as the magnitude (i.e. high vs. low) of search costs and ask participants to indicate the extent to which they would like to search. The first experiment employs a moving company situation in which participants incur search costs in order to minimize their expenses on a moving company, and the second experiment employs a sequential-search experiment using a modified Bingo game in which participants incur search costs in order to maximize their payoffs. Both experiments support our prediction. Search behavior is more strongly influenced by changes in search costs that are in terms of money rather than time. A third experiment shows that this difference between time and money is not limited to search costs, but extends to search payoffs as well. Specifically, changes in the magnitude of search payoff have a greater impact when the currency of search is monetary rather than temporal.

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How Do Low-Price Guarantees Deter Consumer Price Search? The Effects of Branded Variants and Search Costs

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Retailers establish their price-images through a variety of price signals like discount frequency and magnitude, reference prices, sale signs, "loss leader" items, and every day low price policies. Because consumers usually lack complete price information in the market, they tend to use salient and accessible price cues to make store price inferences (Alba et al. 1994; Bobinski et al. 1996; Simester 1995; Urbany et al. 1988). Retailers may thus capitalize on this consumer disposition by delivering signals of low store prices. In this paper, we focus on LPG signals because they are effective signals that influence consumers' price and value perceptions, store patronage intention, and search behavior.

Compared with other price signals, LPGs have a relatively short history in the retail market; research on its implications for consumer behavior is emerging but still scarce. Previous research has examined their impacts together with a number of market-level and individual-level variables including store image, store locations, consumer search cost and price knowledge, external reference prices, and selling price levels on consumers' perceptions and search behavior (Biswas et al. 2002; Srivastava and Lurie 2001; Srivastava and Lurie 2004; Lurie and Srivastava 2005). Nevertheless, our understanding of the effects of LPGs on consumer price search is still limited. Given that LPGs have been found to discourage consumers from shopping around (Srivastava and Lurie 2001), it is important to find out what factors would attenuate this behavioral tendency. Drawing on signaling theory and information economics, we provide theoretical explanations and develop hypotheses with respect to consumers' responses to LPGs when (1) individuals' search cost differs and when (2) branded variants are present or absent in the market.

Specifically, we argue that LPGs are non-credible signals of low store prices when there are branded variants in the market. As such, when consumers perceive a LPG signal to be credible due to the absence of branded variants, they lack motivation to do price search. In contrast, when a LPG signal is perceived as non-credible due to the presence of branded variants, consumers may tend to search more. However, the effect of branded variants on consumer price search is likely to be qualified by consumers' own search cost. Therefore, it is hypothesized that the number of stores searched is less when there is no branded variant (relative to its presence) in the market. This relationship is significant when consumers bear high search cost. When consumers bear low search cost, the difference in the number of stores searched between a market with branded variants and a market without branded variants should be less pronounced or even minimal. This is because when search cost is low, consumers can afford to search more stores even though there is no branded variant in the market and the LPG signal is credible.

Ninety undergraduate business students were recruited at a major university to participate in the experiment conducted in a computer lab. Subjects were randomly assigned to individual computers and instructed to use a program that simulated cross-store price search experience. The experiment was a 2 x 2 between-subjects factorial design that manipulated individuals' search cost (low versus high) and branded variants (absence versus presence) in the market. The 2 x 2 ANCOVA results showed that search cost ($M_{High\ Cost}=4.03$ and $M_{Low\ Cost}=5.24$; $F(1, 76)=6.6$, $p<.05$) and the interaction between search cost and branded variants significantly affected the number of stores searched ($F(1, 76)=7.90$,

$p<.01$). Simple effect analyses showed partial support for the hypotheses.

This study contributes to the extant literature on LPGs in a number of ways. First, it examines the implication of a specific market condition—branded variants—for consumers' price search when they receive LPG signals in the retail market. Second, it examines the interaction effect of branded variants and individual-level search cost on consumer price search. Since the presence of branded variants can reflect market-level search cost, the latter is operationalized in the experiment in a fashion independent of individual-level search cost. Our findings show that consumers' price search in response to the LPG is dependent on their search cost and whether branded variants are present or absent in the retail market.

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Giving an “E-Human Touch” to E-Tailing: The Moderating Roles of Static Information Quantity and Consumption Motive in the Effectiveness of a Virtual Salesperson

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

An Ernst and Young study on barriers to online shopping found that the inability to talk to a salesperson and inadequacy of product information were among the most important reasons for not buying. Jupiter Research's study on online shopping behavior found that ninety percent of online shoppers wanted some sort of human interaction during the shopping process. According to an Accenture's survey of 25 top e-commerce sites, sixty-two percent of shoppers never complete their purchases due to a lack of real-time customer service. All these reports indicate that the lack of a salesperson and the consumer's inability to obtain additional information translate into lost sales for e-tailers (Raymond 2001).

Online marketers are increasingly addressing these two issues by utilizing virtual salespeople to provide product information in real time. These virtual salespeople play two roles—they provide information as well as a human touch to an otherwise impersonal online store. Although some e-tailers employ humans as virtual salespeople to assist online shoppers, others utilize more cost-effective artificial intelligence software that “chat” with the customer. For example, Coca-Cola uses “Hank” and IKEA uses “Anna”—virtual salespeople who provide online customer service. Nowadays, companies such as Kiwilogic (www.kiwilogic.com) and Oddcast (www.oddcast.com) market customized virtual salespeople that simulate human interactions.

Although virtual salespersons are increasingly adopted by e-tailers nowadays (Komiak, Wang, and Benbasat 2005), little is known about the effects virtual salespeople have on consumers' attitude toward the web site, product, and their likelihood of buying. In this paper, we examine the impact of a virtual salesperson (VS) on consumer response. We specifically examine whether the impact of the VS is moderated by the amount of static information available on the web site and consumer's consumption motive during the shopping process. We argue that when the web site has only limited static product information available, the VS can be rather useful for the consumer to obtain product information and can positively affect consumer attitude and purchase intention. On the other hand, the effectiveness of the VS as an information provider would diminish when the web site has sufficient static product information. We further propose that the “human touch” provided by the VS can positively impact consumer attitude when consumers have a hedonic consumption motive. However, when consumers have a utilitarian consumption motive, the VS can adversely impact consumer attitude and purchase intentions.

We examine our propositions in two experiments. Our results indicate that the impact of the virtual salesperson is moderated by the amount of static product information on the web site and the consumer's consumption motive. In study 1, we show that the virtual salesperson has a positive effect primarily when static product information on the web site is limited. In study 2, when detailed product information is readily available on the web site, the virtual salesperson proves detrimental when the consumer has a utilitarian consumption motive. Implications for online marketers are discussed.

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The Benefits Leader Reversion Effect: How a Once Preferred Product Can Recapture Its Standing

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The current work makes a qualitative distinction between preferences that result from learning about product prices versus those that result from learning about product benefits. In a binary choice setting, we posit that consumers who prefer one option (the "leader") over another, but who adopt a deeply discounted brand as their new leader, may also maintain a preference for their pre-price leader. That is, the original leader is more appealing in terms of benefits and remains so, even though the cheaper product is preferred overall net of price. We further posit that any benefits-oriented information processed after price will transport the consumer back to benefits space, causing the benefits leader to re-emerge as the overall leader. In two studies we find evidence of benefits leader reversion, even when the information after price objectively favors the cheaper brand.

A substantial body of research suggests that decision makers establish a cognitive element associated with whichever option emerges as preferred or leading during the choice process (Beckman and Kuhl 1984; Gerard 1967; Jecker 1964; Montgomery 1983; Russo, Meloy, and Medvec 1998; Svenson 1992). This article extends the work on predecisional cognitive elements by proposing and testing for the simultaneous existence of two different leaders. One of these leaders is the benefits leader, the option that is preferred based on the information overall, absent price. The other leader is the net-p leader (net of price leader). Under a specific set of conditions, one brand can be the net-p leader, while the other is maintained as the benefits leader. In a binary choice between two brands, this can occur when a slightly preferred brand is discovered to be substantially more expensive than the other brand. That is, the originally preferred brand is the benefits leader, while the cheaper brand becomes the net-p leader.

We expect that consumers who switch from a brand that has better benefits (benefits leader) to a cheaper brand (the net-p leader) will retain the benefits leader in memory. We further expect that this benefits leader will exert a gravitational pull on the predecisional processing of benefits-based information encountered after the price information. Specifically, we hypothesize that consumers who see additional non-price information about the choice options after price will revert to their benefits leader as their overall preferred option, even if the new information objectively favors the net-p leader. We examine these hypotheses in two studies.

In study 1, participants ($n=64$) made a choice between two resort hotels for spring break. The price attribute, which revealed one of the hotels was 20% cheaper than the other, was the fifth attribute in a six attribute sequence. Of the 64 participants, 18 exhibited a leadership pattern that qualified them for testing the benefits reversion hypothesis. Specifically, 18 participants switched to the cheaper hotel as a result of price. Twelve of these 18 participants (66.6%) switched back to their benefits leader after the last attribute, a proportion significantly greater than the normative proportion benchmark ($z=2.03, p<.05$). Importantly, these 18 participants were not more likely than other participants to exhibit leadership reversals before the price attribute.

Study 2 was designed to replicate study 1 and to test whether reversion to the benefits leader would occur even when the last attribute favored the cheaper hotel. To this end, we used the same stimuli from study 1, with one exception—the last attribute was

designed so that it diagnostically favored the cheaper brand. Our data revealed that 16 of the 50 participants in this study adopted the cheaper brand as their new leader after seeing the price attribute. As in study 1, a majority of these ($n=11$, or 68.8%) switched back to their benefits leader after the last attribute, even though this benefits based attribute favored the cheaper brand. This proportion was significantly greater than the normative benchmark for study 2 (28.3%; $z=3.59, p<.001$). Again, no individual differences in pre-price switching rates were found.

Two studies revealed that a majority of those who switched from their benefits leader to a cheaper option switched back to their benefits leader upon reading new non-price information. In study 2, a majority reverted back to their benefits leader even though the last attribute objectively favored the currently leading net-p leader (i.e., the cheaper option). These results have implications for pricing strategy, sales closing techniques, and the design of comparative advertising. They also have theoretical implications for the role of price as an attribute. Namely, most choice models of consumer behavior (e.g., conjoint analysis) do not afford unique status to price beyond suggesting that it should be given adequate weight to reflect its universal importance. Our findings suggest that price, as an attribute, should be treated as a unique entity.

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The Brand Anchoring Effect: A Judgment Bias Resulting from Brand Awareness and Temporary Accessibility

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Introduction

Anchoring refers to a biased judgment on a stimulus based on the initial assessment of another stimulus and the insufficient adjustment away from that initial assessment. Previous research indicates that anchoring seems to be a general phenomenon, underlying a wide variety of processing strategies (Epley and Gilovich 2001; Johnson and Puto 1987; Tversky and Kahnemann 1974). Every time when individuals form an impression or an image about a stimulus while another stimulus is present, these impressions may be subject to anchoring effects.

Consumers regularly form images about brands and compare brands to other brands. We therefore propose that there will be an anchoring effect in image impressions about brands—a phenomenon that we will refer to as “the brand anchoring effect.” The brand anchoring effect can be investigated, for example, in the context of co-branded identities (e.g., cellular phones offered by the brand alliance Sony Ericsson). We propose that in these co-branding cases, one constituent stimulus (Sony or Ericsson) may serve as an anchor and affect the image structure of the co-branded identity (Sony Ericsson) as a whole. We test the brand anchoring effect in three studies, identifying characteristics of the co-branded entities that lead to one of the constituent entities to become the anchor. We derive our hypotheses on the basis of the Selective Activation, Reconstruction, and Anchoring (SARA) model (Pohl, Eisenhauer, and Hardt 2003), which is specifically designed to explain anchoring effects, and the customer-based brand equity model (Keller 1993, 2003).

Theoretical Background

The SARA model assumes that when individuals are asked a question that requires a judgment (e.g., what is the brand personality of the co-branded identity?), they utilize available images about the “information units” in long term memory (such as an image of the brand associations of a constituent brand). Each judgment is associated with a number of images of the brands and the SARA model specifies which “information units” are chosen as an anchor. Specifically, the selection of the anchor and the direction of the judgment bias depend on distinct characteristics of internally represented brand knowledge. Once a brand has been selected as an anchor, it will bias the co-branded identity in such a way that its knowledge structure will be closer to the anchor brand than the other constituent brand.

Consistently with the SARA model, it has been shown in a wide range of domains, such as information integration theory (e.g., Fazio and Williams 1986), the accessibility-diagnostics framework (e.g., Feldman and Lynch 1988), brand alliances (e.g., Simonin and Ruth 1998), and in research on priming, that the accessibility of information has a strong influence on judgments. In the context of branding, Keller (1993) identifies brand awareness as one of the most important factors for retrieval of information about the brand. Thus, following the SARA model and the brand alliance study by Simonin and Ruth (1998), we predict that brands with a high level

of awareness in a co-branded identity are more likely to be anchors than those with low awareness.

Method

To test our hypothesis about the brand anchoring effect, we conducted three studies (each $n=80$) with fictitious brand alliances of existing brands from three different product categories. In studies 1 and 2, respondents evaluated the alliances and the constituent brands on Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale. We conclude that an anchoring effect was present or not, based on standard similarity measures (D , X , and q correlation) that compare the profiles of constituent brands with the brand alliance.

Study 1

In study 1, we tested two brand alliances that either consisted of two toothpaste brands with different levels of unaided awareness (high/low) or similar levels of awareness. The results support our assumption: The judgment of the brand alliance was based on the brands with the higher level of brand awareness. In contrast, in the similar-brand-awareness condition, none of the brands served as an anchor.

Study 2

Study 2 was designed to replicate the brand anchoring effect of high vs. low awareness for a new product category (chocolate). In addition, we tested whether or not we would observe anchoring effects for strong image brands (relative to weak image brands) when the awareness levels of both brands in the alliance are at comparable high levels.

Our results provided a replication of the brand anchoring effect of high (vs. low) awareness brands. However, when both alliance constituents have high awareness, independent of brand strength, none of the brands served as an anchor.

Study 3

In study 3, we addressed the key question of *how* brand awareness creates a brand anchoring effect. Following the SARA model, it is available information that provides retrieval cues, and therefore for awareness to produce anchoring effects, brand awareness should make information more available. Thus, we manipulated brand awareness and the availability resulting from it, rather than just measuring it (as in the previous two studies). Respondents were exposed to two different packaging designs for the brand alliance Milka Uncle Ben's, offering a crispy rice chocolate cereal. The package design either provided predominantly Milka related brand elements (e.g., color) or predominantly Uncle Ben's related design elements.

As expected, the profile in the Milka focused design was closer to Milka than Uncle Ben's whereas the profile of the Uncle Ben's focused design was closer to Uncle Ben's. These results confirmed that the packaging design made Milka brand-related information more available when the design first brought to mind Milka. In contrast, it made Uncle Ben's brand-related information more available when the design first brought to mind Uncle Ben's.

Conclusion

Taken together, the results of the three studies confirm our overall prediction: brand-related information, once made available, can result in a brand anchoring effect in the judgment of a co-branded entity. Brand-related information may be permanently more available in high awareness brands; alternatively, it can be made more available temporarily by presenting the co-branded entity in a particular way. Future research should examine possible moderators of the brand anchoring effect, such as brand name order in the alliance or product category fit, and how these factors influence the selection of the brand anchor.

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Brands as Categories: Graded Structure and Its Determinants

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ABSTRACT

As a result of many years of brand leveraging by marketers many brands now consist of multiple products sharing a single brand name. An outcome of this is that one of the ways that consumers' product information is likely to be organized is as brand categories.

Although these groups of related products are alternatively referred to as "umbrella brands," "brand portfolios," and "family brands," since it is the goal of this paper to investigate the nature of these groups as cognitive structures, the term brand categories is used. There are other possible organizations of consumer knowledge (e.g., by product categories, consideration sets, usage situations, etc.) however, the growing importance of brand categories to practitioners and academics alike suggests that brand organization is increasingly relevant. This research focuses on the structure of brand categories by specifically examining a number of alternative determinants of graded structure in two existing brand categories.

A series of surveys were used in order to collect individuals' perceptions of the two focal brand categories. Analysis of variance, factor, correlation, and regression analyses were all used to examine the internal structure of the brand categories. Analyses confirmed that brand categories do in fact possess graded structure as do the majority of other previously identified categories. The data suggests that all of the determinants of typicality that were examined (ideals, familiarity, frequency-of-instantiation, attribute structure, coherence) were highly correlated and closely related to overall typicality judgments. Further analyses suggested that both coherence and familiarity/frequency-of-instantiation were the best determinants of subjects' typicality ratings in the two brand categories examined here. The findings for the coherence measure were particularly interesting as this variable has rarely been empirically examined as a possible determinant of typicality judgments prior to this research. Significantly, this measure performed as well as other determinants that have been looked at in prior studies. Finally, as has been found in past research, the typicality of individual products in both brand categories was positively related to overall attitudes for the individual products. Theoretical and managerial implications of the findings are discussed.

It is now common for companies to have a series of products, more or less related, that are on the market under a single brand name. For example, Haagen-Dazs started out with a single product—premium ice-cream—but through a series of extensions and licensing agreements, now offer an array of products under the Haagen-Dazs brand name including frozen yogurt, sorbets, ice-cream bars, frozen yogurt bars, sorbet bars, and even liqueur. This market phenomenon suggests that one of the ways that consumers' product information is likely to be organized is as brand categories (e.g. Barone and Miniard, 2002; Boush and Loken, 1991; Boush et al., 1987; Cowley and Mitchell, 2003; Lee and Sternthal, 1999; Park, Milberg, and Lawson, 1991; Wanke, Bless, and Schwarz, 1998). Brand categories have also been labeled "umbrella brands," "brand portfolios," and "family brands". However, since it is the goal of this paper to investigate the nature of these groups of products as cognitive structures, the term brand categories will be used. Although there are other possible organizations of consumer knowledge (e.g., by product categories, consideration sets, usage situations, etc.) the growing importance of brand categories to practitioners and academics alike suggests that brand organization is in-

creasingly relevant. This research focuses on the structure of brand categories by specifically examining a number of alternative determinants of graded structure in two existing brand categories.

BRAND CATEGORY STRUCTURE

Cognitive structure is a hypothetical construct referring to the organization of concepts in memory. Structures in memory influence whether a particular piece of information will receive attention, and if so, the manner in which it will be encoded, organized, and subsequently retrieved. They also function as interpretive frameworks and thereby influence evaluations, judgments, predictions and inferences; and finally, overt behavior (Markus and Zajonc 1985).

Brand Category Graded Structure

A common characteristic of categories is their internal organization in a graded structure (Mervis and Rosch 1981). Graded structure means that a category consists of a continuum of category membership, ranging from typical (prototypical) members through unclear cases to prototypical nonmembers (Barsalou 1982). Typicality ratings predict performance in a wide variety of tasks, including categorization, remembering, naming, or reasoning about a concept's instances, with better performance associated with more typical instances (Barsalou 1992). Additionally, past research has suggested that an exemplar's typicality is related to overall attitudes towards the exemplar (Barsalou 1983, 1985; Loken and Ward 1990; Nedungadi and Hutchinson 1985) with more typical exemplars being more highly evaluated.

One of the important implications of graded structure, in the context of brand categories, is that typical instances of a category are used more often as cognitive reference points in comparisons (Mervis and Rosch 1981). This implies that if brand categories do possess the property of graded structure, the most typical products in the category may play a relatively larger role in how consumers think about the brand. Product categories have been shown to have graded structure with characteristics of both goal derived and taxonomic categories (Loken and Ward 1990) as have brand categories consisting of existing and hypothetical products (Boush 1988). In the context of brand categories, graded structure implies that some products are more representative of a brand name than are others (Boush and Loken 1991; Loken and John 1993).

Conceptually, it is possible that brand categories may be different from other types of categories with respect to graded structure. Boush (1993) noted that applying a common brand name to products differs from the way names are applied to objects in common taxonomic categories. Categorization of objects in common taxonomic categories frequently involves making the categorization decision ("Is it a member of category X?") after observing its characteristics. Unlike members of taxonomic categories, a branded product is categorized as a member of the brand category from the outset simply by being labeled with the brand name. When consumers see a branded product, they are essentially told that it is a member of an existing brand category. Other research has shown that how objects are grouped or organized together can influence which properties are used in judgments of the similarity of the objects (Tversky 1977). A specific grouping may determine the similarity of the objects in the group, rather than similarity judgments about the objects determining the grouping or classification. This suggests that grouping a set of products under a common brand

name may influence the selection of the particular properties that are attributed to the brand category (i.e., determine the dimensions of similarity that make the products cohere or fit, cf. MacInnis, Nakamoto and Mani 1992) and to some degree form the basis for categorization. As a result, because the products are by definition grouped together as “Brand X products,” all products sold under that brand name may be perceived as equally good, or typical, members of the brand category. Their organization under a common brand name may influence which properties are used to judge their similarity and select “common” features that individuals then use to “explain” the brand category. For example, because a wide range of products like athletic shoes, socks, t-shirts, hats, etc., are all sold and labeled as “Nike products,” consumers may attribute specific properties to the brand based on this grouping (e.g., “sportiness”) and view all of the products as highly similar on this dimension and therefore equally good examples of the Nike brand category.

However, it is more likely that brand categories have the property of graded structure with the typicality of products in a brand category determined by factors that have been identified as relevant to other categories (e.g., attribute-structure, ideals, coherence, familiarity).¹

In order to investigate the graded structure of categories, researchers have attempted to define some of the determinants of typicality. Frequently used measures that have been examined as possible determinants of global typicality ratings (e.g., Hampton and Gardiner 1983; Loken and Ward 1990) include: familiarity and frequency-of-instantiation (Barsalou 1985; Hampton and Gardiner 1983; Loken and Ward 1990; Martin and Stewart 2001; Read, Jones, and Miller 1990), attribute-structure (Loken and Ward 1987, 1990), ideals (Barsalou 1985; Martin and Stewart 2001; Read et al. 1990), coherence (Dawar and Anderson 1994). More recently, Viswanathan and Childers (1999) developed an alternative measure of product category gradedness based on fuzzy-set theory. A brief description of these measures is presented in the next section.

Determinants of Typicality

Familiarity. Past research has been mixed in finding that familiar exemplars are perceived as more typical than unfamiliar exemplars. Familiarity is measured in a category-free context in contrast to the frequency of instantiation measure described below. Barsalou (1985) found that familiarity was not a significant determinant of the graded structure of either taxonomic or goal-derived categories, Loken and Ward (1990) found that it was positively related to typicality for some product categories, while other researchers have found a significant positive relationship (e.g., Hampton and Gardiner 1983). Because of the unique characteristic of brand categories, familiarity may be an important determinant of their graded structure.

Frequency of Instantiation. Frequency of instantiation refers to a measure of the frequency with which people have experienced a particular exemplar as a member of a particular category, rather than a measure of the absolute frequency with which an exemplar is experienced and has been proposed as a more appropriate determinant of typicality than familiarity (Barsalou 1985). Exemplars that appear more frequently should have greater influence on the representation of the category and therefore typicality judg-

ments (Barsalou 1985). Research using this measure has found it to be a significant determinant of graded structure (Barsalou 1985; Loken and Ward 1990).

Ideals. Barsalou (1985) defined ideals as characteristics that exemplars should have if they are to best serve a goal associated with their category and found that they were an important determinant of graded structure in both common taxonomic and goal-derived categories. Loken and Ward (1990) demonstrated that ideals were a significant determinant of the graded structure of product categories (see also Read et al. 1990). Brand categories may also be structured by ideals since consumers may view a brand as a means to an end or associate it with a particular function, and typicality judgments may reflect the likelihood that a product will help achieve the consumption goal (cf. Broniarczyk and Alba 1994), as e.g., Lysol products and a “disinfectant” goal.

Attribute-Structure. The attribute-structure measure is based on the view that consumers judge the typicality of a product less by its family resemblance to other products and more by the degree to which the product has salient attributes related to the goals or uses of the category. The measure is assumed to encompass a more complete set of beliefs rather than a single ideal. Loken and Ward (1987, 1990) found that attribute-structure is particularly relevant to product categories in which graded structure was a function of salient beliefs about the member’s utility to consumers.

Coherence. Coherence, a measure used previously in brand extension research (Dawar and Anderson 1994), refers to how logical individual products are, and how much sense they make, as members of the brand category. This measure may be an important determinant of graded structure in the context of branded products. It attempts to assess consumers’ perception of the coherence (Lakoff 1987; Dawar and Anderson 1994; Medin and Wattenmaker 1987) of the brand category, or the extent to which the collection of products make sense under the brand name. This measure may account for consumers’ theories (cf. Murphy and Medin 1985) about why a group of products are sold under a particular brand name. The coherence measure focuses on “explanation” as a key variable in categorization decisions (Rips and Collins 1993). Because brand categories are essentially created and defined by marketers, coherence may be a particularly appropriate measure for accounting for consumers’ judgments about product typicality. Those products that make sense or are logical, given a consumer’s theory about what the brand means, may be viewed as the brand category’s most typical members.

Prior Consumer Research on Category Structure

Earlier research examined the determinants of typicality in product categories (Loken and Ward 1990, see also Viswanathan and Childers 1999) and demonstrated that new brand extensions vary in their typicality with respect to a brand category (e.g., Boush and Loken 1991; Loken and John 1993). Boush (1988) did measure the typicality of products in existing brand categories, however, it only examined a few (2-3) existing products in addition to a group of hypothetical products not sold by the brand. This research replicates and expands these results by considering the graded structure of existing products in real brand categories. In addition to confirming the existence of a graded structure for the exemplars within each brand category, it also addresses the ability of individual measures identified in previous work to predict global measures of typicality (cf. Loken and Ward 1990). Finally, because past research has demonstrated that an exemplar’s typicality is related to overall attitude towards the exemplar (Barsalou 1983, 1985; Loken and Ward 1990; Nedungadi and Hutchinson 1985), this relationship is examined as well.

¹In addition to research showing that different brand extensions vary in perceived typicality, some researchers have claimed that no categories have been discovered to date that do not have this property (Barsalou and Sewell 1985).

STUDY & EMPIRICAL RESULTS

All participants were undergraduate students enrolled in introductory marketing courses who participated as a class requirement. A series of pretests were conducted in order to develop the stimuli used in the main study.

Pretest 1. The first pretest was used to choose two existing brand categories that were familiar to participants and which consisted of a reasonable number of products currently sold in the local area under the brand name. A survey of local grocery, drug, and discount stores as well as of magazines, local newspapers, and *Consumer Reports*, was used to generate a list of eight potential brand categories. Thirty-nine respondents completed Pretest 1. Twenty of the respondents listed "as many of the specific products that you are aware of that are sold under the brand name" for four of the brand names. They then rated the typicality of the individual products for the other four brand names on an 11-point scale from "not at all typical" to "extremely typical." The other 19 respondents completed the same tasks for the brands in the opposite order. Finally, all respondents rated their familiarity with "products sold with the brand name" for each of the eight brand names on an 11-point scale from "never heard of them" to "extremely familiar". Based on the average number of products listed in the open-ended questions, the rated typicality of the individual products in the brand category, and the familiarity with the brand name, the Haagen-Dazs and Levi's brand categories were chosen. Each were familiar to most individuals and had a reasonable number of products (Haagen-Dazs=8; Levi's=12) that varied in perceived typicality.

Pretest 2. A second pretest was conducted to obtain a list of ideals and attribute beliefs, for each of the brand categories selected in Pretest 1. Ideals were selected by asking a sample of 29 participants to "list your goals or purposes for purchasing the following brand name". Two ideals for each category were chosen by taking the most frequently mentioned goals or purposes, mentioned by at least 34% of respondents (cf. Loken and Ward 1990).

This pretest sample also was used to develop the attribute dimensions used in the attribute-structure measure in the main study. Specifically, they were asked to list the "positive and negative attributes, qualities, or characteristics of this brand name that would increase (or decrease) your chances of purchasing one of its products." The most frequently mentioned attributes, mentioned by at least 39% of respondents, were used to form four belief statements for Haagen-Dazs and five for Levi's.

Graded Structure Measures and Data Collection Procedure. Four separate sets of respondents (total N=231) were used for the graded structure data collection. For each set of measures, the most typical individual product (based on Pretest 1 results) was presented first with the remaining products in the brand category presented in random order. This was done in order to anchor each person's judgments on the same prototypical product. Individuals were informed that all products in the survey were real products sold in the area.

The first set of 56 respondents provided global measures of typicality for each individual product in the two brand categories. Typicality was measured on two scales: typicality and representativeness. Subjects rated each product on a scale ranging from 0 (not at all typical of Brand X products) to 10 (extremely typical of Brand X products) and a scale ranging from 0 (very unrepresentative of Brand X products) to 10 (very representative of Brand X products). Instructions were adapted from Loken and Ward (1990) and Hampton and Gardiner (1983).

A second set of 56 respondents provided measures of familiarity and frequency of instantiation for the two brand categories. Familiarity was measured on scales ranging from 0 (not at all familiar) to 10 (extremely familiar). Instructions explained that:

"You should judge how familiar you are with the specific product not just with the brand name." The frequency of instantiation measure was adapted from the procedure used by Loken and Ward (1990). It was measured by asking the same respondents to rate how frequently they encountered each category member (product), in stores, advertisements, at a friend's, as a member, or example, of the category (made up of all the products sold under the brand name) on scales ranging from 0 (not at all frequently) to 10 (extremely frequently). Instructions noted the difference between this measure and the familiarity judgments. As in Loken and Ward (1990), respondents rated the two brand categories on both measures in order to increase the likelihood that they would discriminate between the two tasks.

The ideals and attribute-structure measures were completed by a third set of 58 respondents. Each rated (i) the extent to which category members fulfilled each ideal on scales ranging from 0 (very low amount) to 10 (very high amount), and (ii) the likelihood that each product possesses each attribute on scales ranging from 0 (extremely unlikely) to 10 (extremely likely). An attribute structure score for each individual product was computed by summing across the belief ratings for each subject.

A fourth set of 61 participants completed the coherence and attitude measures for the brand categories. Based on the definition described above, individuals were asked to decide "whether each product makes sense to you, or is logical, as a product of each brand name." Coherence was measured on two scales, the first ranging from 0 (makes no sense as a Brand X product) to 10 (makes a great deal of sense as a Brand X product), the second ranging from 0 (is very illogical as a Brand X product) to 10 (is very logical as a Brand X product). The same participants reported their attitude towards each product in the brand categories on three 0-10 evaluative semantic differential scales (unfavorable/favorable, very negative/very positive, poor/excellent).

All measures were averaged across individuals to provide an overall rating for each individual product. Each of the multiple item measures (typicality, coherence, attitude) were summed to form composite scales. The resulting scales (TYPIC, COHER, ATTIT) were assessed to ensure their reliability. For the 8 Haagen-Dazs products, the average coefficient alpha for the TYPIC measure was .89 (range: .798 to .960), for the 12 Levi's products, the average was .92 (range: .786 to .964). For the COHER measure, the average was .98 (range: .955 to .994) for the Haagen-Dazs products and .98 (range: .955 to .997) for Levi's. Finally, for the ATTIT scale, the average was .97 (range: .947 to .997) for the Haagen-Dazs products and .98 (range: .975 to .990) for the Levi's products.

Graded Structure Results

Analysis of the data focused on confirming that the brand categories do possess a graded structure (Barsalou 1983, 1985) and in determining which measures are the best determinants of this structure. The typicality ratings for the individual products in the two brand categories were analyzed in a one way repeated measure analysis of variance with the products as a within subjects factor. The results indicate that the individual products in both brand categories varied in subjects' perceptions of their typicality, with the products factor significant at $p=.000$ in both multivariate and univariate tests for both categories. Follow-up comparisons were conducted on the individual products in each category (see Table 1). The Haagen-Dazs brand category is characterized by a single prototypical product (ice cream), while jeans are clearly the prototypical product in the Levi's brand category. There was clear evidence of graded structure in both brand categories. The individual products represented a significant range of perceived typicality ratings.

TABLE 1
Individual Product Typicality Rating Means

Levi's			Haagen-Dazs	
jeans	9.29 ^a		ice cream	8.47 ^a
jean jacket	8.10 ^b		ice cream bar	7.58 ^b
jean shorts	7.82 ^{bc}		frozen yogurt	6.25 ^c
denim shirt	7.31 ^{cd}		frozen yogurt bar	5.89 ^c
jean vest	6.38 ^{cd}		sorbet and cream	5.68 ^c
t-shirt	5.69 ^{cd}		sorbet	5.56 ^c
flannel shirt	5.20 ^{fg}		sorbet bar	5.41 ^c
sweatshirt	5.15 ^{fg}		liqueur	2.55 ^d
belt	4.37 ^g			
socks	3.01 ^h			
polartec vest	2.59 ^h			
wallet	2.47 ^h			

Products sharing a superscript are not significantly different in pairwise comparisons ($p < .05$)

A series of correlation, factor, and regression analyses were conducted to investigate the relationships between the determinants, typicality, and attitude (cf. Loken and Ward 1990). Table 2 presents the correlation matrix between the typicality and attitude measures and the six potential determinant measures for the 20 products in the two brand categories. First, it is clear that all of the measures are highly related, with slightly higher correlations in the Levi's brand category. Although past research has found distinctions between the various determinants of typicality investigated in this study, for these stimuli all of the determinants appear to be highly related to perceived typicality. The measure with the lowest simple correlation with typicality was the attribute structure measure, and it was still a highly significant .832. Correlations between the various determinants were also high. For example, in this sample, measures of frequency-of-instantiation (FOI) and familiarity (FAMIL) are virtually indistinguishable ($r = .994$). Additionally, ratings of the two ideals measures were highly correlated ($r = .963$). To further examine these findings, a factor analysis (principal components, varimax rotation) was conducted. A single factor, accounting for 88.9% of the variance in the data, was extracted. All of the individual measures loaded on this factor with typicality and all factor loadings were above .89.

Although it was apparent that each of these measures was highly related to typicality in these brand categories, further analyses were conducted in order to examine their relative contributions. Because of the very high correlations between the FOI and FAMIL and two Ideals measures, each of these pairs was combined for the remaining analysis (FAMFOI and IDEALS). The four variables (COHER, FAMFOI, IDEALS, Attribute Structure) were entered in a regression with typicality as the dependent variable. The overall regression equation was highly significant ($F(4,15) = 217.24$, $R^2 = .983$, Standard Error = .295) and the two significant predictors were the COHER ($\beta = .524$) and FAMFOI ($\beta = .358$) measures.

Although these results should be interpreted with caution, there is some evidence that for these brand categories, the more an individual product makes sense, or is logical, as a member of the brand category, and the more familiar the product is, the more it is seen as a typical member of the brand category.

Finally, the simple correlation between TYPIC and ATTIT was a highly significant .879 (.862 and .954 in the Levi's and Haagen-Daz's brand categories respectively), replicating the relationship found for these two measures in past research (Barsalou 1983, 1985; Loken and Ward 1990; Nedungadi and Hutchinson 1985). In the two brand categories examined in this study, the typicality of a product is highly related to its evaluation.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The results confirmed that brand categories do in fact possess graded structure as do most other previously identified categories. There were significant differences in the rated typicality of the individual products in both of the brand categories examined in this research. There were different patterns of typicality ratings for the products in the two brand categories, but it did not appear that there was a simple division between typical and less typical products. For example, Haagen-Dazs had an extremely prototypical product (ice cream) and a very atypical product (liqueur) with the remaining six products all viewed as moderately typical. The Levi's brand category consisted of products with a broader range of typicality ratings. Clearly, consumers judge certain products to be better examples of a brand category than others.

The data suggests that all of the determinants of typicality that were examined were closely related to typicality judgments. Further analyses suggested that both coherence and familiarity/frequency-of-instantiation were the best determinants of subjects' typicality ratings in the two brand categories examined here, however, these results must not be overstated given the high

TABLE 2
Correlations: Typicality, Attitude, and Individual Determinant Measures

Levi's (N=12 products)

	TYP	COH	FAM	FOI	IDLS1	IDLS2	ATST
Typicality (TYP)	--						
Coherence (COH)	.974	--					
Familiarity (FAM)	.974	.931	--				
Frequency of Instantiation (FOI)	.973	.918	.995	--			
Ideals 1 (IDLS1)	.938	.923	.908	.899	--		
Ideals 2 (IDLS2)	.955	.939	.915	.907	.983	--	
Attribute Structure (ATST)	.857	.838	.874	.877	.829	.797	--
Attitude (ATTIT)	.862	.790	.907	.912	.863	.844	.857

Haagen-Dazs (N=8 products)

	TYP	COH	FAM	FOI	IDLS1	IDLS2	ATST
Typicality (TYP)	--						
Coherence (COH)	.919	--					
Familiarity (FAM)	.935	.777	--				
Frequency of Instantiation (FOI)	.902	.712	.994	--			
Ideals 1 (IDLS1)	.863	.717	.902	.885	--		
Ideals 2 (IDLS2)	.870	.669	.966	.963	.926	--	
Attribute Structure (ATST)	.775	.494	.871	.891	.800	.935	--
Attitude (ATTIT)	.954	.927	.925	.883	.717	.669	.494

* Correlations greater than .710 are significant at $p < .05$, two-tailed

correlations between all of the determinants examined and typicality. It appears that multiple determinants may influence consumers' perceptions of the typicality of products in a brand category.

The findings for the coherence measure were particularly interesting. Although this measure has been used previously in brand extension research (Dawar and Anderson 1994), and has its roots in the categorization literature in psychology (e.g., Lakoff 1987; Murphy and Medin 1985), it has never been empirically examined as a possible determinant of typicality judgments prior to this research. Significantly, this measure performed as well as other determinants that have been looked at in prior studies. The coherence measure seems particularly well-suited for studies of the graded structure of brand categories, capturing consumers' perceptions of how logical a product is, or how much sense it makes, as a member of a brand category. These judgments may be one of the best indicators of a products perceived typicality in categories which are essentially created and defined by marketers.

In the two brand categories examined here, the familiarity and frequency-of-instantiation (FOI) measures were virtually identical

($r = .994$). Chairs and firewood provide the classic example of when these two measures diverge. Most people are very familiar with chairs, but do not frequently encounter them as a member of the category firewood. It is likely that for many brand categories these two measures will be highly similar. In most situations, consumers will encounter a product as a member of the brand category. Sub-brands provide a likely exception to this generalization. Consumers may be highly familiar with Band-Aid bandages, or Nyquil medicine, but may not frequently encounter them as members of the Johnson & Johnson, or Vick's brand categories. In situations where there are multiple brand names associated with a product, and differences in the relative emphasis the names receive in marketing efforts, there may be differences between these two measures. Finally, as has been found in past research, the typicality of individual products in both brand categories was positively related to preferences (overall attitudes) for the individual products.

Developing knowledge of the relative importance of various predictors of typicality within brand categories is an important task that can be useful for brand managers in understanding consumers'

perceptions of their brands and products and for managing brand leveraging strategies. Many of the factors examined in this study may be differentially influenced by various marketing efforts, suggesting that marketers may be able to influence consumers' perceptions of the typicality of various products. This is particularly important since it was found that attitude and typicality are positively correlated in brand categories. Interestingly, the data suggest that there may be various ways for marketers to influence these perceptions. For example, a product's coherence may be affected by the effectiveness of marketing communications in convincing consumers that a product is a logical addition to the brand family. Alternatively, because familiarity/frequency of instantiation were also identified as important determinants, marketers may be able to pay less attention to the initial typicality of a new product they introduce to the brand category, instead focusing on increasing consumers' frequency of advertising exposure and product usage, which will in turn influence the product's perceived typicality (cf. Alba and Hutchinson 1987). The data suggests that marketers may be able to pursue multiple routes in influencing consumers' perceptions of the typicality of products in their brand categories.

It is possible that unlike in other types of categories (e.g., ad hoc, taxonomic) where a single, or small number of determinants account for observed typicality ratings, the typicality of individual products in brand categories are equally influenced by a wide range of factors.

Limitations

The results reported here should be interpreted in light of the fact that the research only examined two existing brand categories in a specific experimental context. The use of additional experimental paradigms and tools (e.g., reaction times) would be useful in furthering our understanding of brand category structure. It is very likely that brand categories of different sizes and composition may have characteristics that make them unique to some extent. Additionally, different contexts are likely to influence perceptions of graded structure and typicality (Barsalou 1982; Wanke, Bless and Schwarz 1998). Future research should expand the number and type of brand categories and contexts that are investigated, looking for any other important factors that may influence brand category graded structure.

After many years of pursuing brand extension strategies, many companies now have brand categories in their portfolios. It is critical for managers to understand how consumers' representations of these existing products interact and influence consumer behavior. Future research should continue to investigate brand category phenomena, acknowledging that an array of products often exist under a single brand name.

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Which Fit Do Consumers Use in Composite Brand Extensions?

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Theoretical Background

Composite Brand Extensions (CBEs) are a symmetrical co-branding arrangement where contributions of both parent brands are fully integrated (Ugla, 2004), such as SonyEricsson mobile phones and FujitsuSiemens computers. Several studies acknowledge that perceived similarity or “fit” is a core success factor for brand extensions (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Broniarczyk & Alba, 1994; Park, Milberg, & Lawson, 1991). In the Composite Brand Extension context, the role of fit may be markedly more complex. Consumers are not only confronted with an additional source of “product fit” (that between each of the parent brands and the extension product), but may also assess the fit between the two brands involved in the alliance (“brand fit”). Although several authors have suggested that different bases of fit play a role in a brand alliance context (e.g. Baumgarth, 2000; Simonin & Ruth, 1998; Ugla, 2004), little is known about the cognitive processes underlying the simultaneous evaluation of multiple fit cues.

The use of these cues is constrained by the principle of cognitive economy (e.g. Costley & Brucks, 1992; Garbarino & Edell, 1997; Park & Hastak, 1994), under which consumers are expected to exert as little cognitive effort as is necessary to accomplish a judgment task (Wyer & Srull, 1986). Therefore, they select cues that are most easily retrieved from memory, and most likely to carry the information required for the judgment task (Feldman & Lynch, 1988). Based on the accessibility-diagnostics framework, we propose a hierarchy of fit types in which the most accessible and diagnostic types of fit are given priority.

Hypotheses

Brand associations can be classified by their level of abstraction (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987; Keller, 1993). We conceptualize product fit as the association overlap between the current product categories of the parent brands and the extension product (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Brand fit on the other hand relates to the congruence between the parent brand concepts (Simonin & Ruth, 1998), such as “functional” or “prestigious” (Park et al., 1991). Cognitively, brand fit is at a higher level of abstraction than product fit. Consequently, it is both more accessible (Lynch Jr., Marmorstein, & Weigold, 1988) and more diagnostic (Menon & Raghuram, 2003) than product fit, as it provides richer, more generalizable information. We postulate that brand fit will have a stronger impact on CBE evaluations than product fit (Hypothesis 1).

Since we posit that the role of any given fit type in the evaluation process depends on its relative levels of accessibility and diagnosticity in comparison to other types of fit (Feldman & Lynch, 1988), we develop hypotheses for a three-way interaction between brand fit, product fit with parent brand A, and product fit with parent brand B. Brand fit and product fit provide complementary information, where brand fit explains the rationale behind the brands’ collaboration (Simonin & Ruth, 1998), and product fit explains why they jointly market the extension product. In line with the cognitive economy principle, we hypothesize that product fit with either parent brand will be sufficient for consumers to perceive the logic behind the alliance. The second product fit is then less diagnostic. Thus, when brand fit is present, the effect of a product fit will be

more pronounced when the other product fit is low than when it is high (Hypothesis 2a).

In the absence of brand fit information, consumers are expected to rely more extensively on product fit information. The second product fit thus becomes more diagnostic, leading to a hypothesis that is the reverse of hypothesis 2a: when brand fit is absent, the effect of a product fit will be more pronounced when the other product fit is high than when it is low (Hypothesis 2b). Together, Hypotheses 2a and 2b suggest a three-way interaction.

Method and Findings

The research design involved a 2*2*2 between-subjects factorial design, the factors being product fit A (high vs. low), product fit B (high vs. low) and brand fit (high vs. low). In line with previous research on brand alliances (e.g. Park, Jun, & Shocker, 1996; Simonin & Ruth, 1998), the stimuli consisted of existing brands and hypothetical (Composite) Brand Extensions. We conducted a series of pretests to develop and test the stimulus brands and products. In line with the research design, eight different scenarios were developed to represent the different combinations of the three fit types. Each scenario was evaluated by 30 respondents, with an effective sample size of 240. All hypotheses were analyzed by means of ANCOVA.

Our analyses support the hypotheses and reveal that brand fit occupies a central position in the evaluation process of Composite Brand Extensions. Although its main effect is more than twice as large as the effect of either product fit, brand fit is not a sufficient condition for favorable CBE evaluations. When the parent brands’ images match, product fit with either parent brand generates positive CBE evaluations. When brand fit is absent, the second product fit becomes more important. It can attenuate the negative consequences of lacking brand fit, yet it cannot fully compensate for them.

Our results generate further insight into consumer evaluation processes of brand alliances. They illustrate that consumers take multiple sources of perceived fit into account when evaluating Composite Brand Extensions. The respective role of these fit cues in the evaluation process appears to be determined by their relative levels of accessibility and diagnosticity. The central position of brand fit in this context illustrates the differences between the evaluations of simple and composite brand extensions, and emphasizes the importance of selecting an alliance partner with a congruent brand concept. Furthermore, our findings indicate that brands may gain access to unrelated markets by means of an alliance, provided they team up with a partner that has a brand concept that fits.

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508 / Which Fit Do Consumers Use in Composite Brand Extensions?

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Corporate and Product Message Effects on a Product Portfolio

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ABSTRACT

Based on a diagnosticity framework, we examine how corporate messages differentially transfer to consumers' judgments of multiple products in a company's portfolio compared with a product message. We find corporate messages influence the product portfolio, although the nature of their influence depends on message content. Corporate ability messages had stronger effects on product beliefs than corporate social responsibility messages. Both types of corporate messages had a greater influence on unknown products in the portfolio than known products, and product messages only influenced that product not other unknown products in the portfolio.

Me, Myself, and My Choices. The Influence of Self-Awareness on Preference-Behavior Consistency

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

For a long time consumers have been assumed to be rational decision makers with well-defined preferences. Experimental research, however, suggests that consumers often construct their preferences as needed to make decisions (Bettman, Luce, and Payne 1998). Consumers' tendency to sometimes switch away from their favorite choice options (Ratner, Kahn, and Kahneman 1999), as well as the subtle influence of task and context factors (e.g. Huber, Payne, and Puto 1982), lead to inconsistencies in consumers' choices.

Public self-awareness, often induced by the presence of an audience or video camera, has recently received attention by consumer behavior researchers, most notably by Ariely and Levav (2000) and Ratner and Kahn (2002). They found that people display more variety in their choices when their behavior is public because choosing variety is consistent with societal expectations. Private self-awareness on the other hand, although it has stimulated a lot of research in social psychology, received little attention in consumer behavior literature. In this research we examined to what extent private self-awareness can play a role in consumer decision making. As previous research in social psychology has shown that a self-attentive person becomes more conscious of his/her attitudes and beliefs (Gibbons 1990), we expected private self-awareness to reduce preference-behavior inconsistency during choice making.

In a first study (n=99), we manipulated private self-awareness by placing a mirror in front of the participants. We asked high self-aware (Mirror condition) versus low self-aware participants (No Mirror condition) to choose five frozen meals from a set of eight. Attitude-behavior consistency was operationalized as the consistency between these choices and previously measured personal liking ratings. Consistent with the prediction that high self-awareness increases attitude-behavior consistency, we found that participants in the Mirror condition stuck more to their favorite meals than participants in the No Mirror condition. Thus, high self-aware participants behave in a more consistent manner with their personal preferences than low self-aware participants.

A follow-up study (n=159) confirmed the crucial role of private self-awareness in choice making. Fenigstein and Levine's (1984) story-writing task was used to manipulate self-awareness. We compared the extent to which high self-aware versus low self-aware are susceptible to context effects (i.e. context and attraction effect). As difficulties in determining product preferences is an underlying condition for context effects to occur, we expected private self-awareness to moderate context effects. That is, when consumers have difficulty determining product preferences, a search for reasons increases the likelihood that decision makers will prefer a compromise or an asymmetrically dominating option (Simonson 1989). Thus, this bias arises not because people are simplifying, but rather because they are making too many compensatory comparisons (Dhar, Nowlis, and Sherman 2000). As consumers with articulated attribute preferences are characterized by a less comparative processing (Chernev 2003), and as private self-awareness increases the awareness of personal preferences, we expected self-awareness to decrease context effects. The results of the second study confirm this reasoning: When participants are highly self-aware, they are less likely to choose a compromise or an asymmetrically dominating option than when they are not self-aware. We

suggest that because of an increased awareness of one's personal preferences, high self-aware participants engage less in comparative processing and, therefore, are less susceptible to context effects.

In sum, the two studies reported in this paper provide strong evidence that private self-awareness can have a major impact on people's preference-behavior consistency. In the first study, we provide evidence for this conjecture: By increasing self-awareness, people are able to behave in a way that is more consistent with their personal preferences. In a follow-up study, we show that this increased preference-behavior consistency makes it more difficult for context effects to intrude: When participants are self-aware they are less likely to choose a compromise or an asymmetrically dominating option than when they are not self-aware. Both studies strongly support the view that when consumers are in a state of high self-awareness, they encounter fewer problems in determining their preferences.

Our findings also point to the practical power of private self-awareness: On the one hand, by increasing self-awareness (e.g. by placing a mirror), consumers are able to make choice decisions that match their personal preferences better, which, afterwards, might result in higher choice satisfaction. On the other hand, marketers need to understand that the advantage of certain sales tactics (f.e. creating compromise products), can disappear with self-attentive consumers. In addition, it will be harder to push a consumer towards a certain product in such conditions. Thus, certain selling environments might be more likely to benefit from selling strategies which draw attention away from the self. In general, the present research implies that marketers ought to consider the side effects of their store arrangement (e.g. mirrors) or their sales talk (e.g. small talks) on self-awareness, as these might have major implications on their sales strategies.

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Who Chose the Forgone Alternative?: The Effects of Social Comparison on Regret

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Previous regret literature has focused on individual comparisons to any alternative that was not selected (Inman, Dyer, and Jia 1997; Tsiros 1998), yet findings suggest that social comparisons play an important role in feelings and decisions (Hoelzl and Loewenstein 2005; Kumar 2004). This paper draws on research in social psychology regarding evaluations in group settings (Beach et al. 1998; Brewer and Weber 1994; Brown et al. 1992; Tesser 1988) to consider the effect of social comparisons on regret. Specifically, we examine the effects of group identity and closeness to others on regret.

The prior regret literature has demonstrated that regret occurs from comparison to forgone alternatives. How is this affected when comparisons are made to in-group members versus out-group members or to a significant other versus a stranger? Kumar (2004) finds that the valence of the decision maker's relationship with an other and the proximity of the other moderate the effect that the decision of the other impacts one's likelihood to take action. Specifically, purchase likelihood is less when a referent other in close proximity took advantage of a previous opportunity. These results indicate that social comparison to a close other can negatively impact purchase likelihood. Yet, social comparison to a close other may have positive effects on our decisions (Hoelzl and Loewenstein 2005).

Larrick (1993), drawing on social psychology literature, argues that decision-makers are concerned not only with outcomes, but also with maintaining a positive self-image. This research on group identity has found that, at the group level, a success by an in-group member leads to a positive evaluation, or minimal regret, through association with the group member and reflection upon their positive performance (Brewer and Weber 1994; Brown et al. 1992; Tesser 1988). Thus, when individuals make comparisons to the choice of an in-group member (someone who is a member of their group), reflection occurs. This reflection effect (Brewer and Weber 1994; Tesser and Campbell 1982) predicts that regret will be decreased when a group member chooses a highly satisfying alternative. In contrast, when individuals make comparisons to the choice of an out-group member (someone who is not a member of their own group), an upward comparison, or a comparison to a forgone alternative perceived to be better, is expected to increase regret.

These predictions are tested via a 2 (closeness: significant other vs. stranger) X 2 (outcome: better vs. worse) between-subjects design with MBA students (N=183). After reading a scenario about the outcome of their entrée choice at a banquet, participants indicated their regret for their dining experience. The results indicate that the interaction of closeness and outcome is significant ($p < .01$), as predicted. Examining the simple effects, we find that for participants in the better outcome condition, regret is greater among those comparing their entrée against that of a significant other than that of a stranger (3.04 vs. 2.44; $t = 2.32$, $p < .05$). For participants in the worse outcome condition, regret is less among those in the significant other condition than those in the stranger condition (3.16 vs. 3.60; $t = -1.70$, $p < .10$).

A second study further examines this effect of social comparison on regret by considering the effect of individual differences in social comparisons (Lennox and Wolfe 1984). It is hypothesized that regret for individuals who are susceptible to social comparison

information should be influenced by the interaction of the other's outcome and one's own outcome. When individuals perceive they did worse than a stranger, regret should be significantly more when one has low satisfaction with their own entrée than when they have high satisfaction with their own entrée. In contrast, for individuals who are low in social comparison and perceive they did worse than a stranger, regret should not differ between high and low satisfaction because their regret is not influenced by the other individual's better performance.

These effects are examined in a field study with restaurant customers, greatly enhancing the generalizability of these findings. A total of 215 customers at a casual dining American restaurant were surveyed about their entrée choice, their satisfaction and regret with entrée, their comparisons to entrées ordered by individuals seated at other tables, and their attention to social comparison information (ATSCI) tendencies. A significant three-way interaction among satisfaction, perception of own entrée, and ATSCI is found ($b = 0.36$, $p < .05$). In further analysis, results show that for low ATSCI individuals, the two-way interaction of satisfaction x perception of own entrée is not significant ($F_{1, 113} = 0.35$, ns), as expected. In contrast, for high ATSCI individuals, the two-way interaction of satisfaction x perception of own entrée is significant ($F_{1, 100} = 4.98$, $p < .05$), such that when a high ATSCI individual perceives their entrée to be worse, regret is significantly greater when there is low satisfaction with own entrée than when there is high satisfaction with own entrée ($M = 4.13$ vs. 2.10 ; $t = 3.46$, $p < .01$). When a low ATSCI individual perceives their entrée to be worse, regret does not differ between high and low satisfaction ($M = 2.84$ vs. 2.44 ; $t = 0.65$, ns).

The joint results of these studies indicate that it is not only *who* chose the forgone alternative, but also one's individual susceptibility to social comparisons that impacts regret. These two studies use different measures (imagined vs. real regret) and methods (between-subjects and survey) to indicate robust findings that make significant contributions to the regret literature by recognizing that regret is impacted by the social aspects of comparisons, which is consistent with previous findings on the effects of social comparisons. Since individuals frequently make social comparisons, these results have broad implications for understanding the regret consumers experience.

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To Hold Me Is To Love Me: The Role of Touch in the Endowment Effect

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

How does touch influence the valuation of an object? Twenty-five years of research has shown that consumers place a higher valuation on an item once they have taken ownership of it, a finding commonly known as the endowment effect (Thaler 1980, Knetsch and Sinden 1984, Kahneman, Knetsch, and Thaler 1990). The effect has been replicated in a variety of settings and with a variety of endowed objects, including lottery tickets, mugs, pens, and chocolate bars (Knetsch and Sinden 1984, Kahneman et al 1990, Franciosi et al 1996, Johnson et al 1993). One feature of nearly all endowment effect experiments is that the buyers and sellers have the opportunity to physically hold the item being traded. But how does this physical contact with the item affect the endowed consumer's valuation and sense of ownership? Can aspects of the physical features of the item, such as how much fun it is to touch and hold, influence valuation? And how might individual differences in sense of touch interact with these physical features?

The basic finding of the endowment effect is that individuals value an item higher when it is in their possession than when it is not. In the typical experiment, half of the subjects receive an item (e.g., a mug) and are told that it is theirs to sell or keep (sellers), while half do not get an item (buyers). Solicitation of selling prices and buying prices then show a significant discrepancy; sellers often require at least twice as much as buyers are willing to pay, consistent with loss aversion (Kahneman and Tversky 1979). Additional work on the endowment effect has considered ways to moderate the effect by focusing participants' attention on certain aspects of the decision process, such as focusing on other uses for the money (Johnson, Haeubl, and Keinan 2004). Length of ownership also moderates the effect, with shorter ownership reducing (but not eliminating) it and longer ownership increasing it (Strahilevitz and Loewenstein 1998). Other recent work has looked at the role of affect, finding that endowed items can be contaminated by negative emotions such as sadness, reducing the seller's valuation (Lerner, Small, and Loewenstein 2004).

The three studies presented in this paper extend research on moderating influences on the endowment effect by demonstrating the importance of physical touch in participants' valuation of endowed objects. Based on recent research on the consumers' use of haptic (touch) information (Peck and Childers 2003a, 2003b), we propose three hypotheses relating valuation of endowed objects and feelings of ownership to whether or not individuals can touch the item (H1), whether or not the object itself is fun-to-touch (H2), and individual differences in touch preferences (H3). Study 1 examines differences in the endowment effect for a "fun-to-touch" item when participants are either able to touch the item or not, and also considers individual differences in preferences for touch. Studies 2 and 3 test the theory with a not fun-to-touch item, again considering individual differences; we then provide a direct comparison of the Study 3 results to the Study 1 results to explicitly test how the type of object influences the effect. In addition to measuring valuation of the endowed objects, we also consider participants' sense of ownership to understand how this interacts with the touch variables.

All three studies follow the basic procedure of the traditional endowment effect study, starting with an induced value market and using Becker, DeGroot, and Marshak (1964) elicitation procedures. In Study 1, we give 271 undergraduates a slinky, pretested as being

fun-to-touch. Participants are divided into buyer (chooser) and seller roles, and also split according to whether they can actually touch the slinky itself or only examine it through its packaging. We also administer the Need for Touch (NFT) scale at the end of the study to assess individual differences. A significant endowment effect is found in both conditions; however, sellers who can touch the item value it even more than sellers who can only touch the packaging. No difference is found between choosers in the two touch conditions. We also find that individual differences in sellers' (but not choosers') scores on the Autotelic NFT scale, which focuses on the sensory enjoyment associated with touch, affect valuation, as predicted.

Studies 2 and 3 allow us to further investigate how the haptic features of the object itself influence valuation. Both studies use pretested "not fun-to-touch" objects: for Study 2, a keychain, and for Study 3, a package of mini-tape. In both cases we find no effect of either the touch/no touch condition or individual differences in Autotelic NFT on sellers' (or choosers') valuations and feelings of ownership for the objects. In Study 3, we specifically chose an item that is pretested to have objective valuation similar to the slinkies used in Study 1, allowing us to do a more direct comparison of the data from both studies. We find that endowed sellers who can touch the object feel more ownership when it is fun-to-touch (the slinky) than when it is not (the mini-tape), demonstrating that the touch characteristics of the object itself have an effect. We also found in Study 3 that individuals who score high on an Instrumental NFT scale reported higher valuation and psychological ownership of the mini-tape, which we did not predict.

How does touch influence the valuation of an object? Results of our studies suggest that for endowed items that are fun-to-touch (a slinky), and for individuals who touch because they find it fun, the ability to touch leads to higher valuation and more psychological ownership. This effect of touch on endowed items does not occur for familiar items that are not fun-to-touch, such as the keychains and mini-tape in our Studies 2 and 3. Thus, the combination of ability to touch, an item's touch characteristics, and the individual preferences for touch of the individual lead to specific, predictable differences in object valuation.

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Scope Insensitivity in the Service of the Rational Self: The “Mere Token” Effect

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Difficult choices are pervasive throughout decision making. In this paper, we specifically explore decisions evoking intrapersonal choice conflict (e.g. Ainsle 1975, Thaler and Shefrin 1984, Bazerman et al 1998) where the implicit tradeoffs require the decision maker to sacrifice either one internal goal or the other. We argue that such conflicts, involving incompatible goals, are not readily resolved by a cognitive process of calibrating compensatory tradeoffs but instead involve a search for justifications external to the tradeoff in order to ameliorate the emotional conflict experienced (Janis and Mann 1977; Luce, Bettman and Payne 1997). In our intrapersonal conflict framework, we propose that justifications primarily affect decision through their presence or absence rather than degree, and the resolution of intrapersonal choice conflict is fundamentally scope insensitive (Hsee and Rottenstreich 2004) to the magnitude of the justification. On the other hand, the effect of justification is highly sensitive to the level of intrapersonal conflict, with justifications becoming largely irrelevant in choices involving little conflict. Our framework suggests that a “mere token” justification can often resolve choice conflict and significantly alter the choices made. In a series of studies, we propose and demonstrate a new mechanism for resolving choice conflict, dubbed the mere token effect, in which adding a small common element to both choice options systematically shifts preferences by making it easier to choose the less tempting but higher valued option.

First, we investigate the mere token effect in the context of intertemporal choice, a context widely used to represent self-control conflict. In the base condition, we consider a choice between two outcomes, involving a tradeoff between the timing and magnitude of gains, such as choosing between:

- (a) \$400 in one week, and (b) \$1000 in one year.

We find that in such choices between a sooner-smaller reward and a later-larger reward, the addition of a mere token amount to both options (experimental condition shown below) systematically alters consumer preference.

- (b) \$100 in 3 days and \$400 in one week, (b) \$100 in 3 days and \$1000 in one year.

In a series of studies we had subjects make a single choice, either with or without the mere token (manipulated between subjects), and we demonstrate that the addition of the mere token to both options significantly increases choices of the later-larger reward. We argue that this effect occurs because the immediate mere token amount reduces the intrapersonal conflict by providing token gratification to the desire for immediacy. This common reward effect represents a violation of the principle of separable additivity in discounting, which underlies both exponential and hyperbolic discounting (e.g. Loewenstein and Prelec 1992). In further support of our framework, we show that the choice scenario with the mere token is seen as inducing less emotional conflict and that the mere token effect is scope insensitive to the size of the token amount.

In a series of additional studies, we provide further evidence that the mere token effect operates by reducing intrapersonal choice conflict. We show that increasing psychological distance of both options (by making rewards uncertain) and therefore reducing the intrapersonal choice conflict debiases the common reward effect.

Further, we show that the mere token effect is enhanced when the choice options represent a starker contrast, consistent with the intrapersonal choice conflict model but inconsistent with preference uncertainty and in violation of utility-based models of decision making. We go on to show an “illusory” mere token effect, in which the value of the mere token is deducted from the choice options, thus demonstrating the mere token effect while holding total valuations constant between the base and experimental conditions.

Lastly, in a parallel series of studies, we extend the mere token effect and the related findings discussed above to the more general domain of risky choice. Consumers made choices between a smaller lottery reward with a higher probability of winning and larger lottery reward with a lower probability of winning. Those who made a choice between the two options bundled with a small certain mere token amount were more likely to choose the larger-riskier lottery than those whose choice options did not include the mere token. This effect was shown to be scope insensitive to mere token size and to be moderated by manipulating the degree of intrapersonal choice conflict. We demonstrate that our findings are inconsistent with risky choice models (Savage 1954, Tversky and Kahneman 1992) but consistent with our intrapersonal conflict framework. In closing, we contrast our finding with the literature on choice deferral and discuss the broader implications of both the mere token effect and, more generally, of scope insensitive justification and intrapersonal choice conflict.

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A Structural Look At Consumer Innovativeness and Self-Congruence In New Product Purchases

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Conceptualization

While consumer perceptions and responses to product launches have been studied extensively, a major gap remains. Specifically, there is a need for a larger nomological network of innovativeness. A key contribution of this study is to help marketers leverage the relationship between innovativeness and product/image self-congruence. This research expands on a set of disjointed concepts by empirically testing a model that considers the effects of several independent variables on behavioral intentions.

Bagozzi (1982) extended the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980; Fishbein and Ajzen 1975) by considering the role of cognitive and affective self-regulatory mechanisms in determining behavioral intentions. Our proposed model is inspired by this work. A consumer's evaluation of a new product can be seen as what Bagozzi refers to as an "outcome-desire unit," defined as "an event that happens to one, that one produces, or that one can take steps to influence in the future (Bagozzi 1992, p. 187)." Consumers' appraisals of new products may be shaped in part by individual difference traits such as innovativeness, as well as more situational states such as self-congruence and perceived risk. This process may lead to an emotional reaction, represented in our model by satisfaction, which in turn may lead to a coping response, represented in our model by behavioral intentions. Beginning with this essential framework, the relationships in the model were constructed based upon a review of the literature on each of the constructs.

Innovativeness refers to the tendency of some individuals to adopt new products early. Consumer innovators are valuable resources to firms introducing new products, as they perform essential roles in innovation diffusion. Researchers have also shown direct links between consumer innovativeness and behavioral intentions across several domains.

Interaction between a product-user image and a consumer's self-concept can result in a subjective experience termed self-congruence (Sirgy, et al. 1997). Through the consumption process, consumers utilize brands to project images of themselves to others (Chang 2005). Within this framework, purchase intentions for new products should also depend directly on self-image congruence. Innovativeness may play a role in a consumer's construction of self-concept.

Perceived risk is consistently linked with behavioral intentions (Howard & Sheth 1969). Low perceived risk should promote behavioral intentions. Innate innovativeness is a tendency to make risky and innovative decisions (Midgley and Dowling 1978). Park et al. (2005) suggest that higher risk is associated with lower purchase intentions. Innovators must be less risk averse to purchase new products.

Satisfaction is an affective state. Self-congruence can regulate satisfaction such that consistent messages can cause positive emotion (Markus and Wurf 1987). Satisfaction can also impact consumer behavior (Park et al. 2005) and aspects of product encounters can impact satisfaction. Consistent with Schwartz's (1990) findings, people who are satisfied should evaluate new products more favorably than those who are dissatisfied. Satisfaction is also recognized as a key driver of behavioral intentions (Zeithaml,

Berry, and Parasuraman 1996). Satisfaction can also alter perceived risk. Johnson and Tversky (1983) reported that positive affect may reduce perceived risk, whereas negative affect can elicit the opposite reaction. New products, though inherently riskier, have been shown to elevate affect and decrease perceptions of risk (Park et al. 2005).

- H1: Innovativeness positively affects behavioral intentions for new products.
- H2: Self-congruence with a product positively affects behavioral intentions for new products.
- H3: Innovativeness positively affects perceived self-congruence in the context of new product purchases.
- H4: For new product purchases, innovativeness negatively affects perceived risk.
- H5: For new product purchases, perceived risk negatively affects behavioral intentions.
- H6: In new product purchases, self-congruence positively affects satisfaction.
- H7: In new product purchases, satisfaction positively affects behavioral intentions.
- H8: Satisfaction negatively affects perceived risk for new product purchases.

Method

Students were asked to describe their purchase behavior for home electronics (342), new music releases (213), and electronic handheld devices (191). Online surveys were used. Respondents' names were checked across samples to ensure independence of the individual observations. Duplicates and respondents who incorrectly answered a quality check were purged. The three samples were combined, yielding a total of 741 respondents. The sample was 57% female with a median age of 21. Seventy-three percent of the sample was Caucasian, 12% African-American, 9% Hispanic-American, and 4% Asian-American.

Existing scales were adapted to measure innovativeness, self-congruence, perceived risk, satisfaction and behavioral intentions in the two new product consumption settings. All measures utilized a seven-point Likert or semantic-differential scale. The final model consisted of three items from Sirgy et al.'s (1997) self-image congruence scale, two items from Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Malhotra's (2005) behavioral intentions scale, three items from Goldsmith and Hofacker's (1991) domain specific innovativeness scale, two items from Heijden et al.'s (2003) risk perception scale and three items from Zhu et al.'s (2002) consumer satisfaction scale.

The psychometric properties of the five constructs were evaluated using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in accordance with Anderson and Gerbing (1992). Results of the combined CFA indicate excellent measurement fit and establishment of convergent and discriminant validity in accordance with Fornell and Larcker (1981).

Major Findings

This study's objective was to clarify the relationships among innovativeness, self-congruence, satisfaction, perceived risk and

behavioral intentions. The results provided strong support for the proposed model. Results were robust across three industries. All hypotheses were supported, indicating that the research model best described the nomological network surrounding consumer innovativeness and behavioral intentions for new products. Innovativeness affects perceptions of perceived risk and self-congruence and it also directly impacts behavioral intentions. Findings indicate that there is considerably more confluence among the variables than indicated by existing literature.

The relationship between innovativeness and self-congruence suggests innovativeness is part of a consumer's self-concept. New products can play an important role in the construction of self-image and can be used to define one's innovative personality aspects. Findings suggest that innovators' tendencies to diffuse innovation can be leveraged by focusing more on the image creation aspects of new products than utilitarian aspects. Managers can improve results by carefully managing the relationship between their respective brands and images of being modern, unique, and expert.

The Effect of Uniqueness on Word-Of-Mouth Agency: The Moderating Roles of Product Category and Availability

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Increasing consumer skepticism of the advertising industry and fragmentation of television audiences has decreased the effectiveness of traditional mass media advertising. Consequently, companies are relying more on WOM communication and other non-traditional communication approaches to increase their return on Marketing investment (Court, Gordon, and Perrey 2005). There is increasing reliance on “brand ambassadors,” or agents, who are affiliated with, but typically not paid by, firms, to engage in positive WOM. Companies often pay agencies that enlist consumers to serve as volunteer WOM agents. The present research focuses on this growing phenomenon.

While a significant body of research has studied the outcomes of WOM in the context of persuasive communication, less is known about the causes of WOM agency, that is, why consumers choose to become WOM agents. We explore the *social* benefits and costs associated with a consumer’s decision to become a WOM agent. While being a WOM agent may be attractive for market mavens (Feick and Price 1987), it may hurt consumers who are high in their need for uniqueness (Lynn and Harris 1997) by decreasing the uniqueness of their possessions. Additionally, this social cost of decreased uniqueness may vary across products. We expect that the detrimental effect of WOM agency (in terms of decreased uniqueness of consumed products) is greater for publicly consumed luxury products than for privately consumed luxury products (Bourne 1957). Furthermore, we expect that uniqueness affects WOM agency when a public luxury product is available, but not when it is unavailable.

Effect of Need for Uniqueness (NFU)

Informing other consumers about a product increases their likelihood of adopting that product and decreases its uniqueness. High need for uniqueness (NFU) individuals desire rare products which provide differentiation from other people. For fear that others will get the same product, consumers may choose not to tell others about it. Unique product choices may attract other people who are also high in NFU (Fisher and Price 1992), and high NFU individuals may feel threatened if others become similar to them (Tian, Bearden and Hunter 2001).

Moderating Role of Product Category

This detrimental effect of NFU on WOM agency may, however, vary across product categories. Peer influence on product-level decisions is stronger for publicly consumed than privately consumed products (Bearden and Etzel 1982; Childers and Rao 1992; Tian et al 2001). Furthermore, factors which increase adoption of a conspicuous product will decrease the value of a product for high NFU individuals (Amaldoss and Jain 2005). Thus, we expect that while high NFU consumers will be *less likely* to engage in word of mouth for public products than for private products, they will be as willing as low NFU individuals to endorse a private product. In contrast, low NFU individuals will be equally likely to promote public and private products.

Availability Moderates Role of NFU on WOM Agency for Public Luxury Products

Commodity theory posits that anything that is useful to a person, conveyable to another person, and potentially possessable will be valued when its availability is limited (Brock 1968). Need for uniqueness is one explanation of *why* unavailability leads to increased desirability (Lynn 1992b). Brock (1968) refers to the potential time delay in acquiring a product as one of the drivers of availability. We predict that the detrimental effect of WOM agency for high NFU consumers will disappear if the public luxury product is not yet available in the market. That is, when the product is not yet available for purchase, the WOM agent does not decrease the uniqueness of the product by talking about the product with acquaintances.

Empirical Results

In study 1, we measure NFU and demonstrate its effect on WOM agency for public and private luxury products, while controlling for market mavenism. Respondents read a scenario in which they receive an email from a company to join a program as a WOM agent. A specific product in need of WOM promotion is described in the email. Approximately half the respondents read about the public product (Apple iPod Shuffle digital music player), while the remaining respondents read about the private product (Apple Monitune monitor/TV). Pretests confirm that while both these products are perceived to be luxury products, the Shuffle is perceived to be a more publicly used product than the Monitune. All respondents then rate how likely they are to join the program. The results indicate that the attenuating effect of NFU is more *negative* for public luxuries than for private luxuries.

In study 2, we replicate the uniqueness effect of study 1, using a prime to manipulate NFU between subjects (Aaker and Lee 2001). Respondents first evaluate an advertisement for Welch’s Grape Fruit Juice, which either focuses on an individual or on a group. They then read a scenario similar to study 1. Results indicate that among respondents who see the public product, those exposed to an individual prime (high NFU) are less likely to purchase than those exposed to a group prime. However, among respondents who see the private product, the prime does not have a significant effect.

In Study 3, we demonstrate how availability level moderates the effect of NFU on WOM agency for public luxury products. We present consumers with a public luxury product (a Siemens cell phone) and manipulate whether this product is presently available in the market or will be available in six months. Results indicate that when the product is available, high NFU respondents are significantly less likely to become WOM agents than low NFU respondents. However, when the product is not available, high NFU respondents are as likely to become WOM agents as low NFU respondents.

Conclusion

These results indicate that there is a cost of WOM for consumers who are high in NFU, and this cost is exacerbated for a) public

versus private products, and b) available versus unavailable products. The results suggest that high NFU consumers may be more successful as WOM agents when promoting private luxury products and/or when promoting products that are yet to be launched in the marketplace.

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Personality Characteristics of Market Mavens

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ABSTRACT

A number of papers have been published investigating the demographic, motivational and psychological characteristics of the maven, but none has attempted an in-depth investigation of their personality traits. This paper tests the relationships between the characteristics of market mavens with Extraversion-Introversion and four personality orientations or traits that have been developed recently. The findings suggest that it is possible to anchor the construct of market mavens within a broader personality theory. The research found strong relationships between market mavens, physical/sensing personality orientation and extraversion.

EARLY ADOPTERS (INNOVATORS)

In general, all consumers are the targets of marketing communications, although some consumers are more valuable to businesses and industries than others (Feick and Price, 1987; Goldsmith, Flynn, Goldsmith, 2003). An examination of the marketing literature has revealed that three types of consumers are especially valuable to businesses and the marketplace. These are known as reference groups and can be grouped into the early adopters (innovators), opinion leaders and market mavens. Their value to businesses and industries originates from their affinity to share knowledge about the marketplace, products and services.

The first of the reference groups, early adopters (also known as innovators) tend to be associated with usually a bell shape type of normal distribution, which is characterised as product or category specific as opposed to being interested in all product categories across the board (Rogers, 1995). Studies of early adopters/innovators have found that early adopters tend to be better educated, younger ages, upwardly mobile and come from the higher socioeconomic status relative to others in the social system, who usually can afford to take the risks and have the money too (Engel, Blackwell and Miniard, 1995). In comparison to other social groups, early adopters are more likely to adopt a new product or service comparatively earlier than other groups of consumers (Clark and Goldsmith, 2005) and are more likely to disregard the risks associated with new products or services (Engel et al., 1995). Numerous studies have shown that early adopters are heavy users of commercial, professional and interpersonal information sources (Goldsmith, Flynn, and Goldsmith, 2003; Fisher and Price, 1992; Mahajan and Muller, 1990). These studies also showed that early adopters tend to be more likely to share information they have gathered about a specific product or service with other members of their local reference groups.

OPINION LEADERS

Like early adopters, opinion leaders are an attractive target for marketers as they have been shown to be effective facilitators for spreading information specific to a product or service (Chan and Misra, 1990; Clark and Goldsmith, 2005; Feick and Price 1987; Goldsmith et al, 2003). There has been a lot of debate as to what are the general characteristics of the opinion leaders (Marshall and Gitosudarmo, 1995). A number of studies have sought to identify differences between opinion leaders and early adopters. These differences include opinion leader's characteristics that relate to levels of sociability, such as gregariousness (extraversion); of outer-directed personality traits (Marshall and Gitosudarmo, 1995);

their degree of innovativeness, positive attitudes to change and demographic characteristics such as youth, higher education and income (Marshall and Gitosudarmo, 1995). Innovativeness is usually tempered by social respectability or need for trustworthiness, which is not always present in the early adopters/innovators. However, opinion leaders, like early adopters, are high information seekers (Clark and Goldsmith, 2005) and use large amounts of commercial, professional and interpersonal sources of information regarding a specific product or category of interest. Opinion leaders regularly share their knowledge with other people. A few studies have shown that opinion leaders may be sought after and consulted about new products or services, by other consumers, because they are usually perceived as more knowledgeable with regards to high involvement purchases (Christiansen and Tsiourtis, 1998).

MARKET MAVENS

The conceptualisation of the third reference group has been credited to the study by Feick and Price (1987). Feick and Price (1987: 85) defined market mavens as "individuals who have information about many kinds of products, places to shop, and other facets of marketing, and initiate discussions with consumers and respond to requests from consumers for marketplace information".

Feick and Price (1987) demonstrated that although market mavens have similar demographic characteristics as opinion leaders and early adopters/innovators, they differ from the opinion leaders and early adopters/purchasers on the higher levels of general knowledge about the marketplace and product marketing mix (product, prices, distribution, promotions) characteristics. Mavens have been shown to have a broader array of information about different types of products, including durable, non-durables, services and store types (Feick and Price, 1987). This contrasts with the opinion leaders and early adopters who are more knowledgeable and want to share information about a specific range of products within a product category or specific market environment characteristics. Market mavens collect and retain information about a wider range of issues such as product quality, prices, sales, availability, store personnel characteristics and other features that may be relevant to themselves and to other consumers. The media habits of market mavens differ from those of early adopters and opinion leaders. Market mavens are more likely to read retail magazines, direct mail advertisements and discuss retail store image attributes more freely than non-mavens (Higie, Feick and Price, 1987) and to be heavy users of coupons, grocery lists and budgeting tactics (Price and Feick, 1988).

Although demographically similar to opinion leaders and early adopters, market mavens are more likely to be female, marginally lower educated than non-mavens and more likely to come from certain sub cultural groups (Feick and Price, 1987). Market mavens have been shown to be more accurate in their evaluation of service quality than early adopters and opinion leaders (Engelland, Hopkins, and Larson, 2001), but early adopters and opinion leaders are more likely to be influential with a specific market or product category. In contrast, market mavens can be seen to be a source of general or non-specific marketplace information. This trait makes mavens an attractive target market to retailers and other large industries that produce and/or sell a wide range of durable and fmcg products. Market mavens are more likely to

encourage spread of information through word-of-mouth or viral marketing across a wide range of product categories (Clark and Goldsmith, 2005; Goldsmith et al., 2003; Price et al., 1987).

A large number of studies have focused on identifying the general media consumption, communications and demographic characteristics, but little is known about the market maven's motivational and psychological characteristics (Walsh, Gwinner and Swanson, 2004). Knowing that mavens watch more television and read more magazines than non-mavens, without knowing the reasons or motivational and psychological characteristics of the market maven, leaves the question of how to target effectively, build a relationship and communicate in a meaningful way with market mavens relatively unanswered.

MOTIVATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND PREFERENCES OF MARKET MAVENS

A number of studies have endeavoured to identify some of the motivational and psychological characteristics of the market mavens (Clark and Goldsmith, 2005; Engelland et al., 2001; Goldsmith et al., 2003; Walsh et al., 2004). Motives arouse and direct consumer behaviour and therefore market mavens would be targeted more accurately if their motives were better understood (Walsh et al., 2004). Identifying and understanding the motivations behind the actions of the market maven is particularly important to businesses wishing to highlight their product/service attributes and provide relevant information to market mavens. Price and Feick (1987) noted that compared to other groups of consumers, market mavens would be differentially motivated from other groups of innovators and early adopters. Walsh et al (2004) identified some of these unique motivational factors for mavenism. They found that market mavens were motivated to share their information with other consumers for a number of reasons, which include; an obligation to share information; a strong desire to help others; and an intrinsic pleasure in sharing information with others. Clarke and Goldsmith (2005) suggest that market mavens conform to social norms and can be susceptible to normative influences. Therefore cultural and sub cultural or social class norms, values and attitudes are likely to influence and be influenced by market mavens. Clarke and Goldsmith (2005) clarify this result by explaining that although mavens are information leaders, they do have socially normative boundaries, which are used appropriately and skilfully. However, the maven's socially normative behavioural considerations are moderated by the personality trait of high self-esteem and social respect or prestige/status. The literature review has identified no study that attempts to anchor the market maven characteristics within a general personality theory. The ad hoc type of description of the market maven's personality without any reference to their overall personality characteristics without an explanation of what kind of person is a market maven, seems to be a relevant research issue that is very useful for theoretical and model building purposes as well as for marketing practitioners. By expanding our understanding of the broader market maven's personality traits or characteristics, researchers and marketing practitioners would be able to differentiate more clearly market mavens from other groups of innovators/early adopters in terms of their psychographic characteristics and styles of decision making.

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS AS PREDICTOR VARIABLES OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Albanese (1993) suggests that although all consumers have a personality it is hard to understand how it affects behavioural

decisions. Efforts to utilise personality theory as a single predictor item with consumer behaviour have produced unconvincing results in general (Kassarjian and Sheffet, 1991). However, it is difficult to generalise about the effectiveness of personality in relation to predicting consumer's behaviour and decision making process, because researchers have used a variety of competing theories, definitions, methodologies, and instruments measuring different personality characteristics, in a wider range of appropriate and inappropriate marketing applications (Pervin, 1997; Plummer, 2000). It is very difficult to provide a clear-cut assessment of whether personality as a single or general global construct is a good predictor of behaviour without any other relevant information about the consumers, for example, demographic characteristics, attitudes, motives and values. The degree of construct specificity affects the level of relationships with consumer's behaviour. Personality is considered to be very general construct, attitudes tends to be more of an intermediate level, and specific traits are more closely related with specific context and behavioural aspects of consumer's nature. Therefore, predictive validity of consumer's behaviour varies according to the type of construct (broad, intermediate or specific) and the type of context the trait is hypothesised to be relevant and used for (Nakanishi, 1972; Kassarjian and Sheffet, 1991).

The degree of construct generality is bound to have an effect on the level of predictive power. Gountas and Mavondo (2005) found strong correlations between personality and behaviour using global personality preferences/traits, as well as more specific traits like self-efficacy (Bandura, 1982). Integrating personality characteristics (general as well as more specific behavioural context related traits) with motivation, available resources, and external opportunities, (Gountas, 2004; Gountas and Mavondo, 2005) achieved stronger levels of relationships between personality and consumer's behaviour (actual and intended behavior). Personality constructs can be very useful predictors of consumer behaviour if they are developed appropriately for specific consumer behaviour purposes, and if they include other important influences such as social, external factors, demographics, and overall market conditions (Kassarjian and Sheffet, 1991). There is a tremendous range of consumer decisions, varying from high involvement to low/trivial level of importance, and therefore it is appropriate to consider carefully the usage of existing off the shelf personality instruments with all kinds of consumption decisions and behaviour studies.

Kassarjian and Sheffet (1991) suggested that consumer researchers should avoid using ad hoc personality items, especially if they are single personality traits but always endeavour to use well-validated and reliable personality instruments, which have high reliability scores. They suggest that personality instruments should be embedded in a well-developed theory of personality and to consider personality as one of a number of variables moderating or influencing consumer's choices and behaviour.

The literature review identified a number of personality traits and theories being used as predictor or explanatory variables of innovators/early adopters and market mavens, but none has attempted to use the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) or any new Jungian personality type of theories (Briggs-Myers and McCaulley, 1989; Jung, 1921/1971). This study uses a new personality theory that has its foundations in the broad Jungian personality typology and takes into consideration the MBTI and other Neo-Jungian ideas. The new personality theory (Gountas, 2003) has been developed over a number of years, has been tested, and retested with representative samples of consumers. The validity and reliability

scores are above the expected standards and therefore the instrument is robust and appropriate for applied consumer research purposes.

THE FOUR PERSONALITY ORIENTATIONS

The new four personality orientations/mega traits attempt to identify distinctive consumer approaches towards processing information and viewing the world from different perspectives. The conceptual foundations of the new theory are a synthesis of the original Jungian (1921/71) and post Jungian personality types postulations (Briggs-Myers, and McCaulley, 1989) based on the four functions or human faculties (thinking, intuitive, feeling and sensing). The new model (Gountas, 2003) departs from the original eight predetermined Jungian personality types which included the four functions, the two additional attitudes or extraversion and introversions and the arbitrary notions of two groups of organising functions that of perceptive and judgement. The new model hypothesises that there are four broad but different approaches/functions regarding consumer's behavior and postulates that each orientation has a different valence and intensity of preferences.

The theoretical model put forward by Zajonc and Markus (1982) of the existence of two distinctive preferences that of cognitive and affective with regards to a wide range of behaviours and actual decision making, has been extended and adapted to form the feeling and thinking orientations of the new personality orientations model. Cacioppo's and Petty's concept that individuals have different Needs for Cognition (Cacioppo and Petty, 1982) has been integrated and adapted to fit in to the overall construct of Thinking/Logical that Jung has put forward too. The Jungian and post or Neo-Jungian function of sensing has been synthesised and adapted with the trait of materialism (Moschis, and Churchill, 1978; Richins, 1987; Richins, and Dawson, 1992) to form the Physical or Somatic/Materialistic orientation. The labels of the four personality orientations in the new model are thinking/logical, imaginative, physical/sensing, and feeling/emotion/action. The core characteristics of each orientation are briefly summarised in order to provide an idea of what are the main differences between the four personality orientations/functions. Each orientation or trait is hypothesised to manifest in all consumers in varying degrees, therefore there is no single one orientation or complete lack of other orientations that exert influence on the consumer's range of preferences and styles of decision-making.

The thinking/logical orientation/function is characterised by a higher level of interest and focus on generating new ideas and understanding the way things or certain phenomenon operate. There is a higher need for cognitive type of processing information; a need to know how and why certain products are more appropriate; and evaluate objectively the differences between products based on accurate factual information and guided by evaluative criteria. The thinking orientation enjoys thinking/ideation, is inclined to form logical connections between ideas, and uses effortful cognitive processing strategies to make sense of any obscure or abstract concepts (Cacioppo and Petty, 1982). Decision-making is likely to be based on the careful cognitive and logical examination of facts and other sources of information related to a product purchase. Consumers with higher scores on the thinking trait rely on principles to guide their reasoning of cause and effect and tend to be impersonal in their relationships (Moss, 1989; Gountas, 2003). Thinking/logical orientation traits are related with a strong interest in creating new knowledge, generating new ideas and constructing new understanding of how the world works (Pervin, 1997; Gountas, 2003). Consumers with an overall higher tendency towards the thinking orientation may show all or some of the characteristics

hypothesised in the thinking/logical construct. Some of these characteristics, construct facets, of the thinking/logical orientation are: interest in analysing information, maintaining objectivity in decision making, using well founded intellectual principles to guide thinking process, value justice and fairness, tend to use critical and deliberate thinking, which can appear emotionless or blunt and less concerned for feelings (Briggs-Myers and McCaulley, 1989; Gountas, 2003).

Consumers/individuals with higher score on the imaginative trait/orientation have a heightened sense of awareness of the unconscious perception (Jung 1921/71; Pervin, 1997). They tend to rely on visual type of learning stimuli, using diagrams and pictures to store information and identify differences between product attributes. They are more likely to interpret and adapt to the word around them using imaginative process of thinking and visualisation techniques to make sense of what and how to do things. Their main sources of information are not logically organised but they are guided by creative and need to understand the non-visible aspects of the world. They are able to use and perceive subconscious images and sensing of what has happened (past events) and what might happen in the future (Jung, 1921/71; Gountas, 2003). Although information is gathered by the five senses, the same as all other personality orientations, at very high speed, not in a particular organised manner, and therefore input tends to be generic, blurred on the details and interested to identify the creative and interesting or unusual qualities of the information material (Moss, 1989). Imaginative consumers tend to prefer unconventional approaches and products, like more abstract and creative types of communication and better at constructing theories and 'hunches' through imaginative processes. The imaginative consumer can visualise patterns and make sense of event with minimal information. They prefer complexity rather simple reality. The facets or sub constructs of the imaginative orientation/trait are a stronger tendency to visualise, to construct and manipulate images, are more inclined to value idealism, reflection, creativity, imagination, tolerance for the unusual and unconventional process of decision making.

The physical/sensing consumers value physical comforts, material possessions and enjoy more the physical world just for its own sake. They experience more pleasure from the physical or material goods and the tangible attributes of products. They rely heavily on the input of their five senses (sight, smell, hear, touch and taste) as well as their instinctive earthy/physical body reactions to tell them what is appropriate for them (Jung, 1921/71; Gountas, 2003). The physical/sensing person is more likely to appreciate the details and real as opposed to the imagined or cognitive interpretations of a situation (Moss, 1989). They tend to focus on the immediate physical experiences and often show an acute ability to see very accurately material characteristics (colour, texture, and three-dimensional aspects). They can understand the material world very well and enjoy transforming and creating new material artefacts. The facets or sub constructs of the physical/sensing orientation/trait are physical realism, acute powers of material observation and understanding, memory for details, practical, down to earth and enjoyment of physical pleasures, achievements and comforts (Briggs-Myers and McCaulley, 1989; Moss, 1989; Gountas, 2003).

The feeling/action orientation/trait is characterised by a higher level of energy drive and achieving the best possible feelings. They tend to prefer experiential input to construct their understanding of the world and who they are as individuals. They focus on the enhancement of self-identity and self-esteem and therefore strive to achieve goals that are socially sanctioned and approved. They evaluate events, products and experiential benefits in subjective terms and whether they are likely to enhance their own sense of

worth, social and self-respect, social acceptance, status and individuality. They enjoy emotional experiences, understand their own emotional states and those of others and are capable of transforming and creating new emotional/feeling states (Briggs-Myers and McCaulley, 1989; Gountas, 2003). Feeling/action oriented consumers tend to evaluate products based on their social symbolism, status and emotional appeal. They are able to evaluate consumption interactions in terms of negative or positive feeling/emotion outcomes based on their own subjective and perceived social evaluation of a service or product (Gountas, 2003; Pervin, 1997). The evaluation process is based on the perceived subjective level of significance or potential to enhance and add status, and feelings of success, importance and power for the individual. Feeling/action orientation consumers rely more and are more interested in the understanding of the personal as well as group values and therefore they are more subjective in their interpretations and construction of reality is more heuristic and based on actual experiential evidence. The feeling/action orientation/trait facets or sub constructs are: higher concern for the human emotional and feeling aspects, experiential sources of information, a need for affiliation, status, social respect and achievement, understanding emotions and able to transform and create new emotions, preference to evaluate products in terms of emotional benefits and social symbolism (Gountas, 2003).

The constructs of extraversion and introversion (E-I) have been considered relevant to include as free standing personality characteristics (Costa, and McCrae, 1992; McCrae and Costa, 1997) in addition to the four general personality constructs in order to be able to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the market maven's characteristics. The E-I construct is composed of the sub constructs or facets of sociability, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement and positive social interactions. They are hypothesised to be relevant personality aspects that may influence decisions and behaviours of market mavens concerning the product category context of food consumption in restaurants.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The specific industry we want to test the relationships between market mavens and the four personality orientations is the restaurant and hospitality industry. The hospitality industry relies heavily on its diners to 'experience' the whole product of the restaurant, including the food, service, atmosphere and the company of others. Market mavens play a critical role in the diner's experience, by providing information and opinions about restaurants; market mavens are able to determine, inadvertently, which restaurants will be patronised by the consumers.

Market mavens are expected to be more knowledgeable about food and restaurant outlets and to produce the highest or stronger positive relationship with the physical/material orientation/trait. All other personality orientations/traits are expected to produce lower (than the physical/material orientation) but positive relationships with market mavens. Eating and dining out in restaurants is a social activity and therefore we expect that second highest correlations with market mavens to be the feeling/action orientation/traits followed by thinking/logical and last the imaginative orientation/trait dominant consumers.

H1: there is a stronger positive relationship between market mavens and physical/material orientation; followed by feeling, thinking and imaginative orientations in order of significance.

The trait of extraversion is expected to influence the strength of the relationships between market mavens and all four personality orientations, but the physical/material orientation is hypothesised to produce the highest regression score followed by feeling, thinking and imaginative orientations.

H2: there is a higher and positive relationship between extraversion and market mavens, and a lower negative correlation between introversion and market mavens.

METHODOLOGY

Exploratory qualitative and quantitative research was conducted to refine the research instrument and the survey method. The questionnaire instrument performed well and researchers decided to use a self-completion survey method within a specific restaurant as the most appropriate venue for the intended sampling method.

Participants. A random sample of dinners throughout the weekdays was selected and two hundred and three (N=203) responses were collected. The demographic characteristics included all ages (18-65+), from all educational and income levels and with an equal proportion of male-female gender participants (male=48.3%, female=51.7%). The findings were factor analysed and then hierarchical regression analysis was carried out to determine the degree of correlations between the hypothesised constructs of market mavens, personality orientations/traits and E-I traits.

Instruments. The researchers used existing scales that are embedded in well developed personality theories, with small adaptations to suit the hospitality environment; five items for market mavens (Feick and Prices, 1987), six items in total for extraversion-introversion (Briggs-Myers and McCaulley, 1989), and an adapted version (twenty four items in total) of the four personality orientations/traits (Gountas, 2003).

INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

The four personality orientations/traits and the individual traits of Extraversion-Introversion were hypothesised to be the independent variables because they are the overall personality characteristics that influence many other aspects such as market mavenism, attitudes and motives. Market mavenism is hypothesised to be the dependent variable because it is a second order type of personality characteristic.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The reliability analysis produced acceptable Cronbach alpha scores: Market Maven ($\alpha=.88$), Thinking orientation/trait ($\alpha=.72$), Feeling orientation ($\alpha=.71$), Physical/sensing orientation ($\alpha=.64$), Imaginative orientation ($\alpha=.74$), Extraversion ($\alpha=.69$), and Introversion ($\alpha=.69$). Bivariate correlations between the market maven composite construct and a number of demographic variables revealed that there are some interesting and significant relationships at the .01-.05 (2-tailed) level. For example mavens are more likely to frequent restaurants (.286**), if they have achieved a degree level of education (.631**), are aged 26-35 years old (.351*), with an average income of 35-45,000 dollars (.440*), having professional status (.258*), and are equal proportions of males and females (.286**).

The actual regression analysis results (see table 1) suggest that the physical/sensing orientation/trait is the best predictor with the highest score ($r=0.474***$), followed by the thinking trait ($r=0.463***$), feeling trait ($r=.408***$) and imaginative ($r=0.205***$).

TABLE 1
Regression analysis

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
	Beta (standardised coefficients)						
Dependent variable: Market Mavens							
Independent variables:							
1. Thinking orientation/trait	0.463***						0.242*
2. Feeling orientation/trait		0.408***					0.048
3. Physical/Sensing orientation/trait			0.474***				0.307***
4. Imaginative orientation/trait				0.205**			-0.109
5. Extraversion (Sociability)					0.242**		0.125*
6. Introversion						-0.124	-0.148*
7. All Psychological characteristics (1-6)							
<i>r</i>	0.463	0.408	0.474	0.205	0.242	0.124	0.551
<i>r</i> ² (<i>r</i> Square)	0.214	0.166	0.224	0.042	0.059	0.015	0.304
F value	54.771***	40.09***	58.167***	8.859**	12.508***	3.156	14.244***
(***) <i>p</i> <.001; ** <i>p</i> <.01, and * <i>p</i> <.05)							

Hypothesis 1 is largely supported because all of these regressions are positive and the order of magnitude of relationships is as predicted except one (feeling) is not the second highest correlated orientation as hypothesised.

Hypothesis 2 is also supported because the regression scores between extraversion and mavens is significant, positive and larger ($r=0.242^{***}$) than the introversion trait correlation (-0.124).

When all the independent variables are entered into the regression analysis, the strongest predictor of the maven trait is the physical/sensing orientation/trait followed by the thinking and extraversion (see table 1).

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results support the findings by Price and Feick (1988) that market mavens have a higher level of interest and influence on services and store types. The research findings support the hypothesis that mavens are more likely to frequent restaurants. Mavens are likely to be well educated, with average incomes with no significant difference between males or females; they tend to have higher levels of education (college degree level) and are mostly professional people. The most significant predictor item that distinguishes mavens from other market segments is their preference for the physical (food) type of enjoyment. Mavens patronise restaurants for the sheer interest in good food physical comforts rather than for social prestige, status or to escape from everyday life. However, they are sociable and interested in activities that have a social flavour and therefore they tend to be extraverts rather than introverts. Mavens are more likely to evaluate logically which restaurant to patronise and weigh up the different options based on real accurate market facts as opposed to emotional or imaginative considerations. Restaurant outlets need to target and promote their service products and services based on the core benefits (physical pleasure, comfort and luxury type of atmosphere) and provide enough physical evidence to support their promotional communication claims to persuade their prospective customers.

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper we have examined some of the market maven's personality characteristics, namely their four major personality

orientations/traits and extraversion-Introversion. Understanding some of the core personality characteristics of mavens, would enable marketers to identify more clearly the preferences and motives of their most influential consumers. This is an important aspect for academic researchers and marketers because market mavens and early adopters/innovators are usually the key drivers of market demand for new and existing products and services. Consumption patterns change and often they are driven by small groups of consumers (mavens and innovators) who are usually more interested in many product categories and in communicating their knowledge to other consumers.

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Does Word-of-Mouth Change with the Passing of Time?

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Over several decades, sustained consumer research on word-of-mouth (WOM) has produced a substantial body of knowledge about this consumer phenomenon, its components and some of its processes. However, most of this previous research has treated WOM interaction as a static and mostly dyadic event, and has not fully investigated the content of the actual WOM exchange. Even though this focused research perspective has led to significant advances, it also seems problematic in our current hyper-connected social and business environments, where WOM can be performed not only by close contacts, but also within large groups of virtual strangers who may never physically meet and who are only connected through some computer mediated community. The growth of online communities has created borderless virtual spaces where geographically dispersed consumers can become participants in informational exchanges. Although the importance of this phenomenon is undeniable, much remains to be learned with respect to the relationship dynamics and WOM communication dynamics in these communities. This basic acknowledgement underscores the importance of studying WOM not just from a dyadic (source-seeker) perspective, but instead as a group activity that is achieved through group communication practices. As such, we seek to understand how WOM exchanges are affected by the social nature of the groups or communities in which they take place. In particular, we seek to extend our knowledge of how the dynamics of community development and community relationship building can influence WOM exchanges in general and WOM rhetoric in particular.

In this netnography (Kozinets 2002), we analyzed text data from the discourse of bulletin boards hosted at BabyCenter.com—a website for new and expectant parents. Our unit of analysis was the verbatim thread transcript, which was operationalized as a post with all of the replies. The complete text of all messages of one bulletin board was captured for a nine month period. The threads were concerned with WOM talk (661 threads) or interpersonal relationships within the community (used for contextual grounding of the data).

Our analysis followed an ethnomethodology program (Garfinkel, 1996). From this analysis, we develop a typology of WOM interaction genres and show that they change over the community lifespan. Our findings confirm that the levels of social connection and the interaction communicative functions are the main factors that distinguish different WOM genres. This conceptualization assumes that linkages between messages (i.e., between WOM initiation and WOM responses, and between WOM responses themselves) vary from loosely connected messages to tightly connected bonds, and that simultaneously these messages can serve instrumental (task-oriented) or socio-emotional functions. When a group WOM conversation stems from interactions between individual members who are focused on their own personal identity, the overall WOM genre is disconnected. Group members act or react in a non-coordinated way, with no notions of mutual sharing or collective concepts incorporated into the interaction. In this genre of WOM, interactions are pseudo-dyadic despite their group setting, and WOM advice giving/seeking roles and practices are static throughout the WOM episode, with generally a limited potential repertoire of WOM rhetorical methods. There are two main genres of disconnected WOM, and they differ based on the function of the overall interaction. In the disconnected instru-

mental WOM genre, consumers' intentions within these WOM episodes may be viewed through efforts to achieve private instrumental goals (i.e., task-oriented). In this genre of WOM, initiators typically provide no detail about their situation or problem, and focus solely on the potential solution. Also, the requested response is framed as paradigmatic and object-oriented. Correspondingly, the WOM responses are typically non-personal and paradigmatic. Alternatively, in the disconnected experiential WOM genre, WOM initiators typically provide background information for their problem and situation, and frame the requested response as narratives, thereby inviting personal and experiential accounts. Correspondingly, responses are often self-referential anecdotal stories.

By contrast, when participants to group WOM interactions develop a group identity and orient their actions toward the group, we found that the WOM genres are connected (or even multidirectional). In these WOM genres, group members jointly construct mutual understandings and shared volitional commitments to perform group actions and consciously come to see their actions in this way. Collective concepts such as group objectives, we-intentions, and social identity are central variables in this genre of WOM interactions. The WOM genres associated with this connected orientation definitely stem from 'real' group interactions (as opposed to pseudo-dyads) and can lead to indirect outcomes in the WOM exchanges, with others besides the initiator also being influenced. Further, in these connected WOM genres, the rhetorical repertoires appear more diverse and richer, and there is general fluidity between advice seeking and advice giving roles, with members often switching roles during an interaction. There are two main genres of connected WOM, and they differ based on the function of the overall interaction. In the connected instrumental WOM genre, participants' communicative practices focus on instrumental goals. WOM initiations are typically framed in solution-oriented terms and the requested response is typically framed in object and paradigmatic terms. Corresponding responses also follow a non-personal and paradigmatic focus. Further, in this genre of WOM exchange, it seems that even though we have a true group discussion, the nature and dynamics of the exchanges are limited to achieving basic informational exchanges and basic alignment of the group goals. In contrast, in the other connected genre: multidirectional communal WOM, we found that the interaction mechanisms were more complex and sophisticated, fully leveraging the potentials that group discussions offer. In this genre, we found that the WOM discussions exhibited a wide range of collaborative conversation practices such as: tag-teams, agreements and debates. In order to fully leverage the group resources, in this WOM genre, WOM initiators typically provide detailed background information for their problem and situation, generally providing a full diagnostic. Further they frame the requested response as narratives, inviting personal and experiential accounts. Since members are closely collaborating, in this communal connected WOM genre, responses are often recipient-referential anecdotal stories, utilizing narrative tools, often co-produced and revised through multiple messages. To conclude, it seems that in this WOM genre, something far more important than the exchange of information motivates participants to invest such amounts of time and energy

As a whole, this study shows that the methods used in seeking and providing WOM advice or more broadly engaging in some aspect of a WOM communicative practice can reveal the context in

which they are occurring, demarcate group membership and individuals' social identity orientation, indicate purposes of interaction, and define participants' motivations in a particular episode.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY
Health Marketing: How Consumers Cope

Lisa E. Bolton, University of Pennsylvania, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

The objective of this special session is to address an important problem in health care—how to encourage consumers to engage in health-protective behaviors and to comply with medication or treatment regimes. Such research is part of a larger literature on how consumers respond to health communication messages and how to promote active coping strategies among consumers in the health domain.

Each project offers a unique yet complementary perspective on these issues. Specifically:

- 1) “How Does Drug And Supplement Marketing Affect A Healthy Lifestyle?” investigates the effects of remedy marketing on a healthy lifestyle. It finds that drugs (versus supplements) serve as get-out-of-jail-free cards that reduce healthy lifestyle intentions among consumers within the problem domain. The authors attribute their results to reduced motivation and efficacy to engage in health-protective behaviors that constitute a healthy lifestyle.
- 2) “Getting Emotional about Health” examines the effectiveness of health messages that present consequences for the self or family. Its premise is that emotions point to the stakes of a disease, and health consequences have two crucial types of stakes: for self and for family. It finds that, when individuals are primed with a positive (negative) emotion, the compatibility between the referent and the emotion fosters (hinders) message processing.
- 3) “Fact, Fear, or Regret: Getting People to Cope Actively” investigates how the negative emotions of fear and regret as compared to a factual appeal differentially affect coping processes and behaviors. Specifically, a regret appeal evokes a state of responsibility and triggers action-oriented coping (e.g., use of a remedy). In contrast, a fear appeal dampens feelings of responsibility and triggers denial coping. In factual appeals, coping is driven by individual trait coping styles.

Together, these projects examine consumer and message factors that influence the effectiveness of health marketing and, more specifically, adaptive coping (i.e., avoiding risky behavior and starting/maintaining health-protective behavior). In large part, prior research in health communications has been focused on cognitions (e.g., examining consumer response to risk-avoidance communications). Departing from this tradition, the present research emphasizes the roles of motivation and emotion and also extends its investigation to remedy messages (i.e., for products that promise to manage/reduce risk). On the one hand, then, each project offers a “new” perspective by introducing and examining factors in ways that have not previously been addressed in the literature (e.g., discrete emotions, referent appeals, remedy labeling). On the other hand, each project also points to the “age-old” challenge of designing effective health communications—the myriad ways that consumer characteristics influence message processing. For this reason, our discussant Joel B. Cohen from the University of Florida (who has been chosen for his unique breadth and depth of experience in this area) will focus specifically on the advantages and disadvantages of each perspective within a broader context. Doing so is fundamental to any effort to understand and integrate the diverse findings in the health marketing literature—and, ultimately,

to improve our understanding of consumer health behavior and, in turn, consumer welfare.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“How Does Drug And Supplement Marketing Affect A Healthy Lifestyle?”

Lisa E. Bolton, Americus Reed II, Kevin G. Volpp and Katrina Armstrong

A variety of health care products or remedies purport to aid consumers in adopting or maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Although the *intended* objective of remedies is to reduce health risks, recent research suggests that remedy marketing may have *unintended* consequences (i.e., boomerang effects) that undermine risk-avoidance by consumers (Bolton, Cohen, and Bloom 2006). Within the health domain, there are many risky behaviors (e.g., high-fat eating, a sedentary lifestyle, smoking, excessive drinking) that are attractive to consumers and yet increase disease risk (e.g., heart disease, stroke, cancer, liver disease). The present research investigates whether the boomerang effect on healthy lifestyle intentions extend to both drugs and supplements as remedies.

On the surface, there may seem little reason to expect differences. For consumers within the problem domain, both drugs and supplements may be perceived as remedies that reduce risk and thereby undermine risk avoidance via a healthy lifestyle. In contrast, however, we investigate whether consumer react differentially to drug versus supplement marketing. Specifically, we propose that drug marketing may be *more* likely to boomerang than supplement marketing for two reasons. First, by increasing the salience of thoughts about poor health, a drug may lead consumers to classify their problem as one of poor health. This low self-image may reduce self-efficacy about enacting complementary health-protective behaviors and living a healthy lifestyle (Bandura 1986) inasmuch as a sick person feels less empowered to take responsibility for their own health outcomes and instead may look to external aid and treatment. Second, drugs—by reducing the salience and perceived importance of other complementary health-protective behaviors—may persuade consumers that drugs alone are sufficient to reduce risk. If so, then consumers will be less motivated to engage in complementary health-protective behaviors. With supplements, additional protective behaviors that contribute to a healthy lifestyle will still be seen as important to protect one’s health—indeed, the name itself serves as a reminder. Based on these two psychological mechanisms, we hypothesize that:

- H1: Drugs (compared to supplements) will decrease intentions to engage in healthy lifestyle practices (i.e., a boomerang effect).
- H2: Drugs (compared to supplements) will a) reduce perceptions of health and perceived efficacy; and, b) reduce perceived importance of, and motivation to engage in, complementary health-protective behaviors that constitute a healthy lifestyle.
- H3: Motivation and efficacy will mediate the effects of drug and supplement marketing on healthy lifestyle intentions.
- H4: A combined intervention (designed to increase motivation *and* efficacy to engage in health-protective behaviors) will increase healthy lifestyle intentions for a drug

remedy (versus no intervention or a single-mechanism intervention).

In a set of laboratory and field experiments, we investigate the effects of drug and supplement remedies (e.g. fat-fighting pills, anti-cholesterol products) on intentions to live a healthy lifestyle.

In experiment 1, a drug (versus supplement) undermined healthy lifestyle intentions. In experiment 2, healthy lifestyle intentions declined for a drug (versus supplement) as effectiveness increased. In experiment 3, drugs were associated with poorer health and reduced importance of healthy lifestyle practices than supplements; cognitive schema about drugs and supplements were shown to influence such judgments. In experiment 4, a consumer taking a drug (OTC or prescription) versus a supplement or no product was perceived as engaging to a lesser extent in healthy lifestyle practices. A drug also led to lower perceptions of health, efficacy, ability, and motivation to engage in healthy lifestyle behaviors. In experiment 5, a drug reduced efficacy and motivation to engage in health-protective behaviors and, in turn undermined healthy lifestyle intentions. When accompanied by a combined intervention that increased efficacy and motivation, the drug no longer boomeranged. Finally, in experiment 6, a combined intervention accompanying a drug remedy that targeted efficacy and motivation increased healthy lifestyle intentions; single-component interventions targeting motivation or efficacy alone did not.

These findings support our hypotheses and are significant for five reasons: 1) our research proposes a boundary condition in the health domain for the boomerang effect of remedies demonstrated in previous research, namely the type of product (supplement versus drug); 2) identifying products as supplements (or supplemental in nature) could serve as a corrective technique by reminding consumers that their use should accompany a healthy lifestyle; 3) from a health care perspective, corrective interventions that target motivation and efficacy as mediating psychological mechanisms can ‘undo’ the drug boomerang and promote healthy lifestyle practices; 4) from a consumer welfare perspective, the proliferation of supplement marketing may in fact be less harmful to a healthy lifestyle than similar drug marketing that undermines other health-protective behaviors; and 5) from a public policy perspective, the marketing activities of companies promoting drugs and supplements may merit attention to ensure that information is prominently displayed to reinforce healthy lifestyle practices. More generally, these findings add to the growing debate over the regulation of drug and supplement markets, the role of direct-to-consumer advertising, and de-marketing efforts to reduce risky consumption. Specifically, our research suggests that drugs boomerang on consumers by undermining their motivation and efficacy to engage in health-protective behaviors. Thus, consumers “tune out” other health-protective behaviors that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. In contrast, supplements remind consumers to “turn on” complementary protective behaviors as part of a healthy lifestyle package. Thus, drug marketing—and even supplement marketing—should be treated with caution—lest such products seduce consumers into treating them as get-out-of-jail-free cards.

“Getting Emotional About Health”

Nidhi Agrawal, Geeta Menon and Jennifer L. Aaker

It is well documented that people’s self-perceptions are often self-enhancing, even in the face of adverse reality. People tend to underestimate the likelihood of contracting a disease (i.e., “unrealistic optimism” or “self-positivity bias”), raising concerns regarding the effectiveness of health-related advertising. Extant research has focused largely on the role of moderating factors that increase self-risk perceptions, thereby heightening health awareness and

disease prevention (e.g., Luce and Kahn 1999; Raghurir and Menon 1998). We build on this base of research but focus on a different set of phenomenon.

Our premise is that emotions point to the stakes of a disease, and health consequences have two crucial types of stakes: for self and for family. Therefore, to understand the effectiveness of health messages that present consequences for the self or family, one needs to take into consideration the role of emotions—both as a provider of resources and of information. Important research questions we address pertain to: (a) the role of discrete emotions in fostering the acceptance of vulnerability or leading to the rejection of vulnerability, (b) how discrete emotions and message characteristics interact to influence message effectiveness, and (c) delineating the process by which these effects occur. To address these gaps, we conducted four experiments that examine the role of four strategically-chosen discrete emotions (happiness, peacefulness, sadness, agitation) in influencing message effectiveness, with a particular focus on how the emotions interact with health messages focused on the consequences of an illness for self or family. We show that when primed with a discrete positive (negative) emotion, the compatibility between the message referent and the discrete emotion fosters (hinders) the processing of health information. Further, this effect occurs due to an increase in the negative emotional state in compatible situations while processing disease-related information.

We argue that discrete emotions, varying on the dimensions of valence and self/other-relatedness, can influence the processing of health messages featuring the two distinct referent groups. While the valence of the emotion (e.g., positive, in the case of happiness) becomes a source for the acceptance or rejection of a message that presents a relevant health threat, the self/other-relatedness dimension of the same emotion (e.g., self-relatedness of happiness) forms the basis of compatibility with the message referent (e.g., self). Thus, this research integrates recent work on moods as antecedent states influencing the resources to process the message (e.g., Keller, Lipkus, and Rimer 2003) with research suggesting that discrete emotions may be appraised on distinct dimensions (e.g., Lerner and Keltner 2000).

We prime happiness and peacefulness (experiment 1), sadness and agitation (experiment 2). The results show that under happy emotional states, self-referent health appeals are more effective than family-referent appeals, whereas the converse occurred for peaceful emotional states. And under negative emotional states like sadness (vs. agitation), the compatible self-referent health appeals were less effective than family-referent appeals. Together, these findings suggest that compatibility between message referent and self/other relatedness dimension of the emotion impacts message effectiveness—an effect that is critically dependent on valence of the emotion. In experiment 3, we expand the set of message effectiveness measures, and enhance external validity by embedding the message in a more realistic domain where a magazine primes the emotions that then foster or hinder the processing of health related information. Here too, we demonstrate that a compatible message referent leads to greater message effectiveness, but only for positive emotional states when there are resources to deal with such emotionally aversive messages. Negative emotions appear to encourage a mood repair motive, discouraging consumers from accepting the messages presented by a compatible appeal. We also demonstrated that the interactive effect of emotional valence and compatibility on message effectiveness is mediated through depth and quality of processing of information, thereby providing evidence for the process that we posit. Finally, experiment 4 demonstrates that emotional deterioration underlies the effects observed in experiments 1-3.

Our results have implications for the literature on emotions, compatibility effects, and health communications. Our findings speak to (a) examining compatibility effects between message characteristics and individual factors, and (b) positing specific cognitive-based mechanisms underlying the effects including elaboration likelihood, experienced fluency, or perceptions that a persuasive message “just feels right.” We add to this literature in three ways. First, we show that compatibility can occur not simply between a primed construct and message characteristics, but also between one dimension of an incidental discrete emotion and message characteristics. Second, we extend this emotion-based compatibility finding by demonstrating its dependence on the valence of the emotion such that positive emotions foster compatibility effects, but negative emotions make compatible appeals less persuasive. Extant research on compatibility effects has found only argument strength as a moderator of the persuasiveness of compatible messages (Petty and Wegener 1998). Our findings introduce valence of emotion as another such moderator.

“Fact, Fear, or Regret: Getting People to Cope Actively”

Kirsten Grasshof, Barbara Kahn and Mary Frances Luce

Negative emotions are commonly used in advertisements promoting everything from mammogram screening to cat food. Negative emotions vary in important ways, perhaps most notably in the action tendency or coping response they generate. For example, fearful people will tend to flee dangers while angry people approach them. Some negative emotions make people feel incapable of managing the situation themselves so they escape while others make people feel capable and responsible so they act.

Lazarus (1991) suggested that people cognitively appraise a situation on several different appraisal dimensions (e.g., valence) and that these cognitive appraisals give rise to different emotions. When negative emotions are experienced, people generally use coping strategies to mitigate them. Recent research has begun to investigate how specific emotions and or specific appraisals prompt various coping strategies. For example using a recall task, Folkman and Lazarus (1988) found that appraisals of responsibility lead to action-facilitative-coping (e.g. “I thought about what steps to take”). Conversely, feelings of threat and a lack of efficacy led to avoidance coping (Duhachek 2005). These results support the hypothesis that links emotions that evoke strong (weak) feelings of responsibility, for example regret (fear), with active (avoidance) coping strategies. However, despite strong theoretical support and some recent experimental support, research that directly examines the link between emotions, coping, and behavior is still scant and riddled with prevalent inconsistencies and null effects (Skinner et al. 2003).

The present research investigates how the emotions of fear and regret as compared to a factual appeal differentially affect coping processes and the resulting impact on behaviors. In this research instead of asking participants to indicate how they cope with an emotional event we actually observe the coping process by watching how they navigate through various Internet sites, allowing us to measure coping patterns and times. This format of using internet links that are reflective of coping strategies is congruent with the way many consumers process emotionally charged decisions from deciding what brand of car to purchase to considering different types of medical treatments.

In study 1, participants were exposed to messages pretested to evoke fear or regret, each compared to a more factual control message regarding Chlamydia. They were then given the opportunity to explore several Internet links as much (or little) as they desired. The available links were designed to reflect active coping

strategies (1. how to use condoms, a step by step guide to proper condom use, 2. purchasing condoms, a site that sold discounted condoms), information seeking strategies (3. advantages and disadvantages to condom use, 4. ask Alice, a peer generated site discussing condoms) or denial strategies (5. a joke site). The links that were explored and time spent per link and overall were recorded.

The results indicated no significant differences in the overall time spent coping. However, the relative mix of action oriented versus denial coping varied. Participants in the fear condition spent a significantly smaller portion of time actively coping than either those in the regret or factual condition. Furthermore, the fear participants spent a significantly larger portion of time exploring the denial (joke) link. The results support our hypothesis that participants exposed to a fear message are less likely to cope actively and more likely to engage in denial coping than regret or factual participants. We also found preliminary support for our hypothesis that participants in the regret condition would cope more actively than those in the factual condition. Finally, coping tendencies appeared to be moderated by individual coping styles in the factual condition, and thus in the absence of a specific emotional theme to direct coping strategies.

In a second study we find that the differences between regret and fear coping are exacerbated in an emotional versus a deliberative mind set. We also find that the actual decision to purchase condoms is predicted by the results in the emotional condition. This is consistent with our expectation that a condom serves as a visceral cue evoking emotional reactions and coping tendencies.

In summary, using real time measures of coping we find the theorized differences between the high responsibility emotion of regret and the low responsibility emotion of fear. This suggests that when a state of responsibility is evoked through an emotional appeal (specifically a regret appeal), action oriented coping can be triggered. However, when feelings of responsibility are dampened through a fear appeal, denial coping is triggered.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Negativity Biases in Consumer Preferences, Choice, and Outcome Perception

Carey K. Morewedge, Princeton University, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

Much research on evaluation has focused attention on the role of preferences. For example, how preferences increase for the things we choose and receive (Festinger, 1957; Kahneman, Knetch, & Thaler, 1990). Whether our preferences reflect the immediate, prospective, or retrospective pleasure experiences or objects will bring (Kahneman, 1999). And whether we are too focused on what we prefer in the short term and do not account for decisions' long term ramifications (Mischel & Shoda, 1995). Research, however, has also demonstrated that negative events have a profound impact upon our lives, and that much of life is spent attempting to avoid them (Baumeister et al. 2000; Denrell, 2005; Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Rozin & Royzman, 1999). The research we present focuses on what we dislike, and how our distastes influence decisions. It demonstrates why the unpleasant aspects of our decisions and their outcomes also deserve serious consideration.

Hsee first presents research on negativity bias in the judgment of alternatives. Whether evaluating penguins, politicians, or peers, his findings suggest that people are more likely to agree on what they dislike than what they like. In other words, there is greater consensus across individuals on what is bad than on what is good. Second, Kramer, Maimaran and Simonson examine the relative ease of assessing options' strengths and weaknesses. They find that the peculiar attractiveness of compromise (utilitarian) options may be due to their superior resistance to criticism relative to risky (or hedonic) options, rather than to differences in the benefits they confer. Third, Morewedge presents research suggesting that negative outcomes appear specially intended to perceivers. He finds that people are more likely to attribute negative outcomes to the intentions of other people rather than to non-intentional causes (i.e., computer programs and chance), whereas people are more likely to ascribe positive outcomes to non-intentional causes rather than to the intentions of other humans. Finally, Dan Ariely will critique these papers, discuss how they relate to other existing research, and point out potential implications.

ABSTRACTS

“Do People Agree More On Who is Pretty or On Who is Ugly?”

Christopher K. Hsee, The University of Chicago

This research explores two general questions: whether people agree more on what they like or on what they dislike, and whether people err more when predicting what others like or predicting what others dislike. We find that in general people agree more on what they dislike yet err more when predicting what others like. We explore the underlying reasons of these effects and identify situations where the reverse effects may emerge.

“De gustibus non est disputandum? The Impact of the Nature of the Chosen Option in Positive and Negative Contexts”

Thomas Kramer, City University of New York

Michal Maimaran, Stanford University

Itamar Simonson, Stanford University

Given that consumers often criticize others' choices or seek to defend their own, it is surprising that academic research provides

such little empirical evidence on the impact that the specific nature of the chosen option has on both choice criticism and choice defense. That is, we currently know very little about whether consumers' sensitivity to the choice type (e.g., virtue vs. vice, or compromise vs. non-compromise) differs between criticizing others and responding to others' criticism. Presumably, criticism of choice and response to criticism are two sides of the same coin: the option that is easier to criticize should be harder to defend. For example, if it is easier to criticize a choice of a cake over an apple, then choice of the cake should also be harder to defend.

However, we propose that the two actions are asymmetric with respect to the impact of the nature of the chosen option. In particular, we hypothesize that in the relatively negative context of criticizing choices, consumers tend to focus more generally on shared norms, whereas in the relatively positive context of defending choices, they focus more on the particular product attributes of the chosen option. Thus, the *nature* of the chosen option will have a larger impact when criticizing choices than when defending these choices.

Specifically, in order to respond to criticism of their choices, consumers can generate reasons justifying their choice based on the sovereignty of their idiosyncratic preferences (e.g., Shafir, Simonson, and Tversky 1993; Simonson 1989). Since tastes or preferences are highly subjective, choice options *irrespective* of their nature can be defended by reliance on the options' attributes matching these particular values. In contrast, the particular nature of others' choices is likely to play a relatively greater role in negative contexts of criticism. Since subjective tastes are difficult to argue (“de gustibus non est disputandum”), criticizing consumers for their choices may involve shared norms regarding which choices are the appropriate ones to make. For example, when choosing between a vice (e.g., a chocolate brownie) and a virtue (e.g., a fruit salad), it is common knowledge that one *should* choose the salad in order to maintain better health. Similarly, when choosing between a compromise and a non-compromise option, most individuals assume that choosing the compromise option is safer and minimizes losses, making it the ‘right’ option to choose.

Thus, consumers are likely to base their criticism on known norms and shared rules, so that the nature of the option being criticized is likely to play a bigger role. Specifically, it is more difficult to criticize the choice of conventional options, those that are easier-to-justify (e.g., the compromise option; Simonson, 1989), or ‘sure-thing’ options (Simonson, Kramer, and Young, 2004). Conversely, unconventional options (such as non-compromise or risky gambles) are more easily criticized. Therefore, we hypothesize and test in a series of studies that, whereas the choice of an option makes a large difference when forming criticism, the ability to respond to criticism is rather insensitive to the nature of the option one chooses.

In Study 1, participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: in the ‘criticism’ condition they read about other students' choices between (1) vices and virtues (e.g., a brownie and an apple), (2) hedonic and utilitarian options (e.g., a candy bar and a calling card), (3) compromise and non-compromise options, and (4) ‘sure-thing’ (e.g., \$25 for sure) and risky gambles (e.g., a 20% chance to receive \$250). Subjects were then asked to rate how easy it would be for them to criticize another student for his choice of

each option. In the ‘respond’ condition, participants rated how easy it would be for them to respond to criticism had they themselves chosen each option.

Across the various problems, we find an interaction between the task (criticize vs. respond) and the type of option. Specifically, participants reported that it would be significantly easier to criticize the choice of the non-compromise, the hedonic option, the vice and the gamble than the choice of the compromise, utilitarian option, virtue and the sure-thing, respectively. In contrast, the differences in ease of responding to choosing one option or the other (e.g., the vice or the virtue) were much smaller and not significant.

In Study 2, we (1) generalized the findings to additional choice contexts as well as replicated the previous results, (2) examined whether the effect also appears in a within-subject design, and (3) ruled out the possibility that the results of Study 1 are due to differences in difficulty of evaluating the ease of criticizing versus the ease of responding. In addition to the two between-subjects conditions, we included two within-subjects conditions in which participants rated both the ease of criticizing others’ choice and the ease of responding to others’ criticism (order counterbalanced; no order effects were found). All participants evaluated choices of (1) compromise versus non-compromise options (2) sure-thing versus risky gambles, and (3) dominating versus dominated options. Finally, participants rated the ease of completing the criticizing versus responding to criticism task.

As hypothesized, we found bigger differences in ease of criticizing each option (compromise vs. non-compromise, dominating vs. dominated and sure-thing vs. risky option) than in ease of responding to criticism for choosing each option. Specifically, criticizing the choice of ‘non-conventional’ options was judged to be significantly easier than criticizing the choice of ‘conventional’ options. Finally, the two tasks were equally difficult (in both the within and between designs) suggesting that the difference in difficulty of tasks cannot account for our results.

A third study (currently underway) seeks to provide direct support for our proposition that negative contexts of criticizing choices versus relatively positive contexts of defending choices affect the degree to which consumers focus more generally on shared norms versus on the particular product attributes of the chosen option. In particular, a ‘choice criticism’ group is presented with several problem types (e.g., hedonic vs. utilitarian options; compromise vs. non-compromise) and indicates in an open-ended format the reasons they could give for criticizing choice each of the options. Similarly, a separate ‘choice defense’ group is presented with the same problem types and indicates in an open-ended format the reasons they could give for defending choice of each of the options. Additionally, a third group of subjects will be recruited to evaluate the persuasiveness and effectiveness of the reasons for criticizing choices of the options (from group 1) and for defending choices of the options (from group 2).

“Negativity Bias in the Perception of External Agency”

Carey K. Morewedge, Princeton University

People seem apt to believe that machines have a “mind of their own” when they malfunction, and that referees were responsible for their team’s loss. Yet, when machines work well or their team is winning, the state of affairs is seldom attributed to the intentions of an external agent. This discrepancy reflects a general asymmetry in the way people ascribe intentional agency. Four experiments, employing ultimatum games and gambles, demonstrate that negative outcomes more often prompt one to infer the presence and influence of external intentional agents than do neutral and positive outcomes.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Current Methodological Concerns for the Behavioral Researcher

Joachim Vosgerau, Carnegie Mellon, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

In the past 40 years, statistical methods have become increasingly sophisticated. New methods allow behavioral researchers to more efficiently reveal increasingly complex patterns of causal relationships. In this session, advancements in three prominent statistical analysis techniques are presented: Mediation analysis, mean-centering of variables, and measurement analysis. The first paper presents a method for uncovering mediation that is more efficient (in terms of statistical power and accuracy) than traditional mediation analyses. The second paper demonstrates the advantages and disadvantages of mean-centering and its consequences for the interpretation of ANOVA and moderated regression. And the third paper introduces a new measurement analysis for panel data that allows discerning trait and state components. Overall, the session covers a broad range of methodological concerns that are equally important to the experimental researcher as to the researcher working with field data and surveys.

An important aspect of the session is its appeal to a diverse group of researchers. This is one reason we believe that the session will attract a wide variety of conference attendees. In his role as the discussant Joel Huber will conclude the session by briefly commenting on the papers presented, and will highlight methodology questions that are worthy of future investigation. He will then draw the audience to discuss issues raised by the session.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“A Meditation on Mediation”

Dawn Iacobucci, Wharton

Mediation is frequently of interest to social science researchers. A theoretical premise posits an intervening variable, M , some indicative measure of the process through which an independent variable, X , is thought to impact a dependent variable, Y . The researcher seeks to assess the extent to which the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is direct or indirect via the mediating factor.

For example, X might be a trait, M , a general attitude, and Y , a specific response judgment. Whatever the theoretical content, tests of mediation seem particularly appealing to behavioral researchers attempting to track processes. For example, in the *Journal of Consumer Research* and the *Journal of Consumer Psychology* mediation tests are reported in approximately one quarter of the published articles.

Without question, the most popular means of testing for mediation is the procedure offered by Baron and Kenny (*JPSP*, 1986). Using their approach, the researcher fits three regression models to assess the links between X and M , X and Y , and the combination of X and M predicting Y .

We begin this paper by challenging the unquestioned and overly frequently use of mediation assessments (acrwebsite.org/topic.asp?artid=337). Yet, for the researcher determined to test for mediations, we demonstrate that structural equations models (SEM) are the superior tool for the mediation testing. The regression technique never surpasses SEM. This result is true even in the simplest of data scenarios, and clearly the SEM analytical framework allows us to consider a variety of data scenarios with greater sophistication.

First is the scenario in which a researcher has multiple indicators of the X , M , and/or Y constructs—a scenario prefigured by Baron and Kenny, but not addressed fully in their article. They acknowledge that, like any regression, their basic approach makes no particular allowances for measurement error, which is simply subsumed into the overall error term, contributing to the lack of fit.

To compare the analytical approaches, we created a series of Monte Carlo simulation studies to investigate and compare the regression vs. SEM methodologies in terms of superiority in identifying mediation structures. We varied the strength of the mediated vs. direct effects in the population, and the sample size in the data.

Even in the simplest of data scenarios—the classic case of only three constructs and only one measure per construct—the choice between regression and SEMs matters, and structural equations modeling is the superior technology. The SEM results work to the researcher's benefit, in being more likely to detect existing patterns of mediation, being truer to the known population structural characteristics, and in being statistically more defensible, given the elegance of the simultaneous estimation. Fitting components of models simultaneously (i.e., via SEM) is always statistically superior to doing so in a piece-meal fashion, e.g., to statistically control for and partial out other relationships.

In Study 2, we demonstrate that when multi-item scales are aggregated and their means imputed into regressions, the use of a structural equations model is again superior to the regressions. There is no circumstance in which a structural equation is outperformed by the regressions.

Taking means over multiple items (e.g., $\{X_1, X_2, X_3\}$ to \bar{X}) to simplify analyses is commonplace, but doing so does not use the data to their full advantage as would allowing the representation of the items in a measurement model. In Study 3, we compare multiple items for X , M , and Y as used in SEM vs. their aggregate means. We classified the results into the categories of “no,” “partial,” and “full” mediation and conclude that the results for the mean analysis are not as clear as the results from the full SEM treatment of the multi-item data. When there is “no” or “partial” mediation, means are more likely to overstate the extent of mediation.

Complementary to the concern of measurement issues is the substantive concern over the interrelationship among the focal constructs. We examine the logic and statistics underlying the scenario in which the X , M , and Y constructs are embedded in a richer nomological network that contains additional antecedent and/or consequential constructs. This broader nomological network is encouraged by philosophers of science and methodologists to offer the richest view of the phenomena and their explanations. The addition of at least one more construct, Q , is necessary even if the researcher cares more about X , M , and Y than Q .

The principal statistical purpose of the additional construct is to yield sufficient degrees of freedom to accurately test the mediation links. The mediation model, which posits three links among three constructs, is “just identified,” meaning the directionality of the effects, from X to M vs. M to X is empirically indeterminate (i.e., the fit statistics are perfect, e.g., CFI=1.00; rmse=0.00, and indistinguishable).

Theory should help differentiate the meaningfulness of these alternative models, yet competing models are rarely mentioned,

much less frequently tested. Further, rivals can be conceptually equally plausible. For example, if X =affect, M =cognition, and Y =behavior, there exist supporters of theories which pose $X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$, $M \rightarrow X \rightarrow Y$ or $Y \rightarrow M \rightarrow X$, etc. (Breckler, *PsychBull*, 1990).

The regression techniques are no different from the structural equations models in offering no solution to the issue of using all the available degrees of freedom in the decomposition of the variance (the parameter estimates are equivalent). The use of multi-item scales offers no solution to this problem either—additional degrees of freedom are illusory, contributing to the measurement model accuracy, but not to the critical structural model. Ideally, the X , M , Y mediation would be tested in the presence of at least one additional construct, Q , whose role is to serve as an antecedent to X , or a consequence of X , M , or Y .

In the final part of this paper, we extend the SEM models to consider moderated mediation. SAS code is provided for all scenarios.

“Mean-Centering and the Interpretation of ANOVA and Moderated Regression”

*Joachim Vosgerau, Carnegie Mellon
Hubert Gatignon, INSEAD*

ANOVA is the most prominent statistical analysis in experimental behavioral research. When an interaction of a continuous variable and a categorical variable is hypothesized, it is common practice to dichotomize the continuous scores and analyze the data with an ANOVA. For example, if a researcher wants to test the interaction of familiarity with a product class and gender on the size of the consideration set, the researcher might dichotomize familiarity scores into unfamiliar (score=0) and familiar (score>0), and analyze the data with ANOVA. This practice prevails although dichotomizing continuous variables bears negative consequences such as diminishing statistical power (Irwin and McClelland 2003 *JMR*). The reluctance to analyze data with moderated regression seems to result from the difficulties in interpreting moderated regression results.

Indeed, moderated regression and ANOVA can yield seemingly different effects when applied to the same data. We demonstrate that these differences occur because in ANOVA main effects are estimated at their means, and interaction effects are restricted to be symmetric cross-over effects relative to the means. In contrast, in moderated regression constant effects are estimated at zero, and no specific pattern of interaction is imposed.

In order to make moderated regression and ANOVA effects comparable, some researchers have argued to mean-center variables in moderated regression. We show that mean-centering yields effects that are statistically equivalent to effects from raw variables, but it restricts interaction effects to be symmetric relative to the means of the variables. As a consequence, constant effects in moderated regressions are no longer constant but depend on the specific range of the variables. For example, assume the researcher hypothesizes an interaction of familiarity and gender, such that female consumers who are familiar with the product class include more products in their consideration set than female consumers who are less familiar with the product class. For male consumers no differences with respect to product familiarity are expected. The researcher analyzes the raw data with a moderated regression and finds a significant interaction. In this raw-data analysis, the effect for gender is constant, whether a sample with familiarity scores from 0 to 3 is used or a sample with familiarity scores from 3 to 6. But if the researcher mean-centered familiarity scores, the effect for gender would depend on the specific sample. That is, the researcher would find a different gender effect with the sample of 0 to 3 familiarity scores than with the sample with 3 to 6 scores.

The same problem is shown to hold for main effects in ANOVA. If the researcher dichotomized familiarity scores and analyzed the data with ANOVA, the main effect for gender would depend on the range of the familiarity scores. This undesirable property of range-dependence of main effects in ANOVA is a result of ANOVA constraining interaction effects to be symmetric cross-over effects relative to the mean.

Another interpretational problem with ANOVA concerns the way main effects are estimated. Main effects in ANOVA, as constant effects in mean-centered moderated regression, are computed as the effect when the other variable is at its mean. So, the main effect for familiarity (unfamiliar vs. familiar) is estimated at the mean of gender (female vs. male). But what is the mean of female and male? It clearly makes no sense to talk about the mean of gender. And thus it makes no sense to interpret the main effect of product familiarity that is estimated at the mean of gender. Concluding, in the presence of interaction effects, ANOVA main effects have to be interpreted with caution. Main effects depend on the specific range in which the independent variables are manipulated or measured.

Mean-centering in moderated regression, although it is shown to lead to the undesirable property of range dependence of the constant effects, can nonetheless be beneficial. Mean-centering does not reduce multicollinearity (as some researchers and statistical textbooks claim), but it can help to overcome the arbitrary origin problem of interval scales such as Likert scales. Interval scales have no defined zero point, adding an arbitrary constant to an interval scale does not change its meaning. But adding an arbitrary constant to a continuous variable in a moderated regression changes the effect of the other variable in the moderated regression. So, in moderated regression with an interval scale focal variable, the constant effect of the moderator variable is non-interpretable because of the arbitrary origin of the focal variable. The arbitrary origin of interval scale variables can be eliminated by mean-centering. Mean-centered scores only include deviations from the variable mean, and thus arbitrary constants that are added to the raw variable drop out. However, because mean-centering also changes moderation to a symmetric cross-over interaction effect, caution has to be taken about which variables to mean-center in a moderated regression. We show that when the moderator variable is interval scale, mean-centering this variable allows for interpreting the focal variable's effect as its effect when the moderator is at its mean (the interpretation of the moderator variable's constant effect is not affected by the mean-centering transformation). But when the focal variable is interval scale, mean-centering does not help (as it would change the constant effect of the moderator variable to an effect that varies with the focal variable). In this case, the constant effect of the moderator variable should not be interpreted (the focal variable's effect would not be affected by the mean-centering transformation).

“An Extended Paradigm for Measurement Analysis of Marketing Constructs Applicable to Panel Data”

*Hans Baumgartner, Penn State University
Jan-Benedict E.M. Steenkamp, University of Northern Carolina*

Although the measurement of marketing and consumer behavior constructs has greatly improved in recent years, we believe that several topics have received insufficient attention in the literature. First, in many areas of research it is necessary to draw a clear distinction between the trait and state aspects of a construct. Although the distinction between states (transitory characteristics of individuals that change with circumstances and over time) and traits (relatively stable dispositions) has led to valuable insights in many areas of behavioral research (e.g., enduring vs. situational

involvement), these two components are not treated separately in conventional measurement models.

Second, measure specificity and other sources of systematic but non-construct-related variation in observed responses are usually confounded with random measurement error in standard measurement analyses. Treating all sources of non-substantive variation as an undifferentiated amalgam of measurement error (a) gives the misleading impression that the causes of measurement error are unknown and unknowable; (b) makes it impossible to get insights into the relative importance of the different sources of error or take ameliorative action; and (c) may lead to improper assessments of reliability and cause other problems as well (e.g., when correlations are corrected for attenuation, the correction may be inappropriate).

Third, the means of observed and latent variables are generally not considered explicitly in measurement analyses because all variables are defined as deviations from their means. This is problematic if item or scale means are to be compared across groups of respondents or over time because the comparisons are only meaningful if certain assumptions of measurement invariance are satisfied.

To overcome these problems, we propose an integrative procedure for conducting measurement analysis that (a) distinguishes temporary and stable components of variance in constructs corresponding to their state and trait aspects; (b) separates systematic sources of non-construct variance from random measurement error; and (c) takes into account the means of the observed variables.

With regard to the first point, we propose a second-order factor specification that enables a sophisticated investigation of the stable and transient components of a construct and avoids the problems associated with assessments of stability via test-retest correlations. For example, the procedure allows researchers to determine what proportion of the variation in a construct is due to states or traits.

With regard to the second point, we propose a new classification of measurement error along two dimensions. The first dimension distinguishes between three types of error depending on how many items are affected: (a) measurement error that is specific to a single item within a scale; (b) measurement error that affects a subset of items within a scale; and (c) measurement error that impacts all the items in a scale. The second dimension distinguishes between sources of error that are restricted to a given occasion of measurement (transient) and those that are consistent over time (stable). We show how the resulting six sources of error (stable scale-wide error, transient scale-wide error, stable item-subset error, transient item-subset error, stable item-specific error, and transient item-specific or random error) can be modeled using a factor-analytic specification and discuss the implications of the model for measurement analysis.

With regard to the third point, the proposed procedure incorporates the item and scale means into the measurement analysis, makes assessments of measurement invariance an explicit component of the scale validation process, and ultimately leads to cross-sectional and longitudinal comparisons of means (as well as relationships between constructs) that are methodologically justified.

An extended application of the model to the constructs of brand loyalty and deal proneness is presented to illustrate the benefits of the proposed procedure. We found that about one quarter of the total variance was systematic (nonrandom) measurement error, most of it stable over time. Moreover, scale reliability using the conventional procedure (such as Cronbach's alpha) was substantially overestimated. This result is probably not unique to the present context because the sources of systematic error will also be present in other scales. In addition, we found that ignoring system-

atic measurement error had a very substantial biasing effect on the results, since the correlation between the substantive constructs of brand loyalty and deal proneness was underestimated by a factor of almost 3 (-.25 versus -.70). In general, the direction of the bias depends on the sign of the true correlation. Measurement errors are typically positively correlated. If the true correlation between two constructs is negative, it will be underestimated, as in our illustration. If the true correlation is positive, it will be overestimated.

ROUNDTABLE

The Question-Behavior Effect: Current and Future Research

David Sprott, Washington State University, USA

SUMMARY

Asking someone a question about a behavior changes the ultimate performance of that behavior in the future. This *question-behavior effect* was initially demonstrated by Sherman (1980) using self-predictions to influence both socially desirable (making a donation to a charity) and undesirable (singing over the telephone) behaviors. Since that time, two primary groups of researchers have consistently demonstrated the question-behavior effect and have elucidated (at least some of) the theoretical mechanisms underlying the effect.

One group of scholars (who have published research on the mere-measurement effect) have used scaled intention and satisfaction questions to influence most often non-normative consumer-related behaviors (e.g., Chandon, Morwitz, Reinartz, 2004; Dholakia & Morwitz, 2002; Morwitz & Fitzsimons, 2004; Morwitz, Johnson & Schmittlen, 1993; Williams, Fitzsimons, & Block, 2004). These researchers have shown such questions to influence a wide-variety of actions (e.g., first time and repeat purchase of durable and non-durable goods, product choice, transactions with and defection from service providers, flossing, drug and alcohol consumption). The theoretical mechanism expected to underlie these effects is one based on attitude accessibility, whereby the question makes attitudes accessible which guide future performance of focal behaviors.

Another group of researchers (referring to their findings as the self-prophecy effect) have employed dichotomous self-predictions to influence behaviors with clear norms associated with the behavior (e.g., Greenwald, et al., 1987; Spangenberg, 1997; Spangenberg & Greenwald, 1999; Spangenberg, et al., 2003; Sprott, Spangenberg, & Fisher, 2003). In various settings, these researchers have shown that self-predictions can reduce the incidence of non-normative behavior (e.g., cheating on an exam) and increase the rate of normative behavior (e.g., recycling, health club attendance, donating to a charity, gender stereotyping, voting). In contrast to an accessibility perspective, these authors suggest that self-predictions are effective due to the motivation associated with cognitive dissonance. It is argued that the question simultaneously reminds people of prior failures to perform the behavior and norms associated with the target action; any discrepancy between what people have done and what they know they should do produces dissonance, which in turn motivates behavior change.

Both streams of research have demonstrated the importance of the question-behavior effect by reporting findings for real behavior. For example, Spangenberg (1997) found self-predictions to increase health-club attendance rates up to 6 months after the prediction. Similarly, Morwitz et al. (1993) showed that an intention measure influenced car purchase rates up to 6 months after the question was asked. Clearly, the question-behavior effect has significant implications for businesses measuring future behaviors and for organizations that may use questions to alter future behavior. As noted previously, research on the theoretical mechanisms underlying observed effects has documented at least two processes including attitude accessibility and cognitive dissonance. Both mechanisms have received considerable theoretical support in the literature including research demonstrating significant moderators of observed effects. For example, Morwitz and Fitzsimons (2004) demonstrated that prior brand attitudes influenced the magnitude of the question-behavior effect and Sprott, et al. (2003) found that self-

predictions were more effective for those with high (vs. low) social norms. These findings respectively support the attitude accessibility and dissonance interpretations.

Although much has been learned about the question-behavior effect since its introduction over 25 years ago, there is much left to be studied. Research on the theoretical mechanisms driving these effects should continue. Clearly attitude accessibility and cognitive dissonance are likely to underlie at least a portion of the reported findings, still future investigators should examine potential alternate theoretical processes related to these effects that have yet to be explored (e.g., implementation intentions). Other promising areas of research include investigations on the wording of the question and how such changes in wording may influence the magnitude of the effect. Prior research suggests that relatively simple (and outwardly benign) changes to the wording of intention measures can have differential effects in the theory of reasoned action (e.g., Sheppard, Hartwick and Warshaw 1988), similar effects may be possible regarding the question-behavior effect. As noted previously, question-behavior effects have been observed for up to six months after completing the question; such effects are hard to be accounted for via attitude accessibility and cognitive dissonance. Future research therefore needs to investigate further the nature of such long terms effects and the processes by which such effects manifest. Finally, research needs to investigate additional moderators of question behavior effects—most promising moderators would be those that help to clarify the processes underlying the effect.

The purpose of this roundtable is to bring together researchers interested in this area and to discuss unpublished findings and directions for future research. As can be seen from the list of references and those who have committed to attending this roundtable, a fairly substantial number of consumer researchers have investigated (or are at least interested in) the phenomenon. This roundtable is the first of its kind at ACR, although ACR has been the venue for many informal discussions of this topic over the years. Having a formal roundtable is hoped to take these discussions to a new level and stimulate future research into the question-behavior effect.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Possessions and Identity: Shifting Identities, Shifting Relationships

Jonah Berger, Stanford University, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

Identities and relationships with possessions often shift, but we know relatively little about how such shifts influence the way consumers choose and relate to possessions. Research has shown that consumers choose products that match their self-concept (e.g., Sirgy, 1982), and delineated different consumer-product relationships (e.g. Fournier, 1998), but identities and relationships are often not static. Even if one assumes that preferences are influenced by identities, certain identities may be salient at one time, but not others, and the particular identity expressed by choosing a product may change. Similarly, consumers' relationship with products may shift over time. Some research has begun to examine the effects of identity salience (e.g., Kleine, Kleine, & Kernan, 1993; Reed, 2005) and shifting product relationships (e.g., Aaker, Fournier, and Brassel, 2004), but many important questions remain. How might these shifts influence the way consumers react to and choose products, as well as consumer satisfaction and well-being?

This session examines the consequences of shifting identities and product relationships. What happens when consumers choose a product when one identity is salient, but have to live with the consequences of their choice when a contrasting identity is evoked? How do consumers react when other social groups adopt a product that they had used to signal their identity? What happens when consumers lose special possessions and what factors moderate this threat to psychological security? How do shifts in salient identities change consumers' attitudes towards and relationships with products? The session examines these, and related questions, as it attempts to deepen our understanding of the consequences of shifting identities and product relationships.

Overview of Topics/Issues

The paper presented by LeBoeuf and Belyavsky examines how shifts in identity salience over time influence consumers' satisfaction with choice. We often make choices while one identity is salient, but must live with those choices while a contrasting identity is evoked. They find that the match between these different identities moderates satisfaction with choice, and that mismatches may lead consumers to undo or "revoke" previous choices.

Ferraro, Escalas, and Bettman explore how identity impacts the way consumers respond to the loss of a special possession. To protect themselves from future pain, consumers generally become less attached to possessions after a loss. The magnitude of lowered attachment, however, depends on attachment style, and consumers are less able to distance themselves from possessions closely tied to their identities.

Research by Machin examines how shifts in the set of identities that are applicable to a person may lead to shifts in product relationships. Certain products may seem antithetical to a consumer's identity at one point in time, but as life course events shift the centrality of different aspects of the self, the same product may later be embraced.

Finally, the research presented by Berger and Heath investigates how people react when products that once signaled their identity are co-opted by out-group members. Products can signal identity, but if out-group members adopt them, the identity they signal may change. The studies illustrate that to avoid signaling undesired identities, people may abandon products that are adopted by other social groups.

Taken together, these papers highlight not only that identity influences consumers' choice of, and relationship with possessions, but also how these choices and relationships are sensitive to shifts.

We thus expand the view of the identity possession link from a static, "one moment in time" perspective to a dynamic, interactive, and fluid process. Given the breadth of issues addressed in these papers, it is expected that the session will be of interest to a wide audience, including researchers interested in identity, decision making, and relationships, as well as consumer satisfaction and well-being.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"I Wasn't Myself When I Chose That: Identity-Salience Fluctuations and Post-Choice (Dis)Satisfaction"

Robyn A. LeBoeuf, University of Florida

Julia Belyavsky, University of Florida

People hold numerous social identities reflecting their group memberships and social roles. For example, a woman may be a lawyer, a mother, an American, a Democrat, and so on. The salience of these identities fluctuates in response to environmental cues; recent research has revealed that consumer preferences also fluctuate to align with the momentarily salient identity (LeBoeuf, Shafir, and Belyavsky 2007; see also Forehand, Deshpande, and Reed 2002; Reed 2004). Thus, contrary to normative assumptions that each person holds a fairly consistent preference ordering, people may instead express any one of several (potentially conflicting) preferences, depending on which identity happens, at the moment of choice, to be salient.

This paper investigates consequences of these identity-congruent choices. Although identity salience is inherently fluid, choices, once made, tend to be fixed. Thus, a decision maker may make a choice congruent with a currently salient identity and may be bound to that choice even when another, potentially conflicting, identity arises. For example, a woman may subscribe to a fashion magazine while a feminine identity is salient, but may then view that decision disdainfully if the magazine arrives at work where an occupational identity is salient. This research addresses such issues.

We first identified a set of preferences that would be affected by identity-salience manipulations for our participants (University of Florida business majors). Pre-testing revealed that two potent identities for these participants were the relatively scholarly, serious business-student identity and the relatively social, frivolous University-of-Florida-student identity. We elicited the business identity for approximately one-half of our sample by asking students to evaluate extra-curricular business activities, business courses, and business graduate programs. We elicited the university identity for the remaining participants by asking them to evaluate socializing-oriented extracurricular activities, student-friendly restaurants, and university sports teams. Students then participated in an ostensibly unrelated "consumer preference" study, choosing one of four movies, one of two prizes, one of four books, one of four magazines, and one of four small gifts. Choices were constructed so that half of the alternatives in each choice set were congruent with the serious business identity (e.g., *BusinessWeek*, *Fortune*), but the others (e.g., *Cosmopolitan*, *People*) were congruent with the sociable university identity. Across the five choices, those for whom

the business identity was evoked selected reliably more serious, business-congruent alternatives than did those for whom the university identity was evoked. Thus, preferences indeed assimilated to the salient identities.

Next, we sought to establish that identity-salience fluctuations have implications beyond the moment of purchase, in that they also impact satisfaction with prior choices. As such, a new sample of participants completed the above-described procedure, making choices while either the university-student or the business-student identity was salient. Participants then completed a 15-minute filler task, after which we evoked either the same identity as before or the contrasting identity. To evoke the business identity in this second stage, participants evaluated issues relating to business education and listed positive aspects of being a business major. To elicit the university identity, students evaluated campus issues and listed positive aspects of being at the university. Finally, participants were told that we were interested in their *current* feelings about their prior choices. For each choice, participants were shown the set of previously available alternatives and were reminded which they chose. They were asked to rate their satisfaction with each prior choice and to rate their likelihood of making a similar choice again in the future. We averaged these ratings for each choice; a 2 (first identity) x 2 (second identity) x 5 (item) ANOVA revealed a reliable first identity x second identity interaction. Those who chose under a salient university identity later expressed more dissatisfaction with their choices when a business-student identity was evoked, compared to when the university identity was again evoked. Conversely, those who initially chose under the business identity were more dissatisfied when the university, instead of business, identity was later evoked.

Thus, people view their prior choices more favorably when the “experiencing” and “choosing” identities match. We next explored whether these effects on post-choice satisfaction could lead to actual reversals of prior decisions. We recruited a new sample who completed the first elicitation, choice, filler task, and second elicitation procedures, as described above. In the final part of the study, participants were given the opportunity to “switch” from their original choices and select different items. For each choice, we showed participants the previously available alternatives, reminding them of their choice and asking them to indicate which alternative they *now* preferred. We coded whether, for each item, participants made a “congruent” second choice, a “more serious” second choice (compared to the first), or a “more frivolous” second choice. Across the five items, those for whom the business student had first been elicited were more likely to switch to a more frivolous option when the university student was evoked than when the business student was re-evoked. Similarly, those for whom the university student was first elicited were more likely to switch to something more serious when the business, instead of university, identity was later evoked. A follow-up study replicated these results using different identities and different choices, thus establishing the generality of these effects. Thus, when the self who must “live with” the choice differs from the one who made the choice, people not only demonstrate dissatisfaction with the prior choice, but may even desire to switch to an option more congruent with the currently (although temporarily) salient identity.

Preferences assimilate to the salient identity. This paper shows that identity-salience fluctuations impact not only choices, but also retrospective evaluations of choices. Such findings may shed light on why consumers occasionally “undo” prior decisions (by, for example, cancelling subscriptions or returning items to stores). This work, while expanding our understanding of identity salience, provides a new perspective on temporal inconsistency, suggesting that people may come to regret choices, and to act inconsistently

with commitments, not always because of calculated hypocrisy, but because identities dormant during choice may become prominent post-choice, giving the decision maker a new, potentially contradictory, set of values.

“Attachment Style, Psychological Security, and Consumer Response to Special Possession Loss”

Rosellina Ferraro, University of Maryland

Jennifer Escalas, Vanderbilt University

James R. Bettman, Duke University

The objects we own often take on special meaning arising from the use of possessions to satisfy psychological needs (e.g., Belk 1988). Consumers use special possessions to create personal identity, act as symbols of personal accomplishment, provide self-esteem, assert individuality, present themselves to others, and help them through life transitions. Possessions can also serve a social purpose, providing linkages to other people, integrating one into one’s family, community, cultural group, and society in general. Furthermore, possessions may represent who we were in the past and who we want to be in the future.

Belk (1988) identifies three primary reasons for using possessions to extend self: they give us a sense of security, so we feel anchored in the world; they are instrumental to knowing who we are; and they increase status. In our research, we focus on the notion that special possessions provide consumers with psychological security. We believe that when special possessions are lost, psychological security is threatened. We explore how consumers cope with such security threats arising from the loss of a special possession, both generally, in terms of thoughts, feelings, and potential actions, and specifically, regarding how the loss of one possession affects the extent to which consumers are attached to remaining possessions.

Hart, Shaver, and Goldenberg (2005) posit a tripartite model of psychological security in which people are able to buffer themselves from apprehension and anxiety through enhanced self-esteem, strong cultural beliefs, and important relationships. They suggest that threats to one component of the system can trigger compensatory responses from the other two components. In our research, we build on this theory to suggest that possessions can reflect these three different sources of security (self-esteem, cultural beliefs, and important relationships) and thereby serve as buffering mechanisms from anxiety. Therefore, the loss of a special possession linked to one of these important components of the psychological security system is seen as a threat to that security source and should trigger compensatory action from one or both of the other components. We examine what happens to the value we place on special possessions in one important domain when a special possession in one of the other important domains is lost or stolen and cannot be replaced. Will people compensate by increasing the value they place on other special possessions or devalue those remaining possessions?

We expect that the impact of a possession loss is dependent on people’s possession attachment tendency. Attachment tendency is conceptualized as the extent to which an individual uses possessions to define and communicate their sense of self. People high on attachment tendency tend to derive part of their identity from possessions. They feel that possessions are central to their identity and allow them to achieve a desired identity. We expect that the effect of losing a possession in one critical domain affects the subsequent importance people attach to other special possessions and that this effect will be moderated by attachment tendency. People low on attachment tendency, those who do not use possessions as a communication vehicle for the self, will compensate differently than people high on attachment tendency.

We conducted two studies to examine the effects of possession loss on attachment to other possessions. American participants drawn from an international Internet survey panel were asked to list three special possessions, one that was reflective of an important relationship, one that was reflective of a personal achievement, and one that was reflective of their cultural worldview. To capture attachment tendency, we measured how much the participants initially valued each of these possessions adapting items from Sivasdas and Venkatesh (1995) extended self-scale. We also measured the importance people placed on each of the three possessions. We then asked participants to imagine that the possession reflecting cultural worldview was stolen or lost and could not be replaced and took additional measures of how much value the participants placed on the two remaining possessions.

We found that attachment to the self-esteem and relationship possessions decreased after loss of the cultural worldview possession, with the extent of this decrease moderated by attachment tendency. Importance placed on the remaining two possessions decreased. The extent of this decrease, however, was moderated by attachment tendency. Participants high on attachment tendency exhibited less of a decrease than participants with low attachment tendencies. This result suggests that individuals who tend not to use possessions to define and communicate the self devalue their remaining possessions more so than do those individuals who do use possessions for this function.

In Study 2, we compared responses to losing a special possession to those of two well-known threats to psychological security: a threat to one's world view and mortality salience (where one's death is made salient). This study examined whether the loss of a special possession results in a unique pattern of coping, or whether different security threats lead to similar coping mechanisms. This study was almost identical to Study 1 except that two additional conditions were added, one threatening participants' cultural worldview and the other making mortality salient. The results in the worldview possession loss condition replicate the results of Study 1. Responses to worldview threats and mortality salience mirror those of worldview possession loss.

Our results indicate that after a possession linked to an important aspect of self is lost or stolen, the importance that people place on other special possessions decreases. This suggests that people may be seeking to protect themselves from the possibility of further possession loss in the future by devaluing their remaining possessions. However, the extent of the devaluation is moderated by the overall importance of the possession to self-identity. People high on attachment tendency do not devalue the two other possessions as much as do people low on attachment tendency. People high on attachment tendency rely on their possessions to define and communicate who they are. Thus, the extent to which they can devalue their possessions is limited. Our results also indicate that responses to two other specific types of psychological security threats are consistent with the threat of worldview possession loss.

"Identity Shifts and the Decision to Consume"

Jane Machin, Virginia Tech

This research examines how shifts in the gender identity of women trying to conceive influence their decision to avoid or to purchase over-the-counter fertility aids. Past research on the relationship between womanhood and motherhood has focused on one of three different groups of women: women who already have children (e.g., Leifer, 1980), women who are pregnant (e.g., Lederman, 1993) or women who are child-free (e.g. McMahon, 1998). How the process of trying to conceive influences gender and motherhood identities has not been addressed. This represents an important gap since the point at which a woman takes active steps

to try for a baby is often the first time she has seriously addressed what motherhood means to her. It is also important to consider how this relationship changes the longer she has to wait to conceive since identification with a motherhood role is a gradual process (McMahon, 1998). Furthermore, there is no research on how the consumption of over-the-counter fertility aids influences women's identity. As these aids are available over the counter and are relatively cheap they represent a viable fertility aid for many more women than new reproductive technologies.

Using a grounded approach, results from a series of qualitative focus group interviews, together with a textual analysis of home ovulation test cartons are presented (Auerbach and Silverstein 2003). The focus groups were conducted among women at different stages in the process of trying to conceive. The theoretical foundation used to interpret the data is based on symbolic interactionism (e.g. Solomon, 1983) and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It also draws from the literature on female gender and motherhood identities (e.g. Skevington & Baker, 1993) to address the following research questions: (a) what is the gender and motherhood identity for women who are trying to conceive (b) how do these identities shift as the length of time trying increases and (c) how does the shifting identity influence their decision to consume (or not) home ovulation tests. The following is a brief summary of the main findings.

When women first decide to try for a baby, the motherhood identity is not a particularly salient or central aspect of their overall gender identity. Being a working woman, a wife, or a daughter is far more important to their concept of womanhood. They are not yet ready to adopt fully the motherhood identity: in fact, the motherhood identity is viewed rather negatively and as lower status than their current gender identity. These women are aware of home ovulation tests and freely concede the functional benefits of such aids. However ovulation tests also symbolize artificial conception and the desperate mother-to-be who cannot conceive naturally, images that are incongruent with their current gender identity. Avoiding the purchase and use of such fertility aids strengthens their identity both as a woman able to conceive naturally and as a woman whose life is not limited solely to children.

As the length of time women try to conceive progresses, however, motherhood becomes more central to their overall gender identity, making the consumption of home ovulation tests more acceptable: these women become very aware that they are in a low status social group ("infertile women") and they adopt behaviors to address this situation. This primarily consists of reinterpreting negative characteristics in a positive manner, including making comparisons to a new (lower) status group: they now view themselves as women who really want children—motherhood is now seen as a positive identity—and anything that helps them achieve that identity is also viewed positively. Home ovulation tests, symbolizing women who really want children, help to reinforce the motherhood image: by doing everything they can to have children they are fulfilling their socially expected feminine role.

The research also provides support for the idea that purchase avoidance can be a successful identity reinforcing strategy. Achieving congruence between self identity and product identity has been highlighted as an important driver for consumption: consumers are more likely to choose products, brands or stores whose image is highly congruent with their own identity (e.g. Sirgy, 1982; Belk, 1988). The key motivation in this process is assumed to be one of approach: consumers actively choose particular brands, products, services or stores in order to maintain or reinforce a particular identity (e.g. Kleine, Kleine & Allen 1995). In some circumstances however it seems likely that the main motivation is actually avoidance: consumers actively choose to *avoid* consuming particular

brands, products, services or stores in order to maintain or reinforce a particular identity (e.g. Wilk, 1997).

“Don’t Confuse Me with Them: Identity-Signaling and Product Abandonment”

Jonah Berger, *Stanford University*
Chip Heath, *Stanford University*

Cultural tastes (e.g. products, attitudes, and behaviors) can signal identity, but the particular identity they signal may shift based on the identity of the people that hold them. Tastes communicate aspects of people (e.g., what type of person they are) to others and can act as signals within the social communication system (e.g., Levy, 1959). People probably assume that a Harley Davidson rider is tough or prefers beer over wine. But just as tastes often gain such meaning through their association with similar types of individuals, their meaning can shift over time if they are adopted by outsiders. If suburban accountants start riding Harleys in an attempt to seem tough, the meaning of the taste may change and signal different characteristics altogether (i.e., wannabe tough guys).

The paper examines the consequences of shifts in the meaning of cultural tastes. We suggest that when outsiders start to adopt a taste, original taste holders may diverge and abandon the taste to avoid signaling undesired identities. The jocks, for instance, may stop saying a catchphrase once it is adopted by the geeks. Further, we suggest the cost of misidentification will lead people to be more likely to diverge from others that are dissimilar. The more dissimilar out-group adopters are to the current taste holders, the more costly it should be for people to be misidentified as members of the wrong social group. Snowboarders might not want people to think they are akin to skiers, but they probably prefer that mistake to being thought of as akin to golfers.

In our initial experiment, we first examined whether people would actually abandon a real possession that was adopted by an out-group with which they do not want to be confused. Before they became popular, we sold yellow Livestrong wristbands¹ to members of a campus dorm (Target dorm). Separate experimenters then measured the number of dorm members who wore the wristband before and after the same wristbands also were sold to the “geeky” Academic Focus dorm next door. As predicted, almost one-third of Target dorm members abandoned the taste once it was adopted by the geeks. Further, a control dorm on the other side of campus did not show such a significant decline in wristband wearing, allowing us to rule out boredom with the wristband as an alternative explanation. This study provides preliminary evidence that people may abandon products to avoid undesired identity inferences.

The next study examined our prediction that people should be more likely to diverge from social groups that are dissimilar. Students were asked how they would change their use of a catchphrase they and their friend liked saying if it was adopted by various social groups (e.g., business executives, janitors, and suburban teenagers). Separate groups of participants rated the social groups on similarity, liking, or demographic status. As predicted, people reported that they would decrease their use of the phrase if it was adopted by other social groups. Further, while people said they would diverge more from disliked groups, even controlling for liking and relative status, people were more likely to diverge from social groups that were dissimilar.

A follow up study found that divergence from dissimilar groups was mediated by concerns of misidentification. Each par-

ticipant rated how much they would diverge from each social group, perceived similarity, and desire to avoid being confused as a member. As predicted, people diverged more, and preferred not to be confused with, social groups that were dissimilar. Further, desire to avoid confusion mediated the relationship between similarity and divergence.

If identity-signaling is driving divergence then people should care the most about who they share their tastes with in certain domains, i.e., those that others use to infer identity (e.g. hairstyles and music tastes as opposed to dish soap or DVD players). A final study tests this possibility by investigating whether out-group similarity has a greater influence on divergence in identity-related domains. Student participants were given 10 different taste domains (e.g., music tastes, DVD player, and hairstyles) which varied in how much others used them to infer identity (as rated in a pre-test). In a between-subjects design, they were asked to imagine that members of another social group (i.e. Business executives, inner city teens, or Princeton students) had started to copy their tastes in a particular domain (e.g., Princeton students had started adopting their favorite type of music). They then indicated what percentage of the other group would have to adopt the taste for them to abandon it (e.g., would they abandon if 10% of Princeton students had adopted? 50%? Never?). These particular social groups were chosen because they were previously rated as equivalently liked but varied in similarity to the subject population. Results indicated that as predicted, people said they would abandon tastes that were adopted by other social groups. Further, both out-group similarity and the identity-relatedness of the domain influenced the abandonment threshold. Participants required the presence of fewer dissimilar others to abandon a taste, and the abandonment threshold was lower in domains used to communicate identity. Finally, there was a similarity x domain interaction; the similarity of the adopting group only influenced abandonment in domains that people use to communicate identity.

The identity signaled by a possession can shift over time based on the identity of the set of people that hold it. This paper illustrates that to avoid communicating undesired identities, people may abandon tastes that are adopted by other social groups.

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¹These wristbands were originally worn by athletes to support Lance Armstrong and his non-profit foundation, and later caught on and spread contagiously throughout the general public.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Gazing into the Crystal Ball: How Thinking about the Future Impacts the Present and Relates to Faulty Memories of the Past

Rebecca K. Ratner, University of Maryland, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

Consumers' decisions are often based on a prediction about future emotional states. For example, the decision to book a spa vacation could depend on whether a person thinks that he or she will need a break from work. Recent research suggests that consumers' affective forecasts are often erroneous. The papers in this session examine mechanisms that underlie affective forecasts, including how thinking about the future impacts present experiences, processes by which individuals anticipate how they will feel about a future event after a certain amount of time has elapsed, reasons why affective forecasting errors persist over time, and ways in which people's forecasts about the future can be impacted by erroneous memories of the past.

The first paper (Meyvis and Nelson) examines how taking the future into account influences consumers' current real-time experience. The results suggest that although people believe that they will savor upcoming positive experiences and dread upcoming negative experiences, they actually enjoy the present less when anticipating positive experience and enjoy the present more when anticipating negative experiences.

The second paper (Ebert and Gilbert) distinguishes two psychological processes that underlie forecasts about the future: *forward-looking* ("How will I feel right when the semester ends, and how will I feel one month after that point?") and *backward-looking* ("How will I feel mid-June, and how will my well-being at that point be influenced by the fact that I finished the semester one month before?"). Results suggest that the order in which people consider these two points in time impacts the judgments they make. "Backcasting" (the apparent default strategy) is more likely to lead people to use information about both the impacting event and the future state than does forecasting.

The third paper (Ratner, Meyvis, and Levav) investigates why affective forecasting errors persist over time despite disconfirming evidence. The authors suggest that people's memories of their initial forecasts are biased by their present experience, and as a result people do not realize that they made a forecasting error. They therefore do not perceive a need to adjust their forecasting strategies in the future.

The fourth paper (Novemsky, Wang, and Dhar) suggests that consumers incorrectly anticipate the decreasing trend of enjoyment from owning a product for products they have not yet experienced. After a short period of experience, consumers overpredict their adaptation to the same product, perhaps because they overpredict their frequency of usage of the product and underweight the interruption to adaptation from intervening experiences.

Collectively, the papers in this session investigate how people form affective forecasts based on an integration of their present affective state and what they recall from their past experiences and predictions. These papers offer a more dynamic view of affective forecasts than is typically discussed in the literature in that they focus more on process than simply documenting the misforecasting phenomenon.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"Contrasting Against the Future: The Unexpected Effects of Expectation"

Tom Meyvis, New York University

Leif Nelson, New York University

Although consumers are unaware of many of the context effects that have been documented in empirical studies, they do have an intuitive understanding of contrast effects. In fact, they tend to generalize contrast effects to domains in which they actually do not occur. In particular, consumers believe that they contrast hedonic experiences to other experiences that preceded them (e.g., that a regular meal will taste better when it follows a bad meal than when it follows a great meal). However, previous empirical research has not been able to find strong evidence of these hedonic contrast effects (e.g., Novemsky & Ratner 2003). Does this imply that there is no such thing as hedonic contrast effects?

In this project, we examine the effect of *anticipated* experiences on people's enjoyment of their current experience and we observe a data pattern opposite to what has been observed for the effect of *preceding* experiences. Although people do not forecast that future experiences will have a contrasting influence on current experiences, this is exactly what we find. Three studies indicate that negative experiences become more negative when consumers anticipate a pleasant experience and positive experiences become more positive when consumers anticipate an unpleasant experience.

Of course, this is not the first research to suggest that people's current affective state may be influenced by the anticipation of future experiences. However, previous research has focused on *intuitions* about the effects of anticipation rather than the actual *experience* of anticipation (Loewenstein 1987, Lovallo & Kahneman 2000). Interestingly, people do not seem to intuit contrast effects, but instead expect that the anticipation of an unpleasant event will make them feel bad (dread), whereas the anticipation of a pleasant event will make them feel good (savoring). Consistent with these intuitions, people prefer sequences that improve over time (in contrast to sequences that start out with the best experience), are willing to pay more for a delayed positive hedonic event (a kiss with their favorite movie star) than for the same immediate event, and are willing to pay more to avoid a delayed negative event (a 110 volt shock) than for an immediate negative event (Loewenstein 1987). While we do expect such dread and savoring effects to occur in some actual experiences, our research indicates that many experiences reflect contrast effects instead.

Our first study examined the effect of an anticipated pleasant sound experience on participants' experience of the preceding negative sound experience. Participants listened to 60 seconds of sound while continuously indicating how irritating the sound was at each moment. Approximately half of the participants were asked to listen to a vacuum cleaner for 60 seconds, the others were asked to listen to the vacuum cleaner for 50 seconds, followed by 10 seconds of pleasant piano music (Glenn Gould's rendition of the Goldberg Variations). Real-time (and retrospective) irritation ratings show that anticipating the pleasant music made the experience of the preceding vacuum noise significantly more irritating.

The second study varied the valence of the anticipated experience. Participants were asked to listen to the noise of a vacuum cleaner for 50 seconds and either expected that this would be followed by 10 seconds of pleasant piano music (as in the study 1) or 10 seconds of an annoying drilling sound. As expected, real-time ratings revealed that participants perceived the vacuum noise as more irritating when they anticipated the piano music than when they anticipated the drilling sound. Furthermore, when they anticipated the piano music, the vacuum noise became *more* irritating over time (as they got closer to the piano music), whereas when they anticipated the drilling sound, the vacuum noise became *less* irritating over time (as they got closer to the drilling sound). The retrospective measures provide further convergent evidence. Participants who anticipated the piano music rather than the drilling noise, evaluated the vacuum noise as more irritating, were more likely to prefer to switch to another annoying sound, and were willing to pay more to avoid the vacuum sound. These last two measures also provide evidence against a re-scaling explanation.

In the third study, we examined whether the opposite effect would occur for positive experiences: do positive experiences become more enjoyable when you anticipate that it will be followed by a negative experience? We asked 151 participants to listen to a pop song. Half of the participants were asked to listen to 60 seconds of the song, whereas the other half of the participants were asked to listen to 50 seconds of the song, followed by 10 seconds of annoying guitar feedback. Participants who expected the annoying guitar feedback provided more favorable real-time ratings of the song and were willing to pay more for a concert by that artist.

Although the observed pattern is consistent with the existence of prospective hedonic contrast (i.e., contrasting your current affective experience to an anticipated experience), we are still considering some plausible alternative accounts. In the negative domain, it is possible that the anticipation of more favorable future experiences prevents us from activating our psychological immune mechanisms (e.g., adaptation) which mitigate the unpleasantness of the current experience (Gilbert et al. 2004). In the positive domain, on the other hand, the expectation of a negative change may encourage consumers to extract more positively utility from their current experience. We are currently running studies to distinguish between these explanations and prospective hedonic contrast.

“Forecasting and Backcasting: Predicting the Impact of Events on the Future”

Jane E. J. Ebert, University of Minnesota

Daniel T. Gilbert, Harvard University

Consumer research has begun increasingly to explore the effects of anticipated affect on decision-making, i.e., affect that consumers expect to feel in the future post-choice (see MacInnis, Patrick, and Park (2005) for a recent review). While this research has shown that consumers can spontaneously use hedonic predictions in consumption decisions, and are influenced by their hedonic predictions in both the choices they make and how they feel about their consumption experiences, little attention has so far been paid to understanding how and when hedonic predictions are made and how they may be altered or induced. This is especially surprising given the potential importance of hedonic predictions for a broad range of consumer behavior (such as consumer preference, behavioral intentions, consumer satisfaction, brand loyalty and repeat purchase) and the now well-established finding that people are not very good at making hedonic predictions. The present research examined and compared two methods, forecasting and backcasting, by which consumers may predict their feelings in the future following a hedonic consumption event, such as a baseball game or a jewelry purchase.

How often have we heard that “time heals all wounds” or “someday this will all be but a distant memory”? Both of these adages help us recognize that events will have less impact in the future than we might otherwise believe, but they also represent two different ways of thinking about the hedonic impact of an event. The first adage reminds us that our present feelings will decrease with the passage of time, whereas the second adage assures us that our future states will be relatively uninfluenced by the events that precede them. For example, if I want to understand how I will feel on my birthday next month if I see the Red Sox lose today, “time heals all wounds” encourages me to forecast my future feelings by first considering my response to this event (“I’ll be very unhappy if the Red Sox lose today”) and then correcting for the passing of time and circumstances (“...but I’ll probably feel better on my birthday by the time it rolls around next month”). On the other hand, “someday this will be but a distant memory” encourages me to backcast my future feelings by first considering my usual feelings in a future state (“I’m going to be so happy at my birthday party next month”) and then correcting for the occurrence of the event and for the passing of time (“...and if the Red Sox lose today it shouldn’t make much difference by then”).

Forecasting and backcasting are logically identical methods for consumers to predict their future hedonic states after an impacting consumption event: in both cases a consumer ends by making the same prediction, of his or her feelings in a particular future state given the occurrence of an earlier consumption event (e.g., “How will I feel on my birthday if the Red Sox lose today?”), and in both cases the person has and can use precisely the same information. Nonetheless, the two methods reverse the order in which information about feelings in a future state (i.e., how I usually expect to feel on my birthday) and information about the impacting consumption event (i.e., the Red Sox loss) are considered, and although the order of information makes no logical difference in a computation such as this, decades of research has shown that the order in which information is considered can make a large psychological difference.

In four experiments we determine (a) whether backcasters and forecasters make different predictions about the impact of events on their future feelings, (b) whether they consider different kinds of information when making these predictions, and (c) whether predictors who are not guided spontaneously may use forecasting or backcasting to make such predictions.

In studies 1 and 2, respondents were guided to make forecasts, backcasts, or were unguided, and we measured how much impact they thought an event would have on their future feelings (addressing a and c above). In studies 3 and 4, we examined the kinds of information that forecasters and backcasters (and, in study 3, unguided respondents) used (addressing b and c above). In study 3, respondents rated the extent to which they considered the impacting event, their future state, and the elapsed time, and in study 4, we manipulated information about the impacting event, their future state, and the elapsed time. These two studies tell us whether forecasters and backcasters use information about their futures differently in their predictions, and provide us with some evidence on how forecasters and backcasters combine this information to make their predictions.

The data across four studies consistently supported three conclusions. First, backcasters and forecasters make different predictions from the same information. Specifically, backcasters’ future impact predictions are more strongly influenced by the nature of the impacting event and their usual feelings in a future state than are forecasters’ predictions. Second, backcasters and forecasters consider different kinds of information. Specifically, backcasters consider the nature of the impacting event and the

future state more than forecasters do. Third, when people are not guided to use one or other of these methods, they tend to make predictions and consider information as backcasters do. A simple primacy or recency explanation is insufficient to explain these findings.

**“Why We Don’t Learn to Accurately Forecast Our Feelings:
How the Misremembering of Our Predictions Blinds Us to
Our Past Forecasting Errors”**

Rebecca K. Ratner, University of Maryland

Tom Meyvis, New York University

Jonathan Levav, Columbia University

Why do people persist in making erroneous affective forecasts (e.g., Gilbert, Pinel, Wilson, Blumberg and Wheatley, 1998; Novemsky & Ratner, 2003)? We present the results of several studies that suggest that this persistence is partly caused by people’s biased recollections of their initial predictions. Individuals who experienced a negative event (e.g., Kerry supporters following the 2004 presidential election and Philadelphia Eagles fans following the 2005 Super Bowl) were less upset than they had predicted and misremembered this prediction as less extreme than it actually was, thus obscuring the fact that they had made a forecasting error. Similarly, individuals who experienced a positive event (e.g., UNC students following their men’s basketball team’s appearance in the Final Four) also recalled having made less extreme predictions than they had originally indicated. Interestingly, although participants’ memories were inaccurate for affective forecasts relating to the Final Four, their forecasts about winning the championship were quite accurate. This suggests that people’s memories for their affective forecasts may be better for unusual, extremely positive events than for unresolved, more emotionally-ambiguous events. Furthermore, even when individuals were able to accurately recall their affective forecasts, they did not spontaneously bring these to mind, and thus did not learn from the discrepancy between their affective forecasts and their actual experience unless prompted to do so.

We find that when we confront people with the fact that their initial forecast was wrong, they make less extreme predictions in a similar situation in the future. After a real-time experience that disconfirmed their initial affective forecast (i.e., not experiencing as strong context effects as participants’ expected when eating liked and disliked jellybeans, following Novemsky and Ratner 2003), people misremembered their initial affective forecasts as having been less extreme than they actually were. Respondents who were reminded of these actual, extreme initial forecasts showed more learning (i.e., made less extreme predictions for a similar, future set of experiences) than those who were not reminded of what their initial predictions had been. This indicates that learning is indeed impeded when people do not realize that their initial affective forecasts did not match their real-time experience.

In another study, we extend our investigation to the planning fallacy and find that students also misremember predicted completion times for class assignments as less optimistic than they actually were. Furthermore, students who were asked to *recall* their predicted completion times *before* making a second prediction, made less optimistic second predictions than those who were *reminded* of their prior predictions or those who only *recalled* their prior predictions *afterwards*. In fact, those students who made the largest recall errors tended to make the least optimistic second predictions. This suggests that people may sometimes perceive their prior predictions as more diagnostic than their prior behavior, leading them to anchor on their recalled prior predictions when formulating a prediction for a new, similar task. Note that this is consistent with previous theorizing that the persistence of the planning fallacy is in

part caused by people perceiving their past failures as nondiagnostic for their present predictions—since they ascribe these failures to idiosyncratic obstacles that were specific to that past situation.

In sum, these studies indicate that one of the reasons for the persistence of forecasting errors is people’s tendency to systematically misremember their predictions. We often recall our predictions as being closer to the actual outcome than they in fact were. This recall error creates the illusion that we did in fact accurately predict the outcome (or that our misprediction was less severe than it actually was), thus reducing the perceived need to learn. However, these studies also suggest some boundary conditions for this phenomenon. First, we do not always misremember our predictions. For instance, predictions regarding exceptional events tend to be recalled more accurately. Second, even when we systematically misremember our prediction, this may sometimes facilitate, rather than impede learning. For instance, when we use our recalled prior prediction as an anchor for our future predictions, recalling this prediction as being closer to reality will provide a more realistic anchor, and thus a more appropriate basis for our future predictions. Together, these results indicate that a systematic bias in memory for past predictions contributes to the persistence of forecasting errors.

“How Predictions Differ from Actual Adaptation to Durable Products”

Jing Wang, Yale University

Nathan Novemsky, Yale University

Ravi Dhar, Yale University

Many consumer purchases involve items for which consumption extends over a long period of time and decisions to purchase such products depend critically on predictions about how the experience with these products will unfold over time. For example, the decision to purchase a sunroof in a new car depends on whether one believes that it will provide little enjoyment after 6 months. Are consumers able to accurately predict this at the time of purchase? Clearly the ability to predict enjoyment with a product over time is important for many decisions. Failures in predictions of how utility from a product unfolds over time can result in repeated dissatisfaction with purchases or lack of repeat purchase of worthwhile items.

There is a growing body of research on predictions about how consumers will feel in the future in particular circumstances or following particular events. This research has examined many possible influences, including the weather, various health conditions, being denied tenure, having your favorite candidate win an election, etc. For example, Schkade and Kahneman (1998) found that individuals overpredicted the effect that weather would have on their well-being, thinking that Californians would be happier than Midwesterners. One key mechanism for this and many other mispredictions seems to be a focusing illusion (Schkade and Kahneman 1998) whereby individuals focus disproportionately on, and thus exaggerate the importance of, things that would change in the future while ignoring things that would remain the same when making predictions about overall happiness in the future. In actual experiences, individuals pay less attention to any one particular circumstance because they are busy fulfilling the demands of everyday life. A second explanation for misprediction of future happiness is that people may fail to appreciate the speed and extent to which they will emotionally adapt to changes in life circumstances (Gilbert et al., 1998; Loewenstein & Frederick, 1997). In light of these two major explanations for the gap between predicted and experienced happiness, past research has shown that drawing attention to focusing illusions or emotional adaptation might improve the quality of hedonic prediction about long-term emotional impact of certain events (Ubel, Loewenstein, and Jepson, 2005).

The present research differs from this existing affective forecasting research in one important way: the present studies examine happiness with a particular product over time rather than general happiness or well-being. Our measures of predictions and experiences are focused exclusively on the target item, and therefore are not subject to the documented effect of overweighting one event or dimension in considering total well-being.

Our first study examines how predicted enjoyment compares to actual enjoyment for a durable hedonic product. Participants were either given the product to take home (experience condition) or presented with a picture and detailed description of the same product (non-experience condition). Participants assigned to the experience condition either reported their current enjoyment after 1 day or 7 days with the product. Participants in the non-experience condition made predictions about enjoyment after either 1 day or 7 days with the product. We found a substantial reduction in actual experienced enjoyment with the product over time, and yet participants failed to anticipate this downward trend in future enjoyment without a first-hand experience with the product. This failure in predicting adaptation prior to experience with the target product might help explain why intuitive knowledge or past experience of adaptation often fails to curb the desires for new products, especially novel hedonic products, that consumers have yet to experience.

In our second study, we examined how predicted enjoyment compares to actual enjoyment for consumers who have gained some experience with a product. All participants in this study were given a product to keep and were assigned to either a 1-day or 7-day condition. One-day participants were asked to report their current enjoyment after one day with the product and to predict how they would feel about the product on day 7. Seven-day participants were asked to report their current enjoyment on day 7. The hedonic measure again shows that enjoyment is declining over time. Interestingly however, after owning the product for one day, participants largely overpredicted adaptation to the product, i.e., 1-day participants anticipated their enjoyment of the product to be much lower on day 7 than what the 7-day participants actually experienced. It is possible that once participants get to experience a product, they focus too much attention on how they are going to use or play with the product, overpredicting the usage frequency when making predictions about their future enjoyment and hence conclude that its novelty will wear off sooner than it does.

In study 3, we borrowed a defocusing manipulation from Wilson and colleagues (Wilson et al. 2000) to examine whether accuracy of hedonic prediction for a target product can be improved by drawing attention to various daily activities. We used a similar design to our study 2 with the addition of a 1-day defocusing condition. Before making predictions about their future enjoyment of the target product on day 7, participants assigned to this condition first completed a "Diary Study" where they were asked to estimate the number of hours they would spend on 10 activities during a typical week of a year (e.g., going to class, socializing with friends, studying, eating meals). We replicated the study 2 findings that participants in the 1-day control condition predicted their enjoyment of the target item to be much lower on day 7 than what the 7-day participants actually experienced. However, participants who were first asked to reflect on daily activities they would typically be engaged in made predictions that are roughly on par with the actual experienced enjoyment of the item on day 7.

In summary, we find that consumers' enjoyment of durable hedonic products often declines over time. Predictions sometimes fail to accurately represent these trends. Specifically, consumers fail to predict adaptation for products that they have not yet

experienced. Once they gain experience with the product, consumers tend to overpredict the degree of adaptation by focusing disproportional attention on their use of the target item.

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How Cue Congruity Affects Consumer Perceptions

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Consumers are exposed to a barrage of information cues about and from retailers. These cues can be categorized as being either high-scope or low-scope. A high-scope cue is one that is enduring such as a retail reputation. Whereas a low-scope cue is more easily changed such as a retailer offering or not offering a price matching guarantee (PMG) (Purohit and Srivastava 2001). The focus of this research is how consumers use the low-scope cue in forming evaluations as a function of the congruity with and valence of the high-scope cue.

Previous research offers conflicting evidence as to the use of high and low-scope cues in evaluations. Purohit and Srivastava (2001) demonstrate that high-scope cues are used in evaluations regardless of the valence of other cues, but low-scope cues are used only when the valence of the high-scope cue is positive. In contrast, research into the impact of PMGs (a low-scope cue) demonstrates that a low-scope cue is only used when a retailer is not price-competitive (a negative high-scope cue) (Biswas et al. 2002; Lurie and Srivastava 2005). Thus, one research stream indicates that the low-scope cue will be used when the high-scope cue is positive, and the other indicates that it will only be used when the high-scope cue is negative.

This research seeks to resolve the apparent discrepancy by understanding how the level of congruity between the high and low-scope cues impacts evaluations. Consider, for example, the association between the type of retailer reputation and a PMG. A PMG is more congruent with a retailer with a reputation based on price; and less with a retailer with a reputation based on service. Previous research has shown that the level of congruity between a stimulus (e.g., the low scope cue) and an evoked schemas (e.g., schema based on the high-scope cue) influences both processing and evaluation of the stimulus (Campbell and Goodstein 2001, Mandler 1982, Meyers-Levy and Tybout 1989). Thus, we expect that the level of congruity between the cues will impact when the PMG is considered diagnostic and hence used in evaluations. Cue diagnosticity and level of congruency serve as underlying frameworks for this research.

Considering the impact of both congruence and the valence of the high-scope cue, we expect that when the low-scope cue (PMG) is congruent with the high scope cue (price reputation), the low scope cue will not impact evaluations of the retailer if the high-scope cue is positive, but will if the high-scope cue is negative. The reasoning for this follows from the fact that if the two cues are congruent they both evoke a schema related to price resulting in consumers viewing the PMG as relevant additional information to update their existing schema. If the high-scope cue is positive (retailer is price competitive), the low-scope congruent cue (PMG) is not necessary to further improve perceptions. But if the high-scope cue is negative (retailer is not price competitive), the low-scope congruent cue (PMG) will enhance consumer evaluations of the retailer. The PMG partially offsets the negative impression caused by the high-scope cue because it is congruent, and hence, relevant information to that evoked schema. Thus, we hypothesize:

H₁: When the high and low-scope cues are congruent (PMG provided and retailer's reputation based on price competitiveness) there will be an interaction such that:

- *The low-scope PMG cue enhances perceptions about the retailer when the high-scope reputation cue is negative.*
- *The low-scope PMG cue has no impact on perceptions about the retailer when the high-scope reputation cue is positive.*

If the two cues are moderately incongruent they evoke different schemas related to the retailer. Cues which are moderately incongruent can both still indicate positive information. For example a retailer that provides excellent service can also offer competitive prices. If the high-scope cue is positive (excellent service reputation), consumers will consider other information about the retailer even if it is not related to the high-scope cue. Thus, the low-scope moderately incongruent cue is expected to impact evaluations when the high-scope cue is positive.

But if the high-scope cue is negative (poor service reputation), impressions of the retailer will be more heavily influenced by the negative information (Ahluwalia 2002; Skowronski and Carlston 1987). A moderately incongruent cue is not directly associated with and hence relevant to the schema evoked by the high-scope cue and is unlikely to offset the negative impact of the high-scope cue. Thus, we expect that:

H_{1b}: When the high and low-scope cues are moderately incongruent (PMG offered and retailer's reputation is not based on price) there will be an interaction such that:

- *The low-scope PMG cue enhances perceptions about the retailer when the high-scope reputation cue is positive.*
- *The low-scope PMG cue has no impact on perceptions about the retailer when the high-scope reputation cue is negative.*

These hypotheses are tested in three experiments. Experiment 1 uses a retailer with a reputation based on price, and experiment 2 uses retailer with a reputation based on service. Hence, the PMG is congruent with reputation in experiment 1 and is moderately incongruent with reputation in experiment 2. Finally, experiment 3 provides evidence to support the congruency and process arguments used in the development of hypotheses 1 and 2.

Experiment 1 utilized a 2 x 2 between subjects design which manipulated reputation of the retailer (positive/negative) and the presence of a PMG (present/absent). The retailer's reputation was based on price. Experiment 2 utilized the same design but the retailer's reputation was based on service. Finally experiment 3 utilized a 2 x 2 between subjects design in which the valence of the retailer's reputation (positive/negative) and the type of retailer's

reputation (service/price) were manipulated. Results support the hypotheses.

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Cue Competition, Attention Shifting, and the Highlighting Effect

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Researchers have invested considerable effort into understanding how consumers learn associations between product attributes and product benefits (Janiszewski and van Osselaer 2000; Keller 1993; van Osselaer and Alba 2000; van Osselaer and Janiszewski 2001). One of the more commonly studied consumer-learning phenomena is cue competition (van Osselaer and Alba 2000; van Osselaer and Janiszewski 2001). Cue competition occurs when learning of an association between a predictive cue (e.g., product attribute) and an outcome (e.g., brand name) interferes with the learning about a second cue. For instance, a consumer shopping for a pain reliever may learn early in the process that a certain brand has a rapid release property and is gentle to the stomach. Later on, this consumer may learn that another brand of pain reliever has the same rapid release property (i.e., a common attribute) and has anti-inflammatory properties (i.e., a unique attribute). Recent research on associative learning and cue interaction (Kruschke 2001a; Kruschke, Kappenman and Hetrick 2005; Medin and Edelson 1988) shows that the association between the redundant cue and the first outcome (first brand) is stronger than the association between this cue and the second outcome (e.g., second brand). This phenomenon has been labeled the *highlighting effect*. In this paper, we use Attentional Theory (Kruschke 1996, 2001a, 2001b) to explore the marketing implications of the highlighting effect. The Attentional Theory account of the highlighting effect predicts that people will shift attention from common attributes toward unique attributes when learning associations of a second brand to preserve the association between the common attribute and the first brand learned. An implication of the attention shifting account is that the order of learning and the value of the predictive cues can have a strong impact on consumer preference for products with equally valued attributes.

In three experiments, respondents were trained to associate attributes to two different brands. Both brands were associated with one imperfect predictor (*I*) and one perfect predictor (*PC* or *PR*). The first brand offered attributes *I* and *PE* (brand b(*E*)) and the second brand offered attributes *I* and *PL* (brand b(*L*)). After the learning phase, respondents were tested with products offering attributes *I* or *PE*/*PL*. In line with Attentional Theory, we predicted that a product offering attribute *I* only should be more frequently associated with b(*E*). Conversely, a product offering attributes *PE*/*PL* should be more frequently associated with b(*L*). The first experiment provides compelling support to this prediction. The second experiment shows that the strength of association between attributes and brands learned at different points in time has a direct impact on product preferences. When attribute *I* has a higher value than attributes *PE* and *PL*, b(*E*) receives a higher evaluation than b(*L*) since the first brand becomes more strongly associated with attribute *I* than the second brand, which is expected to have stronger association with *PL*. Finally, the third experiment provides further evidence for Attentional Theory and rules out explanations based on mere-exposure and primacy effects for the results of the second experiment. By manipulating the value of attribute *I* to be either larger or smaller than the value of *PE* and *PL*, we show that brand name repetition or primacy is unlikely to drive the results of the second experiment. In addition, we show that, depending on the relative value of the attributes *I*, *PE* and *PL*, reversals in brand preferences can be obtained as predicted by Attentional Theory.

Even though the highlighting effect seems to represent an irrational learning behavior, it can be considered a drawback of a rational attention-shifting process. In evolutionary terms, it is important to protect and accelerate learning through attention shifts. An organism that does not protect the learning of a previous negative episode will have a high chance of experiencing this episode again. For example, the protection of the learning that a certain type of food is associated with poisoning or that a type of sound indicates the presence of a predator is a crucial survival skill. Thus, in the greater scheme, attention shifting is indeed a rational process.

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Do You or Someone You Know? When does Prior Experience Mitigate Unrealistic Optimism and Pessimism in Risk Perception

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Most individuals believe that their chances of experiencing negative events are lower than those of other people (Self<Other). This is the robust “unrealistic optimism” bias (Weinstein 1980, Raghurir and Menon 1998) though “realism” has been documented for depressives (Keller, Lipkus, and Rimer 2002). The absolute levels of perceived risk moderate the extent of self-other differences, such that unrealistic optimism is associated with those who are optimistic in absolute terms, but “unrealistic pessimism” (Self>Other) has been shown for those who are pessimistic in absolute terms (Lin, Lin, and Raghurir 2003). Gender moderates these effects, such that, when given base rate information, optimists remain unrealistically optimistic irrespective of gender, while pessimistic men become realistic, and pessimistic women remain unrealistically pessimistic (Lin and Raghurir 2005).

This paper demonstrates the moderating role of experience for these biases. We replicate the effect that optimists are unrealistically optimistic irrespective of gender, but show that the pattern for pessimists is only valid for those who do not have experience with a cancer/depression victim. For those without experience, pessimistic men show realism, and pessimistic women show unrealistic pessimism. However, experience flips the manner in which gender and experience interact for pessimists. For people who know a cancer/ depression victim, pessimistic women become realistic, and pessimistic men remain unrealistically pessimistic. We argue that these results suggest that one of the underlying reasons for self-other differences are biased processing of information about base-rates or exemplars due to cultural differences (Hofstede 1990), where men have been shown to have a more independent self-construal and women a more interdependent one (Sedikides, Gaertner, and Toguchi 2003). Women, who have experience in interacting with others due to their interdependent self-construal should be able to use information regarding an exemplar to become realistic, while men, who culturally have more of a independent self-construal, when faced with an exemplar of a disease due to experience with another person imagine themselves in that position leading to their being unrealistically pessimistic. Two studies test this prediction.

Method

Participants. Study participants were undergraduate students in Taiwan (n=152 in Study 1, and n=385 in Study 2).

Procedure. Participants estimated the likelihood of getting a disease (cancer in Study 1; and depression in Study 2) using a 0 to 100 scale for themselves and the average undergraduate student.

Design: Both studies used a 2 (target: self / other) x 2 (male/ female) x 2 (experience/ not) x 2 (optimist vs. pessimist) mixed design, with the target factor manipulated within-subjects, and the remaining factors measured between subjects. Experience was measured by asking respondents whether they knew a person who had cancer/ depression. Optimism was defined in terms of a median split (Median=20 in study 1 and Median=38.6 in study 2) of people’s self-estimates. Respondents who reported a likelihood of more than the median were categorized as “pessimists,” whereas the remaining participants were categorized as “optimists.”

Results

Study 1: A 2x2x2x2 ANOVA on risk estimates for cancer, revealed a two-way interaction between target and optimism ($F(1, 144)=37.653, p<0.001$), a three-way interaction between target, experience and gender ($F(1, 144)=9.94, p<0.002$); and an overall four-way interaction ($F(1, 144)=5.104, p<0.05$). Means are shown in Table 1.

The pattern of means show that optimists show self-positivity irrespective of gender and experience. However, gender and experience interact for pessimists: male pessimists without experience show realism, as do female pessimists who have experience; while pessimistic females without experience and pessimistic males with experience show unrealistic pessimism.

Study 2: A similar analysis on risk estimates of depression showed a main effect of target ($F(1, 377)=16.67, p<0.001$) which interacted with experience, optimism and gender ($F(1, 377)=4.05, 189.11, 8.71$, respectively, $p<0.05$) while both the three-way interaction between target, experience and optimism and the overall four-way interactions were significant ($F(1, 377)=4.05$, and $8.15, p<0.05$). Means are provided in Table 2 and replicate the patterns found in Study 1.

Discussion

Results of two studies showed that optimists demonstrate unrealistic optimism irrespective of experience, while pessimists are either realistic or unrealistically pessimistic as a function of their gender and experience. Pessimistic males who did not know any one with cancer/ depression were more realistic about their risk-estimate, but pessimistic males who knew a depression victim showed unrealistic pessimism. On the other hand, pessimistic females without experience show unrealistic pessimism, while those who know a person who has cancer/ is depressed are more realistic.

The fact that pessimist females who know a cancer/ depression victim become more realistic can be explained by the fact that females tend to have closer, intimate relationships with others’ than men (Shek 1995), therefore, when they know a depression victim, they are more likely to have specific knowledge of depression. It implies that their beliefs about their own chances may reflect greater realism rather than positivity or negativity bias. Pessimistic males, with a more independent self-construal, may instead focus on the many reasons they could get a disease once they have been exposed to an exemplar.

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TABLE 1

Experience	Without		With	
Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female
Optimists				
Self	6.07 ^a	9.57 ^a	5.36 ^a	7.00 ^a
Average undergraduate	15.78 ^b	16.57 ^b	11.89 ^b	16.53 ^b
Self-Other difference	Unrealistic optimism	Unrealistic optimism	Unrealistic optimism	Unrealistic optimism
Pessimist				
Self	43.06 ^a	44.00 ^b	63.67 ^b	52.26 ^a
Average undergraduate	40.06 ^a	25.70 ^a	42.00 ^a	49.78 ^a
Self-negativity	Realism	Unrealistic pessimism	Unrealistic pessimism	Realism

TABLE 2

Experience	Without		With	
Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female
Optimists				
Self	12.59 ^a	17.60 ^a	16.81 ^a	16.92 ^a
Average undergraduate	27.15 ^b	38.37 ^b	34.76 ^b	34.31 ^b
Self-Other difference	Unrealistic optimism	Unrealistic optimism	Unrealistic optimism	Unrealistic optimism
Pessimist				
Self	57.71 ^a	59.78 ^b	67.73 ^b	59.10 ^a
Average undergraduate	52.10 ^a	55.11 ^a	46.59 ^a	54.31 ^a
Self-negativity	Realism	Unrealistic pessimism	Unrealistic pessimism	Realism

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The Moderating Effects of Past Experience on Behavioral Intentions

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Despite the growing body of research on the positive association (i.e., main effect) of past behavior on intention, key questions remain as to whether specific components (i.e., predictors) of intentions are enhanced or diminished when past behavior is included as a moderator in behavioral intention models (cf. Orbell, Hodgkins & Sheeran, 1997). Further, little is known about how past behavior might induce changes in people's deliberative and heuristic processing of information within these models (cf. Wood, Tam & Witt, 2005). For example, it is possible that people with very little experience may be motivated to engage cognitive resources such as considering their evaluations of salient beliefs when making a decision. In contrast, those with extensive experience may be less motivated to process cognitive information, relying instead on heuristic information such as their past success performing the behavior (i.e., confidence in their ability) and their perceptions of how easy or difficult behavioral performance will be (i.e., external facilitators of behavior). These possibilities are investigated in this research.

We make predictions that the level of past behavior will change the nature of the relationship between attitude and intent at low levels of past behavior, and between internal and external control at high levels of past behavior. Thus, the purpose of study one is to test the predicted moderating effects of past experience on attitude and perceived internal and external control with respect to behavioral intent.

Study One. In study one, hypothesis 1 was supported indicating that past behavior accounted for a significant amount of variance beyond the effects of attitude, subjective norm, external and internal control. This is consistent with other research indicating the explanatory power of past behavior within the framework of the TPB. Further, it was shown that for participants with low levels of past experience, attitude was predictive of intention while internal and external control were not, in support of hypothesis 2. At higher levels of past behavior, internal control and external control were predictive of intention while attitude was not, in support of hypotheses 3 and 4. These findings support our theoretical model that past behavior can have a moderating effect on the other variables within the TPB. More importantly, we provide a framework for establishing the rationale as to why such moderating effects occur. Specifically, our framework suggests that those with lower levels of past behavior are more likely to engage cognitive resources when formulating a behavioral intent than those with higher levels of past behavior and thus, when past behavior is low, attitude is the primary driver of behavioral intent. Additionally, these findings support the view that when past behavior is higher individuals are more likely to utilize less cognitively demanding inputs such as perceived control. Despite this support of the influence of past experience on decision making within the TPB, further direct evidence is needed to assess the boundary conditions under which past experience can influence a consumer's likelihood to engage cognitive resources to assist in the deliberative processing of information. Study 2 seeks to address this issue.

Study Two. In our conceptual model, different levels of past behavior result in differential levels of cognitive processing. Thus, study two examines the processes related to past behavior in an experimental paradigm in which the extent of cognitive processing

of information is explicitly considered. We argue that when past behavior is low, individuals will be more likely to engage cognitive resources to access additional information to make up for their lack of actual experience. Thus, we predicted that if low past-behavior participants are likely to engage cognitive resources, they should demonstrate discrimination between strong and weak message arguments. Conversely, when past behavior is high, individuals will be unlikely engage additional cognitive resources because of the small gap between their perceived level of personal resources and the threshold-level of personal resources believed to be necessary to form a behavioral intent. Thus, we predicted that if high past-behavior participants are unmotivated to engage cognitive resources, they should demonstrate little discrimination between strong and weak message arguments.

Findings in study 2 suggest that those in the low past-behavior condition engaged in greater elaboration of the issue-relevant arguments contained in the message than those in the high past-behavior condition, as evidenced by their discrimination between the argument quality of the message. That is, participants with low levels of past behavior were more motivated to engage cognitive resources to the processing of the issue-relevant components of the message than those in the high past-behavior condition. These findings are generally supportive of our theoretical model and more specifically are supportive of hypotheses five and six.

These findings have important implications for both marketers and consumer educational interventions for the prevention of debt. Our research demonstrates that, based on the nature of the interactions, it would be useful for researchers to segment the target population based on experience as suggested in past research (e.g., Beale & Manstead, 1991). For marketers, communications focusing on engaging cognitions of consumers may be quite effective for inexperienced consumers since their attitudes are typically formed through beliefs about the advantages of credit cards (e.g., build credit history, precaution for emergencies, etc.) and reducing disadvantages (e.g., risk of future debt, damaged FICA score, etc.). Thus, marketing campaigns could highlight these salient cognitions and provide positive consequences that are likely to strengthen intention through a favorable attitude (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Marketers could also target experienced consumers with communications about the ease with which products and services, such as credit cards, can be acquired and the conveniences that they offer, in order to increase the consumer's external control. Also, for experienced consumers, communicating information that builds confidence in their ability to acquire a given product or service can be effective. For example, increased perceptions of one's ability to select the best product might be based on past successes and favorable outcomes associated with a particular brand.

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The Role of Fictionality on Gender Differences in Responses to Emotional Melodramatic Entertainment

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Characterized by its heart-tugging, emotional plot, melodrama is a subtype of dramatic entertainment that appeals to the heightened emotions of audiences and readers of all ages. Often labelled “chick-flicks,” “tearjerkers,” or “human interest stories,” emotional melodramas appear in a wide range of entertainment formats (e.g., movies, short stories). In general, the target audience for emotionally melodramatic entertainment has primarily been female consumers. For example, The Oprah Winfrey Show which regularly features stories of tragedy, personal weakness and devastation, attracts approximately 50 million US viewers, among whom women outnumber men in the audience by a ratio of 19 to 1 (http://www2.oprah.com/presents/2005/20anniv/tows/tows_trivia.jhtml). Given this prevalent belief, the purpose of the present research is to understand and test for gender differences in evaluations of melodramatic entertainment. We use as our context of investigation emotionally melodramatic short stories. Further, we extend this literature by identifying the role of one characteristic inherent in melodramatic entertainment—its level of fictionality—on the activation of these gender differences. Finally, the present research seeks to explore underlying processes and tests the impact of the credibility of the fictionality communication source in influencing gender and the level of fictionality on consumers’ evaluations of melodramas.

Gender research has consistently found that females are more emotional and emotionally expressive than males (e.g., Allen and Haccoun 1976). The existence of these gender differences has been attributed to gender-specific norms regarding the “rules of emotions” that are developed through socialization (Birnbaum 1983). For little boys, the norm that they should be emotionally strong and refrain from emotional experiences is socialized by discouraging them from displaying soft emotions (e.g., “big boys don’t cry”; Birnbaum and Croll 1984; Timmers, Fischer and Manstead 2003). In contrast, such restrictive norms do not apply to females and in fact, society encourages women to seek and express their emotions (Timmers et al. 2003). Given the existence of these norms for emotional expression, we expect that females in general will respond more favorably to emotional melodramatic entertainment than males.

However, we expect that this predicted effect will be moderated by an important factor inherent in such melodramas, its level of fictionality. Defined here as the extent to which the story line for a melodrama reflects a real-life event (i.e., low in fictionality) versus a fictitious account (i.e., high in fictionality), the level of fictionality in melodramatic entertainment is expected to either attenuate or magnify gender differences in evaluations of such entertainment. Melodramatic entertainment that is high in fictionality is safe because it is not real or binding, permanently beneficial or harmful (Izod 2000). This is in stark contrast to reality where social rules and norms must be adhered to if one is to avoid the penalties imposed by society for deviating behaviors. Given that fiction presents a context where rules and norms are relaxed and there may be minimal social ramifications for eliciting emotions, we expect that males will feel safe to become involved in a melodramatic story, experience and express their emotions, and consequently evaluate the story more favorably. In contrast, when a melodra-

matic story is factual, the rules of society (i.e., gender norms about emotional responses) cannot be freely discarded without potential negative consequences. Thus, in this situation, we expect males to react consistently with gender norms, such that they will be less involved in an emotionally melodramatic story and thus evaluate the story less favorably. The opposite pattern is expected for females as developmental psychology suggests that they have a preference for reality which begins to become apparent at a young age. In particular, while little boys are prone to play fantasy themes and devise make-believe toys (e.g., Marshall 1961), little girls generally replicate reality by playing a domestic or teacher role (McLoyd 1983; Nicolopoulou 1997). Furthermore, these developmental findings for the preferences towards reality are reflected in adulthood (e.g., Elkin and Handel 1972). Thus, we expect that females will respond more favorably to melodramatic entertainment that is low in fictionality (i.e., based on reality). This should be the case because melodramatic stories that are high in realism are more salient and vivid, thus increasing involvement with the story and consequently eliciting more favorable evaluations. Finally, the predicted pattern of effects for both genders is only expected to arise when information about the level of fictionality is provided by a high (vs. low) credible source.

Three studies examined the impact of level of fictionality on gender differences in consumers’ evaluations of emotional melodramatic entertainment. The first two studies found that males formed more favorable evaluations of a melodramatic story when they were explicitly told that the story was make-believe (i.e., high in fictionality) versus real (i.e., low in fictionality). In the make-believe condition, males temporarily relaxed their gender emotion stereotypes, which led to increased emotion expression, and consequently more favorable evaluations. Females, on the other hand, evaluated the melodramatic story more favorably when they were told it was based on a real occurrence (i.e., low in fictionality). Mediation analysis demonstrates that as implied in the theorizing for both genders, higher involvement was shown to lead to more favorable evaluations of a melodramatic story. The third study extends on the first two studies by examining the role of source credibility on individuals’ evaluations of a melodramatic story. The interaction effects between gender and level of fictionality only held when the source of the fictionality communication was high in credibility. When source credibility was low, the differences in responses to fictionality were attenuated for both genders.

This research makes three important contributions. First, it advances our understanding of gender differences in evaluations of melodramatic entertainment by identifying an important factor (i.e., level of fictionality) which moderates these differences. Second, it explores underlying processes (e.g., involvement) for the observed effects. Finally, it investigates a boundary condition (i.e., source credibility) for the impact of fictionality and gender on evaluations of melodramas.

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Love and Consumption in Poor Families Headed By Lone Mothers

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INTRODUCTION

In the US, 32.3 million people are classified as poor, representing some 12% of the total population (Hill 2002a). In the UK, the General Consumer Council (2001) estimated that between 13 and 14 million people live in poverty. Lone parents, mainly lone mothers, account for a significant percentage of the poverty population (Field 1996). One in four families in the UK is headed by a lone parent and 62% of these families live on or below the poverty line (Gingerbread 2003). Despite their prevalence, low-income families and their consumption decisions are neglected in consumer research generally, and in family consumer research in particular. There is only a very small stream of research that focuses on the poorer consumer, mainly located within the sub-fields of macromarketing (Hill and Stephens 1997) and marketing and public policy (Andreassen 1993). Similarly, in family consumer research Ahuja and Stinson (1993) called for more attention to the fastest growing family type in the US, the female-headed single parent family.

In addition to bearing the burden for ensuring the family's financial survival, lone mothers are often stigmatized by other members of society. The tendency to view lone mothers as a homogeneous group facilitates the social construction of lone motherhood as a social problem (Kanji 2004). Yet Edin and Lein's (1997, 159) study of single mothers, many of them in extreme poverty, found "*surprising resilience and creativity in building strategies to help their children overcome poor life conditions.*" The study of lone mother headed families reported here supports this finding in the context of consumer decision making. Lone mothers try to ensure that their children are protected from the realities of living on a meager budget. In doing so, they either suppress their own needs and desires or place them on hold. Children may also contribute to the family coping effort directly through earned income or, indirectly by withholding their desires for consumer goods. Thus, by their actions lone mothers and their children demonstrate the potential strength of love influence on family decision making.

The paper begins with a review of literature on the poor as consumers and then goes on to consider decision making in family consumer behavior research. The methodology is then discussed with details of sampling, data collection and interpretation methods employed in the study. The study findings are presented and the subsequent discussion considers the significance of love as a driver of consumer decision making in families. Finally, the implications of the findings for family consumer research are discussed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most studies with low-income consumers consider how they cope with poverty with an emphasis on how finance and other resources are accessed. There is little information regarding decisions on resource allocation within low-income families. Even in disciplines where poverty is a more vibrant research topic, there is a tendency to analyze poverty in terms of the financial circumstances of families and take little or no account of the distribution of expenditure within families (Millar and Glendinning 1992).

Low-income consumers often show great skills in exploiting their environments to exert some control within their lives and adapt to the financial realities with which they are faced (Hill and Stephens 1997). For example, the poor often turn to alternative sites

of acquisition for many essential household goods (Williams and Windebank 2001). People on limited incomes patronize car boot sales more frequently than other consumers (Stone, Horne and Hibbert 1996). Gregson, Crewe and Brooks (2002) found that charity shopping is often a necessity for impoverished consumers even though this involves a lot of time and effort to find adequate, good quality products.

Lone mothers frequently borrow money even though this compromises their independence (Edin and Lein 1997). Usually, they rely on cash help from members of their personal networks, such as absent fathers, boyfriends, relatives and friends. In the financial sector, credit unions and mail order credit (Ford and Rowlingson 1996) are important sources of credit, as are doorstep lenders and pawnbrokers. However, as financial circumstances worsen, households tend to move away from credit towards a more liquid form of budgeting (Ford and Rowlingson 1996).

Illicit income can be generated from legal activities in the form of informal work such as babysitting, or from illegal activities such as prostitution or selling drugs (Hill and Stephens 1997). Fryer (2005) found that men typically attempt to maximize income through illicit activity whereas women try to reduce expenditure through careful budgeting and economizing, exploitation of special offers, reduction in expectations of life, creative activities (for example, buying and restoring old furniture) and cultivation of social support. Social support from family and close friends, and from sources including churches and other non-profit associations, is an important resource asset for low-income consumers (Lee, Ozanne and Hill 1999).

The plurality of family structures has not been greatly recognized within the consumer research literature (Ekström 2004). Despite the changes in family structure, consumer researchers have largely neglected the issue of how alternative family forms influence consumer behavior (Rindfleisch, Burroughs and Denton 1997). Thus, little is known about the consumption patterns of lone parent families. Bates and Gentry (1994) studied stem families resulting from divorce and found that children are accorded "adult status" earlier. Ahuja and Stinson (1993), in their study of lone mother headed families, found that children's influence in this family type varies according to demographic characteristics of the family, the mother's sex role orientation, product type and stage in the decision making process. However, Geuens, Mast and De Pelsmacker (2002) found that contemporary family structures, such as single parent families and smaller families, have only a minor impact on children's influence on decision making. Studies of family consumer decision making have tended to consider abstract concepts, such as influence and power, rather than focusing on the tangible consumer behaviors of family members (Hall et al. 1995), such as how resources are spent and distributed within the family. Since family decisions are made within a private and intimate setting, it can be difficult for researchers to access this information.

METHODOLOGY

In line with other consumer researchers (Darley and Johnson 1985), this study adopted a relative perspective on poverty and defined low-income consumers as lacking the resources necessary to participate in the normal customs of their society. However, to aid the selection of families for the study, the results of the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey of Britain (Gordon et al. 2000) were

used as a guideline. This survey indicated that the income after tax needed each week to escape overall poverty averaged £239 for all households. Most of the families in the study were on incomes under £200 per week.

Purposeful sampling was used for this project, which involves the selection of information-rich cases that are used to provide in-depth information that is relevant to the purpose of the research. The study involved twenty-four female lone parent headed families. Families were selected from urban areas and all but three of the mothers were unemployed, one was employed full-time and two were in part-time jobs. Employed mothers were working in low-paid jobs. The interviews began in March 2004 and continued until May 2005.

In-depth interviews were held with the families. As poverty can affect the whole family unit, a family approach was adopted in that all households included at least one child under the age of 18. In 16 families, the mother was interviewed alone and in 8 families it was possible to arrange an interview with the mother and her children (aged 11 to 18). Family methodologies have not been widely used in consumer research (Ekström 2004). Poverty is often experienced within the social context of the family and as such, responses to poverty may be collaborative in nature. The interviewing of multiple family members permits a deeper understanding of the family dynamics in terms of each person's role and influence in consumption decisions. Given the private and personal nature of the research, interviews were carried out in respondents' homes to ensure a familiar and comfortable environment.

Hermeneutics was used to interpret the data. This is an iterative process, "in which a 'part' of the qualitative data (or text) is interpreted and reinterpreted in relation to the developing sense of the 'whole'" (Thompson, Pollio and Locander 1994, 433). These iterations allow a holistic understanding to develop over time, as initial understandings are modified as new information emerges. First, each individual interview was interpreted. Secondly, separate interviews were related to each other and common patterns identified.

FINDINGS

The study findings are presented under 3 sub-headings relating to ensuring children fit in, the price of fitting in and support from children.

Ensuring Children Fit In

Many mothers in the study aimed to minimize the negative consequences of poverty for their children. Fear of social difference affected almost all the mothers, highlighting the strong social pressure they are under to ensure that their children do not stand out as being different from other children. Within the consumer society there is a large emphasis on designer brand names that have high brand awareness among children, even those younger than school age. One way that this is manifested is through the purchase of brand name clothing and footwear and many mothers felt pressurized into ensuring that their children had access to socially acceptable clothing.

Jackie: "Actually nearly all his friends wear brand name shoes so I wouldn't make my child stand out" (23, one child).

Lorraine: "It seems to be that it's the done thing to dress your kids in brand name clothing, I have to do it now; she has reached that age. For years I avoided brand names, but I was never going to make her stand out from the rest of them" (43, three children).

Sarah: "If I buy them cheap stuff they won't wear them, they're

only going to be laughed at in the street, you buy stuff for the kids so as they're not going to be bullied" (46, six children).

Previous research also suggests that it is not uncommon for children in low-income families to own branded clothing and they consider that if someone is wearing expensive-looking brand names they could not be poor (Elliott and Leonard 2004). However, this desire for brand name clothing can place families under financial stress. Some mothers turn towards credit in order to obtain the desired products.

Eva: "I have to shop from catalogues sometimes because you can pay it off. There's times I just couldn't go to the town and spend £30 or £40, I mean some of these Reeboks and all that Sarah [12 year old daughter] would want, I mean I couldn't take £35 out of my money, I can't do it" (45, three children).

Low-income consumers may be accused of acting irrationally because they spend their limited incomes on branded goods that may be deemed as luxuries rather than necessities. In some family interviews teenagers admitted that their peers would tease them if they did not wear the "right" clothes. The purchase of brand name clothing and footwear may be aimed at maintaining visible consumption whilst reducing expenditure in other less visible areas, such as food consumed within the home. Some parents commented that if they have to reduce expenditure it is food that is the most flexible.

Eva: "You have to pay your bills; you can't have no electric or no heating. You'd have to cut back, maybe instead of having a full dinner, you'd have maybe beans and toast or egg and chips instead of egg sausage and chips" (45, three children).

The Price of Fitting In

The majority of the mothers said that obtaining what their children need and want is their main priority and consequently, even everyday family consumption is structured around the children. To illustrate, several mothers organize their own diet around their children's preferences with comments such as "I tend to buy what they eat and I would sort of skimp on my own stuff" and "I eat kids' food, I don't eat adult's food, I just eat what they're eating." As one lone mother described, this situation is also found with money allocated to clothing, "he [2 year-old son] gets a lot of my shopping money, he gets a lot of clothes. I can't afford to buy clothes for me and him."

Many parents in the study suppress their own needs to provide for their children. Indeed, some parents even implied that their lives were on hold as all their energy was aimed at caring for their children. Some parents choose to delay fulfilling their own ambitions and place their own desires secondary to those of their children.

Julie: "My lifestyle is very very budgeted, very sacrificing. It can be quite stressful... it amazes me how I can find the money to pay for some of the bills that I have like Holly's [5 year-old daughter] school bills... because she wants to be involved in loads of stuff for her school which costs a fortune" (24, one child).

While many families have to endure sacrifices in other areas to afford to buy the branded goods their children desire, others turn to unreported income. Janet is a 38-year-old lone mother with 3 children. Although she is receiving welfare payments, she supple-

ments this income with an unreported job in the local fast food outlet for which she receives cash-in-hand payment. Janet describes her experiences of benefit fraud as follows.

"It's very hard and dangerous too. I've already been caught. You have to pay them back; I'll be paying £20 a month back until I'm 84 or something."

This illicit work provides benefits over and above financial ones, such as the opportunity for social interaction and improving feelings of self-worth. As Janet states, *"it's good because you're meeting people and you're not stuck in the house."* However, the overriding reason for such work is the extra income it generates. Although Janet mentions the benefits of illicit income, she also implies that this is not a problem-free option. The stress and constant worry of being reported creates an emotional strain: *"I hate my life like this, looking over your shoulder all the time"* but *"I just want to be able to give the kids a bit more."*

Kochuyt (2004) discusses how exclusion from the marketplace can be countered by the inclusive effects of the family unit which is made into a back-up institution to fill the gaps created by the failures of the market and the insufficient safety nets of the welfare state. The subordination of individual needs to family needs demonstrates that the way in which resources are allocated amongst family members is unequal. As Kochuyt (2004, 145) suggests *"By imposing an 'artificial lack' of resources upon themselves, the parents create an 'artificial affluence' for their kids."* One reason for the prioritization of children's wants and needs is that mothers view their children as part of their extended self (Belk 1988). If mothers are judged based on their children, it follows that the well-being and appearance of children can be seen as an extension of concern about their individual identities. By providing children with increased possessions and opportunities, parents aim to prevent the reproduction of poverty in the next generation.

Support from Children

Previous research suggests that children employ pre-meditated and well thought-out strategies to persuade parents to meet their consumption desires (Palan and Wilkes 1997). Often this involves overt influence attempts such as bargaining or repeated entreaty (Daly and Leonard 2002). This study demonstrates that the process of low-income children's influence does not necessarily result from overt direct persuasion strategies. Indeed, many of the children had an awareness of their family's financial situation and consequently curtailed demands for increased possessions. Rossiter (1978) pointed out the need to distinguish between direct influence and indirect influence whereby the former represents an active role based directly on the decision maker's own needs and the latter represents a passive role in which the decision maker takes another family member's needs indirectly into account. This study demonstrates how more passive forms of influence can be as powerful as overt persuasion tactics.

In some families, children play an active role in coping with financial constraints and are effective in contributing to the family's united coping effort. Take the example of Melissa, a mother to five children (all below the age of 7) who has faced extreme financial difficulties resulting in personal bankruptcy. Due perhaps to the severity of their financial circumstances, Melissa explained that her 6 and 7 year-old daughters understand the value of money. The following extract demonstrates how 7 year-old Debbie contributes to the coping effort.

"I had no money at all and the girls were eating rice for breakfast and they were eating meatballs and crap food. And

I said, "look Debbie, whenever my money comes I will give you a fiver and you can go down to the shop and you can buy whatever you want," and she went down to the Co-op and brought up a pack of Variety [Breakfast] Cereal and two liters of milk and came back and put it all in bowls for everyone, God love her."

Melissa's guilt over not being able to provide her children with good quality food encourages her to give her daughter money out of the limited budget. Given the extreme financial difficulty, this may appear irrational to outsiders. However, Melissa feels that this is an appropriate course of action in the circumstances. Additionally, in this case, the money is ultimately allocated to collective family consumption. Debbie understands the importance of necessities and uses her own pocket money in such a way as to benefit all members of the family. Additionally, although the pressure to display socially acceptable clothing does not escape Debbie, she rationalizes these choices by curtailing demands in other areas.

"When they were getting their uniforms, we went out to get trainers and Debbie kept saying "no mummy it's ok, no mummy it's ok" and we came home that night and she said "you know what I would really want, do you remember those trainers with the big thick soles, they were Reebok mummy, could I not have them? I'll not get black shoes, I'll just get my trainers, I'll just get them."

Melissa's financial situation is worse than the difficulties faced by many of the other families in the study. However, the evidence suggests that other young children are also capable of understanding financial constraints. Some children attempt to make a direct financial contribution to the household taking the form of both withdrawing money from savings accounts and contributing money earned from part-time employment. Sarah, mother to six children, (four under the age of 18) described how her 11 year-old daughter withdrew half of her savings from her credit union account to help the family.

"One day I was stuck, she went and took, she only had a tenner and she went and took a fiver out of it for me."

Teenage children who earn money from part-time employment can help the family both directly and indirectly. This is consistent with previous research that highlights children's resourcefulness in attempting to improve their family's situation by accessing part-time work (Ridge 2002). Some teenagers contribute directly to the household bills, for example, one informant described how her 16 year-old daughter contributes money towards the electricity bill. Similarly, in another family consisting of a lone mother with three children, the two older children had full time jobs meaning that all bills were split three ways. As well as direct financial contributions towards the maintenance of the household, teenagers with part-time employment also indirectly reduce the pressure placed on parents. In an interview with Janet and Pamela, a mother and her 16 year-old daughter, Pamela described how she is able to buy her own clothes with the money earned through her part-time job. Pamela now has her own income source and as a result is placing fewer demands on her mother.

In some families, especially those with older children, mothers expect their children to participate in the coping process. This does not always require a financial contribution but rather an understanding of the family's financial situation and the limitations that this entails. One way in which mothers achieve this is through open family communication to keep children informed of financial

circumstances. In an interview with Maria and her 17 year-old son, Ryan, Maria mentioned that both Ryan and her other children are “*made very aware of what we’ve got and what we haven’t got.*” As a result Ryan maintained that he does not place unrealistic demands on his mother, relieving pressure at special times such as Christmas. This is supported in the sociology literature as Daly and Leonard (2002) found that some children curtailed their demands for brand name clothes or alternatively sourced clothes with prices that fell within their families’ means.

The strategies can be categorized into those that involve a direct financial contribution to the household and those that indirectly alleviate financial pressure due to the reduced demands placed on parents.

DISCUSSION

Previous family consumer research suggests that children influence the consumption choices of products for which they are the end user such as toys and breakfast cereals (Lackman and Lanasa 1993). This study shows how limited financial resources may actually increase children’s influence. These low-income children are at the centre of consumer decision making within the family, not only in relation to products that are used by them, but also in relation to products for other family members. As in this study, Kochuyt’s (2004) research with low-income families in Belgium also found that parents place children’s needs first, making considerable sacrifices in the process.

However, there is evidence in the study reported here that sacrifices for others are not confined to parents alone. There were many instances where children, though not all of them, put family needs above their own personal needs. This suggests that the family as a consuming unit provides a protective capsule against the risks of poverty by acting in a collaborative manner such that the available resources are distributed within the family on the basis of need. Of course, it could be argued that ‘need’ is perhaps an inappropriate term in this context. Many of the buying decisions in this study may appear irrational to more affluent consumers.

The poor are often accused of acting irrationally because they spend their limited incomes on products that society deems as unnecessary. Given their financial situation, it is assumed that the poor would be cautious shoppers and, consequently, actions that are not aimed at minimizing expenditure can be viewed as irrational. For example, Alwitt and Donley (1996) found that poor consumers prefer nationally branded goods and do not use generic or store brands any more than other shoppers. In this study, it may seem irrational to spend £40 on a pair of branded training shoes for a child, who may shortly outgrow them, when family financial resources are so meager. Furthermore, in order to buy these trainers, savings may be made by serving ‘*crap food*’ to the family and spending less of their resources on what is identified as essential products required for a healthy life (Firat and Dholakia 1998). Andreasen (1993) argued that people act rationally given their own circumstances. In this study one of the overriding aims of buying expensive branded goods and services is the protection of children in terms of potential stigmatization, social difference or bullying from peers, a rational decision given the circumstances.

Thus, current categories such as rational and irrational decisions and discretionary and non-discretionary spending need to be revisited when considering the behavior of poor consumers, as do hierarchy of needs frameworks that suggest consumers meet basic needs for food and shelter before buying the more discretionary ‘social’ goods, such as branded trainers. For low-income consumers spending on branded clothing and footwear is non-discretionary whereas with food spending, in terms of quantity and quality at least, there is some discretion. This suggests new categories for

low-income families of visible and invisible goods placed, perhaps, at either end of a continuum. Spending on visible goods and services will be towards the non-discretionary pole for it is through them that poor consumers present themselves to the world, giving added meaning to conspicuous consumption. Their lack is an indicator of poverty and the associated stigma and shame. By contrast, there is some discretion in invisible spending, which applies to goods and services consumed in the privacy of the home.

Findings demonstrate that both mothers and their children place the needs of other family members before their own needs, suggesting that love can be a driver of consumer decision making. Park, Tansuhaj and Kolbe (1991, 723) note that family consumer research has given little attention to emotions including love, affection, sympathy, intimacy, anger and guilt in consumer behavior. It seems also that family researchers in other disciplines give little attention to love. According to Bahr and Bahr (2001, 1234): “*The naming of love and sacrifice as essential concepts, even root metaphors, strikes the modern student of families as quaint, for neither term plays much part in today’s family theory.*” Certainly, it is difficult to find many instances in consumer research where love is theorized as a driver of consumer decision making.

Miller (1998) suggests shopping is not an individualistic act and that objects can be the means of creating or enhancing relationships of love between subjects. Belk and Coon (1993, 413) examine agapic love in the context of romantic love and gift giving but suggest that it may also apply to “*brotherly love, spiritual love, and parental or familial love,*” and also to non-gift purchases. Agapic love means that the giver is willing to make sacrifices and do anything for the recipient. More specific to impoverished consumers, Hill (2002b, 20) recognizes the potential of love driven behavior to improve the lives of the poor. Other-centered love involves behavior, “*designed to support and advance the quality of life of loved ones.*” He argues that other-centered love stems from individuals who believe that giving to others is an extension of their concern for their own families. It can also come from individuals outside the community who bring new resources to help alleviate poverty.

One of the difficulties in attributing love to consumer decision making is the slippage between terms such as other-centered, caring, self-sacrifice, altruism, emotion, agape and love, which, though not synonyms, could all be used to offer at least a partial description of behavior that places others’ needs before one’s own. Additionally, the “deconstruction” of many of these terms means that there is caution surrounding their use. For instance, self-sacrifice can have distinctly negative connotations when applied to the family. Feminist scholars argue that when sacrifice is employed in this context, it tends to be women who are expected to do the sacrificing—mothers with their children, daughters with elderly parents, and so on (Bahr and Bahr 2001). Similarly buyer behavior, like economics, rational choice theory and psychology, has difficulty in accepting ‘genuine’ altruistic or other-centered behavior since it is assumed that self-interest underpins action (Monroe 1994), perhaps more so in an era when it is widely accepted that consumers are increasingly individualistic.

CONCLUSION

Contributions from this research are evident on a number of levels. First, poverty impacts on the family as a whole and, it follows, that responses to it have the potential to be more collaborative in nature. Parents often restrict or minimize their personal needs to satisfy children and children may suppress their desires and use their ‘own’ financial resources to buy items for other family members. Such collaborative consumption demonstrates the importance of using the family as a unit of analysis. Secondly, it

questions assumptions about the poor and the seeming irrationality of their buying decisions. It suggests that a new category of visible and non-visible goods and services may help explain some seemingly irrational buying decisions by poor consumers. Thirdly, it questions the predominant model of consumer decision making that assumes self-interest and suggests that love may be more of a driver of such decisions than current theory suggests. There are opportunities for further explication and development of love and terms used as synonyms in the consumer buying context. Finally, findings from this study may not be exclusive to low-income families. Regardless of income or marital status, mothers may suppress their own needs and desires, or place them on hold, until their children are older.

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The Use of Seeker and Sentry Persuasion Management Strategies by Heterosexual Male Shoppers

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Interpersonal influence has often been examined in terms of how marketing agents and other individuals persuade consumers. For example, past research has explored how the influence of salespeople (Crosby, Evans, and Cowles 1990) or strangers (McGrath and Otnes 1995) can shape consumers' experiences. However, recent research has examined how consumers respond to and manage persuasion attempts by others in the shopping environment. Kirmani and Campbell (2004) develop a typology of 15 consumer response strategies in managing marketing persuasion interactions. However, little research has examined how male shoppers manage marketing interactions, especially in a domain where they may be particularly vulnerable to influence. This study examines the response strategies of men who are avid consumers of fashion and grooming products—a domain in which most men do not have a lot of experience and knowledge. Unlike the Kirmani and Campbell (2004) study of both college students and individuals between the ages of 30-74, this study is more narrowly focused on younger male consumers in urban areas, such as Chicago, IL and New York City, NY. Collage construction, in-depth interviews, and shopping trips with consumers were utilized in order to gain a holistic picture of how men engage in consumption and how they manage their interactions with influencers that guide this type of consumption. A comparison to the Kirmani and Campbell (2004) typology is offered in order to understand how men rely on and resist interpersonal influences. The findings suggest that informants did use some of the seeker strategies detailed by Kirmani and Campbell (2004), such as Ask, Accept Assistance, Establish Personal Connections, Direct, and Test. Men asked for advice and guidance, particularly from women, in their pursuit of creating an ideal masculine identity. Informants often turn to women due to their perceived expertise in the domain of physical appearance. In addition, several informants accept the assistance of salespeople in their consumption of grooming and fashion goods. Informants in this study also establish personal connections with others, such as friendly behavior and loyal patronage, in the pursuit of their consumption goals. Moreover, men direct others to their consumption needs in order to successfully construct their desired identity. While the Kirmani and Campbell (2004) proved useful in some of the strategies that the male consumers in this study employed, other strategies emerged as well. The three new strategies identified include: Monitoring influence attempts, Hiring surrogate consumers, and Acquiescing to others' influences. For example, informants monitor and observe how others use goods and services in order to determine if they want to portray the same image as those individuals. Other men hire professionals, such as personal shoppers, to aid in the shopping process of fashion goods. Men also give into others' influence and suggestions in order to reach their desired identity goals. Moreover, some of the strategies detailed by Kirmani and Campbell (2004) as sentry strategies, or those behaviors which aid in warding off unwanted influence, actually manifest themselves in a different manner with our informants. Specifically, informants use strategies such as Deceive, Prepare, and Enlisting Companions to assist in the pursuit of their identity goals rather than to ward off an unwelcome persuasion attempt. For example, men did engage in deception, or withheld information about their consumption behavior, not to fend off persuasion agents, but because this type of

consumption fell beyond the traditional boundaries of heterosexual masculine consumption, and they did not want to be ridiculed in their social circles. Informants also engage in preparation through conducting extensive research on goods in order to build up expertise, to ensure that they were purchasing quality goods, and to avoid crossing the boundary into perceived homosexual consumption. The men in this study also enlist companions for advice and guidance in the shopping process rather than to assist in warding off persuasion attempts. Thus, in this segment of consumers who are relatively inexperienced and vulnerable, seeker strategies prevailed. The finding that sentry strategies are not salient in this study reflects the fluidity of the seeker/sentry typology among certain segments of consumers. Finally, this research reveals the importance of females in the consumption process of fashion and grooming products by heterosexual men. We offer a discussion of possible drivers of this dependence on female others. This study enhances our understanding in a neglected domain of male shopping and consumption behavior, as well as extends the work on consumer response strategies to interpersonal influence. In addition, it provides managers with the tools to more effectively understand how interpersonal influence both aids in and deters men in the consumption of fashion and grooming products.

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Children's Conceptualizations of Sales

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

A growing body of evidence suggests that children, at a very young age, understand the sequence of events involved in a shopping trip (Berti and Bombi 1998, Peracchio 1992, Karsten 1996). Children frequently accompany their parents to retail stores and amass a good deal of knowledge about aspects of shopping such as store layouts, product offerings, and exchanging money for goods (McNeal 1992). One particular aspect of the shopping experience that has not been studied much is children's understanding of a sale. Retailers routinely use sales to encourage customers to make a purchase, drive traffic to their store, etc. They also communicate sales to customers in a variety of ways, including purely semantic cues such as "clearance" or in ways that indicate the amount of the price reduction such as take "30% off." The aim of this paper is to broaden our understanding of how children conceptualize sales. Explicitly, we propose that the concept of a sale is established relatively early in the consumer socialization process, and that the manner in which sales are communicated has differential effects on children's understanding of the sale and its impact on the transaction.

Three exploratory studies demonstrate that children have an understanding that sales lower the regular price of items. In our first study, participants were asked to look at a three picture series of a mother and son shopping for bicycles and write a story about what they thought was going on in the pictures. We find that younger children (first and second grade) evaluated the pictures by focusing on the perceptual features of the situation (e.g. people are shopping, bikes are blue), while older children (fifth grade) make statements about the price of the bikes, both comparing the price of one bike to the other bike in the picture and making judgments about whether or not they feel the prices shown are reasonable given the product.

Two follow-up studies also involved picture sequences. In one, children were shown a picture of a display of pudding snacks with the sign "Clearance Savings" placed above it, and were asked to describe what that meant. Most of the participants indicated that this meant that the products were "on sale" or "cost less money," and some also mentioned that stores do this when they are trying to get rid of something they have too much of. In another picture sequence, children saw a display of pudding snacks with the sign "We Sell For Less" and a price sign of "\$2.74" placed above it. Children were asked to estimate the regular price of the pudding snacks. Although there was considerable variance in the price estimates, 85% of the participants indicated a regular price that was greater than \$2.74, demonstrating some understanding that the sale price must be lower. These three studies provide support for the notion that children by the age of 7 or 8 have at least a rudimentary knowledge of what the term "sale" means, why retailers might engage in them, and that sale prices are lower than regular prices.

We also hypothesize that the manner in which a sale is communicated will have differential effects on children's estimates of dependent variables such as the absolute price of the item, the relative prices of items, the likelihood that the child will purchase it, and the likelihood that they could convince a parent to purchase it. We expect these effects to vary by age group. We conduct two experiments with second and fifth grade children. The first study was a between-subject design where we manipulate the description of a sale using four verbal cues: "sale," "clearance," "save," and "special". Although we expected younger children to be less

accurate than the older children, we have no evidence of a difference between the groups. But, when analyzing the responses by word condition, we find an association between the term used and accuracy. The results indicate that the term "special" resulted in significantly less accuracy than any of the other three terms ("sale," "save," "clearance"), supporting our prediction that the framing of the communication of the sale can impact children's understanding.

In the second study we use two different numeric cues to denote sales: dollar-off cue (e.g. "take \$2 off") and percentage-off cue (e.g. "take 10% off). Unlike the first study, we find a significant association between age and ability to identify the least expensive item in both the dollar-off and percent-off conditions, where younger children are less accurate than older children. Additionally, in the dollar-off condition we find a significant association between age and accuracy of the estimates of sale prices. Moreover, we find that all the errors in sale prices were conceptual rather than computational. We conducted a similar analysis of the percent-off condition and again find a significant association of age and accuracy. Explicitly, none of the second graders were able to derive the correct new price of the item at either store, whereas 50% of the fifth graders were able to compute the sale price correctly. Further analysis shows that while the fifth grade errors were more computational in nature, the second grade errors were almost entirely conceptual in nature.

Our research demonstrates that young children seem to understand the concept that a sale reduces the regular price of a product. Furthermore, young children have a basic understanding of why a retailer may institute a sale, although the level of sophistication in understanding sales increases with age. Our results also suggest that children's understanding is susceptible to the manner in which the sale is communicated. Also, when sales are presented in either dollar-off or percent-off terms we find that younger children are more likely than older children to make conceptual errors, and that a percent-off cue proves to be difficult computationally for older children.

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Individuality, Relatedness, or None of the Above? How Thinking Concretely Can Impair the Activation of Self-Relevant Goals

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

People often have two different perceptions of their relationship to others. That is, one may have a conception of oneself as either as separate from other persons (i.e., an independent self-concept) or as connected to others (i.e., an interdependent self-concept, Markus and Kitayama 1991). These two self-concepts are associated with distinct knowledge representations that can coexist in memory and that can be brought to mind (i.e., primed) at different times, depending on the situation (Trafimow, Triandis, and Goto 1991). Abundant research has shown how these alternative self-concepts affect persuasion (e.g., Agrawal and Maheswaran 2005), judgments (e.g., Mandel 2003), and choices (e.g., Briley, Morris, and Simonson 2000). Frequently, researchers rely on a motivational explanation for their findings arguing that the activation of the distinct motivations associated with the temporary accessibility of these two self-concepts (i.e., independence vs. relatedness, Markus and Kitayama 1991) lead individuals to make judgments and take actions instrumental for these motivations (see Kim and Drolet 2003; Torelli 2006). However, recent research that shows that a temporarily accessible self-concept can be more likely to influence judgments under certain conditions (see Agrawal and Maheswaran 2005; Torelli 2006) suggests that there are situations that facilitate (or inhibit) the activation of the high-level motivations associated with a given self-concept. In this research, we study the impact of people's mindsets on the activation of the distinct motivations associated with the temporary accessibility of an independent and an interdependent self-concept.

Mindsets are general cognitive orientations that facilitate a given task (Gollwitzer 1996) and that can have an impact on motivation-related variables (Freitas, Gollwitzer, and Trope 2004). In particular, abstract and concrete mindsets have been found to affect the types of goals one attends to in a situation (Freitas et al. 2004). An abstract mindset facilitates individual's focus on the high-level, abstract aims of a situation, whereas a concrete mindset facilitates the focus on the low-level, concrete aspects and experiences of the same situation. As cognitive operations, mindsets are subject to activation (Bargh and Chartrand 2000). Once activated, there is increased likelihood that these operations will be used in upcoming tasks to interpret new information (Freitas et al. 2004; Higgins 1996). Thus, the activation of a particular mindset (i.e., mindset priming) can affect the level of abstraction at which an individual constructs a situation in a subsequent task.

Priming a given self-concept can increase both its accessibility in memory and that of its associated motivations and cognitions (Trafimow et al. 1991). A vital part of these activated mental representations are goals-means associations that can guide individual's future behavior (Markus and Nurius 1986). These goals-means associations are conceptualized as goal hierarchies that include a fundamental goal, close to the core sense of self, at the top of the hierarchy that is served by a larger number of concrete activities, or means (Carver 1996; Shah, Kruglanski, and Friedman 2003). Thus, priming independent or interdependent self-concepts can bring to mind distinct goal hierarchies with goals of independence and competition at the top of the hierarchy (as in the case of the independent self-concept), or with overarching goals of relatedness to others (for the interdependent self-concept).

Distinct goal hierarchies brought to mind by a temporarily accessible self-concept would make more likely the activation of their corresponding high-level goals when individuals are in an

abstract mindset. In this context, the more abstract goal activated by a higher-level identity would be upper in the goal hierarchy (Carver and Scheier 1999) and closer to the channeling out of fundamental, self-relevant motivations (Levy, Freitas, and Salovey 2002; McClelland, Koestner, and Weinberger 1989). In contrast, individuals in a concrete mindset would focus on goals at the lower-level of the hierarchy and/or concrete experiences from the situation, which would take them away from bringing to mind high-level goals linked to the self, regardless of the accessible self-concept. We then hypothesize the following:

- H1:* Individual's mindset would moderate the goals brought to mind after being primed with a given self-concept:
- H1a:* Upon the activation of an abstract mindset, individuals primed with independence (interdependence) would be more likely to bring to mind independence (relatedness) goals than their counterparts primed with interdependence (independence).
- H1b:* Upon the activation of a concrete mindset, individuals primed with independence and interdependence would focus on concrete goals, and they would not differ in terms of the independence and relatedness goals they bring to mind.

Four experiments provided empirical support for these hypotheses using varied operationalizations of goal activation. In experiment 1, participants listed their thoughts related to performing specific tasks. In experiment 2, we assessed the goals participants spontaneously projected onto a hypothetical consumer. In experiment 3, participants made inferences about the traits of a hypothetical user of a product. Finally, in experiment 4, we assessed the subordination of feasibility to desirability information. Overall, the findings support the notion that priming one's interdependent self activates a motivation to relate to others and priming one's independent self activates a motivation to be independent and seek personal achievements. However, these motivations are more likely to be brought to mind when individuals are in an abstract mindset. When individuals are in a concrete mindset, they are more likely to focus on concrete processes and experiences of the situation, which inhibits their focus on the high-level motivations linked to the temporarily accessible self-concept.

A key contribution of this research is showing the importance of mindsets as cognitive processes that can interact with people's self-representations and impact the way in which individuals interpret consumer situations, which adds to the growing view of human actions that integrates motivation and cognition into synergistic frameworks with more explanatory power (Sorrentino 2003). Findings from this research can help to understand the impact of self-concept on people's actions under the presence of factors that can affect the level of abstraction used by individuals to interpret their actions. We discuss in the paper some of these factors like temporal distance, level of personal agency, and level of familiarity. We also derive some implications from our findings in the areas of persuasion, self-regulation, and decision-making.

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The Dilution Model: How Additional Goals Undermine the Perceived Effectiveness of a Common Means

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Goals are attained through various means (i.e., an object, an action, or a place) connected to it by functional associations. For example, one may go to a café to get coffee and to get lunch. A question that arises is how learning that this café shop serves sandwich in addition to coffee would influence one's judgment of the coffee that it serves, and the subsequent decision to buy coffee here when sandwich is not desired. More generally, this article considers the question of how adding more goals to a given means affects the individuals' motivation to employ it when only one of these goals is activated.

Based on the goal systems theory (Kruglanski et al. 2002), we propose a dilution model of goal pursuit, and suggest that the perceived effectiveness of a given means to goal attainment, and the resulting motivation to pursue it, are determined by the strength of the association between the means and the goal, with stronger associations leading to higher perceived instrumentality. Because an efficient means is likely to be used a great deal, and hence come to be strongly associated with the goal, individuals may assume that the opposite direction of causality also holds and that a greater association of a means to a goal attest to greater efficacy.

According to this model, the associative strength between a goal and a means, and the resulting motivation to pursue the means, are determined by several factors. *First*, it depends on the number and frequency of instances in which the two entities (the goal and the means) have appeared together in the past. A stronger association between a means and a goal is expected if they have appeared together frequently. *Second*, the means-goal associative strength may depend on the uniqueness of the association, that is, on the number of additional means related to the goal or the number of additional goals related to the means. According to a spreading activation model (Anderson 1983; Anderson and Bower 1973), as the number of associations attached to a mental construct increases, each association becomes weaker, as demonstrated by a lower retrieval rate of the target when the central construct is activated. Similarly, it is plausible to hypothesize that adding more goals to a given means dilutes the means-goal association, and this dilution might reduce the perceived effectiveness of the means with respect to the goal. *Third*, the strength of the means-goal association may further depend on the extent to which the goals simultaneously connected to certain means *differ* from each other. The more distinctively different goals are believed to be, the stronger their tendency to undermine each others' association with the common means. When a single means is assumed to satisfy multiple distinctive goals, it might therefore be seen as less effective in satisfying each of these goals, because of the weakened degree of association between the means and each goal.

The aforementioned predictions were tested in four experimental studies. Specifically, Study 1 tested the general hypothesis that an increase in goal number decreases the perceived effectiveness of the means for any specific goal attainment. This study found that when participants listed one goal that certain means satisfied, the means were judged to be more effective for the attainment of the original goal than when they listed three goals that the means satisfied. Study 2 tested whether perceived goal distinctiveness moderates the degree of the dilution effect, and illustrated that, for

the same two goals, participants who elaborated on how the two goals were similar perceived the means to be more effective for serving both goals than participants who elaborated on how the two goals were different. This study demonstrated that the dilution of means-goal associative strength depends on the distinctiveness between goals. Study 3 manipulated the strength of the association between the means and one goal, and tested whether the change in associative strength between the means with one goal impact the perceived effectiveness of the means for an alternative goal connected with the means. In this study, strengthening means-goal association subliminally by pair them together in a sequential prime task made participants believe the means was more effective for serving this goal, but was less effective in satisfying an alternative goal that was also served by the means. Finally, Study 4 used a behavioral measure and examined whether the dilution-induced changes in perceived effectiveness correspond to changes in preference for certain means in actual choice. This study found that when a single means served two (vs. one) goals, it was less likely to be chosen as a means for an activated goal than when it served this activated goal only.

Taken together, these studies provided empirical evidence for a dilution model of goal pursuit, whereby adding goals to a single means reduces the perception of its instrumentality with respect to the original goal. Several specific hypotheses followed from the model were tested in the current research: First, adding more goals to a single means renders this means less instrumental for the attainment of each individual goal. Second, the degree of reduction in instrumentality depends on the perceived distinctiveness of the goals connected to a single means, with more distinctive goals having greater impact on the perceived effectiveness of means. Third, the degree of reduction in instrumentality is directly related to the reduction in associative strength between a goal and a means. Fourth, means that are associated with multiple goals are less likely to be chosen and pursued in the course of self-regulation toward any particular goal.

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Hungry for Money: The Desire for Caloric Resources Increases The Desire for Financial Resources and Vice Versa

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

One of the strongest motivations for people living in modern societies is the desire to obtain money. Notwithstanding the cultural dominance of money, for most of mankind's history 'resources' have connoted food rather than money (Diamond 1997). Collecting or producing enough food to survive has always been man's main challenge. It seems reasonable then to consider that people's desire for money is a modern derivative of their evolved desire for food.

The canonical economic model assumes that the utility from money is indirect, and is only valued for the goods or services it can procure (e.g. Camerer, Loewenstein, and Prelec 2005). While food is generally considered as a primary reinforcer, money can be consumed only indirectly. As a consequence, standard economics consider the desire for food and the desire to obtain money as two different strivings. However, some neurological evidence suggests that the relationship between money and food might be more entangled than most economists would predict. The orbitofrontal cortex, for example, is known to be activated by monetary rewards (Breiter, Aharon, Kahneman, Dale, and Shizgal 2001), as well as food rewards (O'Doherty, Deichmann, Critchley, and Dolan 2002). The overlap in neural activation suggests a common pathway to the processing of money and food rewards, which may have major implications for the standard economical perspective on the utility for money.

Some behavioral evidence is consistent with the proposed entangled relation between financial and caloric resources. Nelson and Morrison (2005) found that men who either feel poor or hungry prefer heavier women than men who feel rich or satiated. They suggested that preference for women's body weight is determined by people's individual experience of resource scarcity. This is consistent with the finding that in cultures with scarce resources, heavier women are preferred to slim women (e.g. Pettijohn and Jungeberg 2004). As male financial and caloric deprivation appears both related to perceived ideal female body weight, we suggest that cues signaling scarcity in one domain might also motivate people to acquire or maintain resources in the other domain. Thus, we claim that people are less likely to sacrifice money when they desire food and eat more when they desire money. Three studies tested this hypothesis.

In Study 1, we manipulated hunger and measured participants' willingness to donate to charity. The participants received a donation scenario and a taste test. To fill in the taste test, all participants had to eat a big piece of cake. In the hunger condition, the donation scenario preceded the taste test. In the satiated condition, the order was reversed. The results showed that hungry participants were less likely to donate to charity than satiated participants. To rule out reciprocity (for receiving the cake) as an alternative explanation, we manipulated the desire to eat food by means of an olfactory food cue in Study 2. Participants had to play a 'give some game' in a room that either was or was not scented with freshly baked brownies. Exposure to an olfactory food cue is known to increase craving, liking, and the desire to eat the cued food (e.g., Federoff, Polivy, and Herman 2003). Like Study 1, Study 2 revealed that desire for food made consumers more likely to hold on to their money. Finally, in

Study 3, we tested the inverse relationship. We manipulated participant's 'desire for money' by inducing lottery-winning fantasies (the manipulation was pretested relying on Bruner and Goodman's 'size of coins' (1947), which reflects participants' desire for money) and measured the amount of candy eaten in a subsequent taste test. Respondents in the high-desire-for-money condition consumed more candy than respondents in the low-desire-for-money condition, but only for unrestrained participants.

In sum, three studies demonstrate a symmetric association between the incentive value of food and money. To our knowledge, we are the first to test the psychological link between money and food empirically. Part of our contribution therefore exists in providing support to evolutionary psychologists' assumption that findings involving money are informative about findings involving food and vice versa. Our results may further provide a partial explanation for Nelson and Morrison's (2005) finding that financial and caloric deprivation appears both related to perceived ideal female body weight. The preference of lower income men for heavier women, as well as the acceptability of a larger body size for lower income women for example, might be interesting social phenomena that can be well predicted from our findings. In addition, our findings might yield an alternative explanation for (at least part of) the findings of Nisbett and Kanouse (1969) that food deprivation differently affects obese and nonobese shoppers (see also Steinberg and Yalch 1978). Normal weight shoppers tend to purchase more when deprived than overweight shoppers. Perhaps, obese persons are not that sensitive to internal hunger cues as nonobese people because they possess more caloric resources. Considering our findings, we might predict that obese people would be more likely to donate to charity than nonobese people. Further research is needed to address this question. Finally, common intuition suggests that we should not negotiate on an empty stomach or that hungry consumers are less cooperative and thus, probably, are less likely to agree with a sales pitch or, in the context of fund raising, less inclined to donate some money. Our findings indeed imply that we should not ask people to donate before an upcoming meal or at the entrance of a bakery.

An avenue for future research is to investigate the overlap in neurological activation due to 'desire for money' on the one hand, and to 'desire for food' on the other hand. The emerging evidence that both reward systems share a brain region (e.g. Breiter et al. 2001; O'Doherty et al. 2002) raises the question to what extent this region is involved in the processing of *all* kinds of rewards (Montague and Berns 2002; Wilson and Daly 2004). The idea that many rewards are processed similarly in the brain has important implications for economics, which assumes that the marginal utility of money depends on what money buys.

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Does Silence Matter? Effect of Time Taken to Respond on Bargaining Outcomes & Evaluations

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Bargaining, the decision making process through which buyers and sellers establish terms of trade, is a fundamental phenomenon in inter-firm exchange behavior (Perdue and Summers 1991). Extant research on bargaining can be categorized as either examining the influence of contextual factors or negotiator related factors on bargaining outcomes and evaluations (Neale and Northcraft 1991). While a relatively large literature examines the influence of contextual factors (e.g., Kim, Pinkley and Fragale 2005; Pinkley, Neale and Bennett 1994) and negotiator's cognitions (e.g., Bazerman 1983; Thompson 1991) on bargaining outcomes, relatively few studies have examined the influence of negotiator interaction process factors on bargaining outcomes and evaluations (e.g. Galinsky, et al. 2002).

This paper examines how negotiator interaction process factor (hence forth also mentioned as 'process factor') that emerges from within the bargaining environment, such as the time taken to respond to an offer, affects bargaining evaluations and outcomes. Moreover, the influence of contextual factors and negotiator related factors on bargaining outcomes and evaluations has been studied in isolation. Thorough understanding of human behavior in social settings, however, is gained tremendously when, in addition to the main effects, the interactions between several predictors are taken into consideration (Beersma and De Dreu, 2002). Behavioral negotiation theory (Neale and Northcraft 1991) posits that bargaining outcomes are a product of the interaction of contextual and negotiator related factors (which includes interaction process between the negotiators). Accordingly, we examine how an interaction process factor such as time taken to respond to an offer, that emerges from within the bargaining environment affects bargaining outcomes and evaluations in presence of contextual factor such as opponent role.

Study 1 examines evaluations of bargaining outcomes as a function of time taken to respond when an offer is either accepted or rejected, and traces the relationship between bargaining evaluations and inferences about opponents' bargaining position (e.g., reservation price). Study 1 demonstrates that the time taken by an opponent to respond to an offer affects bargaining evaluations in both positive and negative domains (i.e., when the first offer is accepted and rejected, respectively).

Study 2 tests the condition under which time taken to respond to an offer does and does not influence bargaining evaluations. Study 2 shows that evaluations of bargaining outcomes were perceived to be superior in the delayed versus the immediate acceptance condition only when the bargaining opponent was an individual bargaining on his behalf. In contrast, time taken to accept the offer had no impact when the opponent was a salesperson.

Overall, this research examines the influence of an interaction process factor that may emerge from within the bargaining environment on bargaining outcomes and their evaluations and highlights the interaction between a negotiator interaction process factor such as time taken to respond to an offer and a contextual factor such as opponent's role. Together, our results suggests that silence does matter in bargaining setup, but does not always influence bargaining outcomes and evaluations as consumers do have mechanisms

by which they guard falling prey to opponent's silence as can be seen in the results of study 2.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Challenges and Extensions to Standard Beliefs in Branding Research

Kelly Goldsmith, Yale University, USA
Tom Meyvis, New York University, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

The three papers in this session share a common concern that existing work on brand equity and brand extensions has been overly narrow in both its conceptual focus and its methodological approach. As we will argue, these limitations matter since incorporating new dimensions of brand equity and introducing greater variation in experimental methodology will challenge some of our prevailing beliefs about the nature of brand equity and the ease with which it can be extended. At a general level, these three papers aim to broaden our conceptualization of brand equity and encourage researchers to question some commonly endorsed branding strategies. At a more specific level, these papers attempt to answer three questions: How can we reliably and meaningfully measure the concept of brand experience? Can widespread concerns about brand dilution be addressed by small changes in branding strategies? And lastly, has prior brand extension research overestimated the importance of fit and underestimated the importance of quality?

In the first paper, Zarantonello, Schmitt, and Brakus address the nascent area of brand experience—a concept that has gained popularity in marketing practice, but has not received as much attention in academic branding research. To fill this void, the authors propose a conceptualization of brand experience based on the theory of mind modularity and develop a reliable and meaningful scale of brand experience consistent with this framework.

In the second paper, Sood, and Keller not only challenge common concerns about the diluting effect of low quality brand extensions on the equity of the parent brand, but also deviate from the commonly used methodology in brand extension research by having participants actually experience the extension products. In a series of experiments, they demonstrate that brand name structure influences the processing style that consumers employ when evaluating brand extensions, and that this processing style in turn leads to differences in extension evaluations and dilution effects.

Lastly, the paper by Meyvis, Goldsmith, and Dhar presents a series of studies which test the effect of consumers' mindset on their response to brand extensions and, in doing so, highlight important limitations of the methodology used in prior brand extension research. The authors demonstrate that the hypothetical, abstract mindset that is common in most brand extension research tends to overly emphasize the fit between the brand and the extension category. In contrast, when consumers are in a more concrete mindset (as is common in a regular shopping environment), they focus more on factors that promise concrete rewards, such as the quality of the parent brand.

These three papers investigate consumers' perceptions of brands from multiple theoretical perspectives and employ a variety of methods to uncover the processes behind consumers' brand experiences and brand extension preferences. In addition, the session also raises issues of ecological validity in consumer research, specifically in research on branding. C. Whan Park, who has contributed widely to branding research, will lead a discussion aimed at facilitating a broader understanding of brand experience and brand extension preference construction that we anticipate will be insightful and engaging.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“Development of the Brand Experience Scale”

Lia Zarantonello, IULM University

Bernd H. Schmitt, Columbia Business School

Josko J. Brakus, University of Rochester

The topic of “experiential branding” has attracted great attention from marketing practitioners, and several trade books have appeared in the market (Andersson and Andersson 2006; Pine and Gilmore 1999; Schmitt 1999, 2003; Shaw and Ivens 2002; Smith and Wheeler 2002). However, little conceptual and empirical work has been done on that topic. One major reason may be the lack of a brand experience scale, compared to other brand related areas where scales exist, e.g., the Brand Personality Scale (Aaker 1997) or the Centrality of Visual Product Aesthetics Scale (Bloch, Brunel, and Arnold 2003).

Here we present our research to develop a theory-based reliable and valid brand experience scale. Drawing on the theory of mind modularity (Fodor 1983; Pinker 1997; Plotkin 1998; Tooby and Cosmides 2000) and an experience categorization by Dewey (Dewey 1922; 1925; see also Dubé and LeBel 2003), we propose that consumer experiences with a brand arise when consumers are exposed to brands and pay attention to the experiential aspects of brand executions. Experiential cues appear as colors, typefaces, emoticons, smiley faces, word games and the like, on brand communications such as print and TV advertising, packaging, in events and stores, on web sites and mobile electronic communications and, at times, on the product as such. We propose that brand experiences consist of five types: sensory, affective, social, bodily, and intellectual. Empirically, we develop a scale that measures each facet of experience and show that different brands can be differentiated on these experience factors.

Item Generation

We first generated items that cover the five facets of experience. An extensive literature review and search for concepts was undertaken. For sensory items we examined research related to aesthetics (Arnheim 1974; Berlyne 1974; Bloch, Brunel, and Arnold 2003; Feibleman 1945; Postrel 2003; Schmitt and Simonson 1997). For affective items we reviewed the literature on affect and emotions in consumer behavior (Cohen and Areni 1998; Edell and Burke 1987; Holbrook and Batra 1987; Richins 1997) and on the psychology of emotions (e.g. Izard 1978; Plutchik and Kellerman 1989). We covered intellectual experiences using Guilford's (1956) intelligence research, and we also looked at creative thinking and applications of creative thinking in advertising (Smith and Yang 2004; Torrance 1987). For consumer bodily experiences, we reviewed the literature on physical/ behavioral and lifestyles aspects (e.g. Brehm and Kassin 1990; Helman and De Chernatony 1999; Richins 1983; Solomon 2004). Finally, for consumers' social experiences, we reviewed the literature on brand communities (Cova and Cova 2002; McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig 2002; Muniz and O'Guinn 2001).

After initial face-validity screening and empirical screening by an expert panel of consumer researchers and experience consultants, who rated on a Likert scale the degree to which the items referred to brand experiences, a set of 125 applicable items was

retained: 24 sensory, 29 affective, 26 intellectual, 23 bodily, and 23 social items. Of these items, about one third were presented as negatively worded.

Next, a sample of 30 university students participated in a study on brand experiences. After explaining the concept of brand experience to the students, we asked them to evaluate to which extent the 125 items were descriptive of their experiences with brands, using a 7-point scale (1="not at all descriptive", 7="extremely descriptive"). Additional open ended questions were asked to assess the quality of the items. We retained items with a mean value greater than 4.0 and with a standard deviation smaller than 2.00. A total of 83 items was left: 23 (7 negative) for sensory, 13 (7 negative) for affective, 10 (8 negative) for intellectual, 18 (7 negative) for bodily and 19 (7 negative) for social experiences.

Brand Selection

Next, 68 university students were asked to think of three distinct product categories. They were also asked to pick one brand for each product category that they believed was marketed in an experiential fashion and one that they believed was not marketed in an experiential fashion.

Brands with the highest rating were retained for a total of 21 brands: 16 experiential (Abercrombie & Fitch, Apple, Barnes & Noble, BMW, Coca Cola, Jet Blue, McDonald's, Nike, Reebok, Sony, Starbucks, Target, Tiffany, Virgin, W Hotels, Whole Foods) and 5 non-experiential (Dell, Gristedes, IBM, Poland Spring, Wal-Mart).

The 21 brands were then randomly split into five groups, and to assess internal consistency, one brand (Apple) was included in each of them.

Factor Analysis

293 students from three universities completed a questionnaire on brand experiences, by judging to which extent the 83 items described their experiences with the 5 brands listed. To reduce primacy and recency effects, five different versions of questionnaire were prepared. After excluding 4 items which were not properly understood by more than 10% of participants, a factor analysis using Varimax rotation resulted in a nine factor solution using the eigenvalues > 1 criterion, but only the first five factors were significant based on scree plot. The first factor contained mostly intellectual items, the second included affective and social items, the third included sensory items, the fourth comprised bodily items, and the fifth included sensory items again. We also conducted another exploratory factor analysis by restricting the number of factors to 4. Results showed that sensory items grouped together, and that the other three factors contained respectively intellectual, bodily, and a combination of affective and social items. The total variance explained was 62%. For each factor, those items with a loading greater than .7 were retained, for a total of 19 items (6 sense, 5 feel/relate, 6 think, 2 act). Each factor (i.e., subscale of the Brand Experience Scale) had a high or acceptable coefficient alpha (think: .93, sense: .92, feel/relate: .92, act: .78).

The mean values of the 83 items for each of the 21 brands were then calculated. All the "experiential brands" had higher mean values (Abercrombie & Fitch: 3.70; Apple: 4.96; Barnes & Noble: 4.19; BMW: 4.92; Coca Cola: 3.93; Jet Blue: 4.20; McDonald's: 4.06; Nike: 4.61; Reebok: 3.52; Sony: 4.18; Starbucks: 4.32; Target: 3.73; Tiffany: 4.44; Virgin: 3.95; W Hotels: 3.74; Whole Foods: 4.74) than all the "non-experiential brands" (Dell: 3.48; Gristedes: 3.10; IBM: 3.25; Poland Spring: 3.47; Wal-Mart: 3.22). Moreover, the Apple means were highly consistent (all means ranged from 4.81 to 5.03).

Confirmative Factor Analyses

We then worked on a shorter version of the scale, which consisted of 12 items. As sensory items we had "I find this brand interesting in a sensory way", "This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses", and "This brand does not appeal to my senses". Emotions were addressed with items such as "This brand induces feelings and sentiments", "I do not have strong emotions for this brand", and "This brand is an emotional brand". The intellectual sphere was investigated with the items "This brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving", "I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand", and "This brand does not make me think". Finally, as behavioral items we had "I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand", "This brand results in bodily experiences", and "This brand is not action oriented".

We also prepared another series of brands and we divided them randomly in 6 groups of five brands each (Adidas, American Express, Ben & Jerry, Blackberry, Calvin Klein, Clinique, Crate & Barrell, Dannon, Disney, Ferrari, Gatorade, Gillette Mach3, Hallmark, Harley Davidson, Hershey's, iPod, L'Oreal, La Prairie, Lego, Motorola, Nokia, Prada, Puma, Samsung, Starbucks, Sudoku, Toys'r'us, Tropicana, Viagra, Victoria's Secret).

Then, we asked 193 students from Columbia University to evaluate to which extent they agreed the items were descriptive of their experience with the brands listed, by using a 7-point Likert scale (1="strongly disagree", 7="strongly agree"). Exploratory factor analysis revealed three factors with eigenvalues greater than one. The three factors explained 67.17% of variance. After the Varimax rotation was applied, a clean factor structure emerged. Three "sense" and three "feel/relate" items loaded on one factor (with one loading equal to .59, another equal to .63, and the rest greater than .72); three "act" items loaded on the second factor (all loadings greater than .72); finally, three "think" items loaded on the third factor (all loadings greater than .75).

We then ran another exploratory factor analysis on the six "sense" and "feel/relate" items that loaded on the first factor in the analysis above. After we applied the Varimax rotation, this subsequent analysis revealed two "nested" factors—the "sense" factor (all loadings greater than .72) and the "feel/relate" factor (all loadings greater than .69). These two factors explained 74.3% of variance generated by these six items only.

Consequently, it seemed that the best model was the three factor model: "act" items loading on one factor, "think" items loading on another factor, and the two "nested" factors within the third factor—"sense" and "feel/relate".

After we analyzed a number of models, the confirmatory factor analyses confirmed that the best models were the one that emerged in the exploratory analysis (the three factors plus two "nested" factors; see above) and the conceptually similar four-factor model: sense, feel/relate, act, and think. Its GFI was equal to .92 and CFI to .92; the lower bound of the 90% confidence interval of the RMSEA estimate was .08 indicating borderline reasonable fit. Since it is easier to implement the four factor "non-nested" model as a measurement tool, we decided to further work with that model.

Current Work

We are now testing both the divergent and predictive validity of the Brand Experience Scale. More specifically, the fourth study aims at showing that our scale measures a construct different from that measured by other scales, i.e. the Brand Personality Scale. The fifth study wants to demonstrate the impact that the brand experience has on brand loyalty, brand attitude, customer delight, and customer satisfaction.

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"The Effects of Brand Name Structure and Product Experience on Brand Extension Evaluations and Parent Brand Dilution"

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Kevin L. Keller, *Dartmouth College*

The structure of the name used to launch a brand extension has become an increasingly important topic in academic research. For example, Park, Jun and Shocker (1998) showed that the type of co-brand name significantly influences extension evaluations. More recently, Desai and Keller (2002) showed that the type of ingredient brand name significantly influences the acceptance of extensions. In this research, we examine a naming structure known as sub-branding, where new products are introduced by combining the parent brand name with an individual brand name (e.g., Quencher by Tropicana cola). We propose that traditional family branding (e.g., Tropicana cola) invokes categorical processing of brand extensions whereas sub-branding results invokes a more piecemeal processing of brand extensions (Sujan and Bettman 1989). As a result, the traditional brand extension effects of category similarity found in past research are more appropriate for family branding than for sub-branding strategies.

More importantly, the type of information processing invoked by the brand extension has direct implications regarding the potential for brand dilution. Past research has found mixed results on brand dilution, sometimes finding consistent dilution and other times not finding any dilution at all, while keeping a family

branding strategy constant (Keller and Aaker 1992; Milberg et al. 1997; Loken and Roedder John 1993; Roedder John, Loken, and Joiner 1998; Romeo 1990). One limitation of this past research is the exclusion of direct experience with the extension. We propose that the compelling, vivid nature of a negative product experience with an extension is more likely to dilute brand equity than simply informing consumers about negative extension performance as in past research. We find that dilution does consistently occur when consumers have a negative extension experience, but only with family branded extensions in similar categories. Interestingly, sub-branding shields the parent brand from dilution, apparently by invoking a piecemeal processing strategy that sends a signal to consumers that the extension is different from the parent brand.

In the first experiment we measure brand extension attitudes and response latencies to provide initial support for the category vs. piecemeal processing models. Respondents were asked to evaluate several brand extensions in a survey administered on a computer. The experiment involved a 2 (similarity: similar or dissimilar) x 2 (name: family or sub-brand) mixed design. Some respondents in the similar (dissimilar) condition evaluated a new cola from Pepsi (Tropicana) as family named extensions; other respondents evaluated these same new products with a sub-brand name (e.g., Quencher by Pepsi). Consistent with our prediction, there was an interaction between similarity and name such that similar family branded extensions were evaluated higher than dissimilar family branded extensions, but there was no difference for sub-branded extension evaluations. In addition, family branded extensions were evaluated more quickly, consistent with category-based processing whereas sub-branded extensions were evaluated more slowly, consistent with piecemeal processing.

In the second study we added product experience to the experiment to form a 2 (similarity: similar or dissimilar) x 2 (name: family or sub-brand) x 2 (experience: favorable or unfavorable) design. Respondents were given the same brand extensions along with a trial taste test for each new product. Some of the new products provided a favorable experience in that the sample was either actual Pepsi or Tropicana. Others in the unfavorable experience condition tasted a diluted version of the drink. This experiment replicated the evaluations of the first study with experience in the favorable experience conditions. That is, family branded extensions were influenced by similarity and sub-branded extensions were not, even though everyone had tasted exactly the same drinks. The results also showed significant parent brand dilution but only for similar family branded extensions. Interestingly, sub-branding eliminated any dilution effects.

The remaining experiments investigate boundary conditions of these effects. Experiment 3 contrasts direct experience via product trial with indirect experience via Consumer Reports. We find that direct experience has a much larger effect on evaluations, even when the Consumer Reports evaluations are in conflict with the product trial experience. Experiment 4 investigates the structure of the sub-brand name. We change the dominance and prominence of the elements in the sub-brand name by changing the order of the elements and the diagnosticity of the individual name. We find that the individual component has to be dominant and meaningful in order for sub-branding to have the most beneficial impact on extension evaluations and dilution effects.

Collectively, our studies provide evidence that brand name structure can invoke different types of information processing strategies and therefore influence both extension evaluations and dilution effects. Specifically, the sub-branding results suggest that slight changes to the extension name structure can result in large changes in consumer responses. Whereas family branding consistently resulted in similar extensions being evaluated higher than

dissimilar extensions, even in the presence of product ratings, sub-branding neutralized these category similarity effects due to the induction of piecemeal (vs. category-based) processing. In terms of dilution effects, sub-branding evidently sends a credible signal to consumers that helps diffuse negative attributions and separates the locus of the extension's failure from the parent brand. In addition, experience was found to guide evaluations more than product ratings, presumably because the self-generated information related to the former led to greater perceptions of diagnosticity. Finally, the results also indicate that dilution effects can be avoided if consumers are provided with some rationale, either via sub-branding or external information, as to why an extension may perform poorly.

“Beyond Survival of the Fittest: The Influence of Mindsets on Consumers’ Response to Brand Extensions”

Tom Meyvis, New York University

Kelly Goldsmith, Yale University

Ravi Dhar, Yale University

Treating their brands as assets, many businesses have attempted to leverage their brand equity by using established brand names to launch new products as brand extensions. Previous research on brand extensions has identified the *fit* between the brand and the extension as an important determinant of a positive consumer response to the new extensions. Regardless of how it has been conceptualized, be it as overlapping category associations, compatible skills (Aaker and Keller 1990), or overlapping benefit associations (Broniarczyk and Alba, 1994), researchers have argued that a good fit between the brand and the extension category is a necessary condition for favorable consumer reactions. However, some recent work (Klink and Smith 2001) suggests that the impoverished presentation of extension information in past brand extension research has led to an overestimation of the importance of fit.

In the current research, we propose that the relative importance of fit will depend on the *mindset* that the decision maker adopts. In most brand extension studies, participants are asked to provide separate evaluations of hypothetical extensions. We argue that this encourages participants to adopt an *abstract*, hypothetical mindset as opposed to a more *concrete*, pragmatic mindset. As research on psychological distance (e.g., Liberman, Trope, & Stephan 2005) has suggested, decision makers who adopt a more hypothetical mindset are more likely to be guided by abstract principles. We therefore propose that participants who are asked to evaluate hypothetical extensions will rely on their lay beliefs and their general principles about how the marketplace should be structured, rather than concrete quality concerns that would drive their actual purchase decisions. In other words, those participants may adopt a more abstract perspective and overstate their sensitivity to the fit between the brand and the extension. Conversely, shifting people's perspective from an abstract to a more concrete mindset should reduce the impact of general principles such as fit and increase the impact of factors that promise concrete rewards, such as brand quality.

Consistent with this proposition, results from five experiments indicate that when the decision context is made more concrete, people's preferences shift from extensions of high fit, low quality brands to extensions of low fit, high quality brands. In a first study, participants were presented with hypothetical extensions to the same product category of a high fit, low quality brand (e.g., ShopRite cottage cheese) and a low fit, high quality brand (e.g., Haagen Dazs cottage cheese). In the *separate evaluation* condition, participants were asked to separately evaluate each extension (every participant rated both ShopRite and Haagen Dazs, but they were separated by other products); in the *joint evaluation* condition,

participants also evaluated each extension, but the two extensions to the same category were presented adjacently; and in the *choice* condition, participants chose between the two brand extensions in each category. Consistent with previous findings in the literature, participants in the separate evaluation condition rated the high fit (low quality) extensions more favorably than the low fit (high quality) extensions. However, when participants made choices between extensions in the same category, or when they jointly evaluated these extensions, they preferred the low fit (high quality) extensions instead. We propose that the comparisons between brands in the same category resulted in more concrete product representations (and increased similarity to regular purchase behavior) and reduced reliance on abstract principles such as fit, in favor of the immediate benefits associated with brand quality. The reduced reliance on fit was supported by results from a second study that replicated the separate evaluation and choice conditions, but also asked participants to list the thoughts they relied on for their decision. As expected, people in the separate evaluation condition were significantly more likely to mention fit-related thoughts than were people in the choice condition.

To further test the effect of inducing a more concrete mindset, we conducted a third study in which all participants made a choice between a high fit, low quality extension (e.g., CVS deodorant) and a low fit, high quality extension (e.g., Nike deodorant). For half the participants, we increased the ease of imagining the extensions by providing a picture of the product. The picture showed a typical product in that category and was identical for both extensions. Even though the picture did not convey any additional information, providing the picture significantly increased participants' preference for the low fit, high quality extension. A fourth study replicated this effect and also asked participants to list their thoughts when choosing between the extensions. As expected, participants who had been provided with pictures were significantly more likely to mention quality-related thoughts (very few participants mentioned fit-related thoughts in either condition). Finally, in a fifth study, participants were again asked to choose between the same extensions as in studies 3 and 4, but no pictures were shown. Instead, for half the participants, the choice context was made more concrete by asking them to think about the extensions before making a choice. Similar to the picture effect, thinking about the extensions before choosing increased the preference for the low fit, high quality brand. Together, these last three studies indicate that as the decision context becomes more concrete (by making the extensions easier to imagine), the benefits offered by high-quality brands become more persuasive, and violations of general principles become less problematic.

These findings illustrate the malleability of consumers' evaluative response to brand extensions and provide further support for Klink and Smith's (2001) contention that previous brand extension research has overstated the importance of fit. However, this work also highlights a concern in consumer research in general, and in branding research in particular. When asking people how they would decide in hypothetical situations, we implicitly encourage them to adopt an abstract, hypothetical mindset that may increase their reliance on abstract principles and lay theories. This is of particular importance to researchers who study consumers' reactions to changes in brand strategies, as they are at risk of measuring consumers' lay beliefs about the decisions that managers ought to make rather than how they would react as consumers in the marketplace. To reduce this risk, researchers can encourage participants to adopt the concrete mindset that is common in typical purchase situations by facilitating the concrete representation of the choice options.

Development of the Brand Experience Scale

Lia Zarantonello, IULM University, Italy
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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The topic of “experiential branding” has attracted great attention from marketing practitioners, and several trade books have appeared in the market (Andersson and Andersson 2006; Pine and Gilmore 1999; Schmitt 1999, 2003; Shaw and Ivens 2002; Smith and Wheeler 2002). However, little conceptual and empirical work has been done on that topic. One major reason may be the lack of a brand experience scale, compared to other brand related areas where scales exist, e.g., the Brand Personality Scale (Aaker 1997) or the Centrality of Visual Product Aesthetics Scale (Bloch, Brunel, and Arnold 2003).

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After initial face-validity screening and empirical screening by an expert panel of consumer researchers and experience consultants, who rated on a Likert scale the degree to which the items referred to brand experiences, a set of 125 applicable items was retained: 24 sensory, 29 affective, 26 intellectual, 23 bodily, and 23 social items. Of these items, about one third were presented as negatively worded.

Next, a sample of 30 university students participated in a study on brand experiences. After explaining the concept of brand experience to the students, we asked them to evaluate to which extent the

125 items were descriptive of their experiences with brands, using a 7-point scale (1=“not at all descriptive,” 7=“extremely descriptive”). Additional open ended questions were asked to assess the quality of the items. We retained items with a mean value greater than 4.0 and with a standard deviation smaller than 2.00. A total of 83 items was left: 23 (7 negative) for sensory, 13 (7 negative) for affective, 10 (8 negative) for intellectual, 18 (7 negative) for bodily and 19 (7 negative) for social experiences.

Brand Selection

Next, 68 university students were asked to think of three distinct product categories. They were also asked to pick one brand for each product category that they believed was marketed in an experiential fashion and one that they believed was not marketed in an experiential fashion.

Brands with the highest rating were retained for a total of 21 brands: 16 experiential (Abercrombie & Fitch, Apple, Barnes & Noble, BMW, Coca Cola, Jet Blue, McDonald’s, Nike, Reebok, Sony, Starbucks, Target, Tiffany, Virgin, W Hotels, Whole Foods) and 5 non-experiential (Dell, Gristedes, IBM, Poland Spring, Wal-Mart).

The 21 brands were then randomly split into five groups, and to assess internal consistency, one brand (Apple) was included in each of them.

Factor Analysis

293 students from three universities completed a questionnaire on brand experiences, by judging to which extent the 83 items described their experiences with the 5 brands listed. To reduce primacy and recency effects, five different versions of questionnaire were prepared. After excluding 4 items which were not properly understood by more than 10% of participants, a factor analysis using Varimax rotation resulted in a nine factor solution using the eigenvalues > 1 criterion, but only the first five factors were significant based on scree plot. The first factor contained mostly intellectual items, the second included affective and social items, the third included sensory items, the fourth comprised bodily items, and the fifth included sensory items again. We also conducted another exploratory factor analysis by restricting the number of factors to 4. Results showed that sensory items grouped together, and that the other three factors contained respectively intellectual, bodily, and a combination of affective and social items. The total variance explained was 62.06%. For each factor, those items with a loading greater than .7 were retained, for a total of 19 items (6 sense, 5 feel/relate, 6 think, 2 act). Each factor (i.e., subscale of the Brand Experience Scale) had a high or acceptable coefficient alpha (think: .93, sense: .92, feel/relate: .92, act: .78).

The mean values of the 83 items for each of the 21 brands were then calculated. All the “experiential brands” had higher mean values (Abercrombie & Fitch: 3.70; Apple: 4.96; Barnes & Noble: 4.19; BMW: 4.92; Coca Cola: 3.93; Jet Blue: 4.20; McDonald’s: 4.06; Nike: 4.61; Reebok: 3.52; Sony: 4.18; Starbucks: 4.32; Target: 3.73; Tiffany: 4.44; Virgin: 3.95; W Hotels: 3.74; Whole Foods: 4.74) than all the “non-experiential brands” (Dell: 3.48; Gristedes: 3.10; IBM: 3.25; Poland Spring: 3.47; Wal-Mart: 3.22). Moreover, the Apple means were highly consistent (all means ranged from 4.81 to 5.03).

Confirmative Factor Analyses

We then worked on a shorter version of the scale, which consisted of 12 items. As sensory items we had "I find this brand interesting in a sensory way," "This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses," and "This brand does not appeal to my senses". Emotions were addressed with items such as "This brand induces feelings and sentiments," "I do not have strong emotions for this brand," and "This brand is an emotional brand". The intellectual sphere was investigated with the items "This brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving," "I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand," and "This brand does not make me think". Finally, as behavioral items we had "I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand," "This brand results in bodily experiences," and "This brand is not action oriented".

We also prepared another series of brands and we divided them randomly in 6 groups of five brands each (Adidas, American Express, Ben & Jerry, BlackBerry, Calvin Klein, Clinique, Crate & Barrell, Dannon, Disney, Ferrari, Gatorade, Gillette Mach3, Hallmark, Harley Davidson, Hershey's, iPod, L'Oreal, La Prairie, Lego, Motorola, Nokia, Prada, Puma, Samsung, Starbucks, Sudoku, Toys'r'us, Tropicana, Viagra, Victoria's Secret).

Then, we asked 193 students from Columbia University to evaluate to which extent they agreed the items were descriptive of their experience with the brands listed, by using a 7-point Likert scale (1="strongly disagree," 7="strongly agree"). Exploratory factor analysis revealed three factors with eigenvalues greater than one. The three factors explained 67.17% of variance. After the Varimax rotation was applied, a clean factor structure emerged. Three "sense" and three "feel/relate" items loaded on one factor (with one loading equal to .59, another equal to .63, and the rest greater than .72); three "act" items loaded on the second factor (all loadings greater than .72); finally, three "think" items loaded on the third factor (all loadings greater than .75).

We then ran another exploratory factor analysis on the six "sense" and "feel/relate" items that loaded on the first factor in the analysis above. After we applied the Varimax rotation, this subsequent analysis revealed two "nested" factors—the "sense" factor (all loadings greater than .72) and the "feel/relate" factor (all loadings greater than .69). These two factors explained 74.3% of variance generated by these six items only.

Consequently, it seemed that the best model was the three factor model: "act" items loading on one factor, "think" items loading on another factor, and the two "nested" factors within the third factor—"sense" and "feel/relate".

After we analyzed a number of models, the confirmatory factor analyses confirmed that the best models were the one that emerged in the exploratory analysis (the three factors plus two "nested" factors; see above) and the conceptually similar four-factor model: sense, feel/relate, act, and think. Its GFI was equal to .92 and CFI to .92; the lower bound of the 90% confidence interval of the RMSEA estimate was .08 indicating borderline reasonable fit. Since it is easier to implement the four factor "non-nested" model as a measurement tool, we decided to further work with that model.

Current Work

We are now testing both the divergent and predictive validity of the Brand Experience Scale. More specifically, the next study aims at showing that our scale measures a construct different from that measured by other scales, i.e. the Brand Personality Scale. Another study wants to demonstrate the impact that the brand experience has on brand loyalty, brand attitude, customer delight, and customer satisfaction.

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582 / Development of the Brand Experience Scale

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Automatic Heart and Automatic Mind: Nonconscious Affective and Cognitive Influences on Consumer Behavior

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SESSION OVERVIEW

The importance of nonconscious processes in determining consumer behavior is gaining increased attention among consumer behavior researchers, but the range of effects of subtle influences on cognition and behavior has yet to be determined. Moreover, less is known about how and when these processes can influence and interact with the emotional and cognitive components that serve as inputs to consumer behavior. The present session seeks to provide an integrative look at nonconscious affective and cognitive effects on choice decisions by examining the main and interactive effects of emotional and cognitive components on automatic behavior.

The first paper, by *Zemack-Rugar and Bettman*, provides evidence that specific emotion constructs can be activated through subliminal priming procedures. The authors show that specific, equally valenced emotions (guilt and sadness) can be subliminally primed, remain inaccessible to conscious awareness, but yet affect indulgence and helping behavior. Moreover, in their third and fourth studies they use a delay paradigm to find that it is the motivational component, and not the semantic emotion-related component, that drives behavior. Hence, this paper shows that specific emotions can be nonconsciously activated by subliminal priming and affect important consumer behaviors.

The second paper, by *Maimaran and Wheeler*, examines activation of cognitive constructs by priming stimuli and shows that active automatic construction processes can lead even novel and impoverished priming stimuli to exert significant effects on construct accessibility and choice. Specifically, they show that participants spontaneously extract higher order cognitive constructs (e.g., uniqueness) upon incidental exposure to novel arrays of shapes (e.g., one square among five circles). More important, they show that such stimuli can also significantly affect fundamental choice propensities such as seeking uniqueness and variety. Hence, this paper shows that higher order cognitive constructs can be activated by very primitive visual stimuli and exert congruent effects on choice.

The third and fourth papers examine how emotional and cognitive processes can moderate nonconsciously instigated processes. The third paper, by *Fishbach and Labroo*, shows that mood can significantly affect nonconscious goal pursuit. Because positive mood signals to approach accessible goals, individuals in positive moods should be more likely to adhere to subtly primed goals, regardless of their content. Because negative mood signals to avoid accessible goals, individuals in negative moods should be less likely to adhere to subtly primed goals. Using a variety of dependent variables, the authors show that positive-mood individuals are more likely to pursue both subtly activated self-improvement and mood-management goals than negative-mood individuals.

In the fourth paper, *Wood, Poynor, and Chartrand* present a new individual difference scale of priming susceptibility. Using a range of individual difference variables, they show that individuals with dispositional propensities to attend to the environment and engage in associative processing exhibit larger effects of primes on their behavior. These various individual difference variables are distilled into a single Susceptibility to Priming scale that has great

potential utility for both consumer behavior researchers as well as advertising practitioners. Additionally, the isolation of these two factors lends additional insight into the critical processes responsible for prime-to-behavior effects.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“Effects of Specific, Nonconscious Emotion Primes on Behavior”

Yael Zemack-Rugar, Virginia Tech
James R. Bettman, Duke University
Gavan J. Fitzsimons, Duke University

Research in nonconscious emotion priming has been limited to showing effects of positively versus negatively valenced affect. Such research has utilized two methods, subliminally priming participants with positively or negatively valenced words (Chartrand et al., 2006) and subliminally priming participants with pictures of people with positive versus negative facial expressions (Winkielman et al., 2005).

We introduce a new paradigm of nonconscious *emotion* priming that goes beyond valence and demonstrates novel effects. Although specific, equally valenced, *conscious* emotions lead to different behaviors (Lerner & Keltner, 2000), it has not been shown that these effects extend to nonconsciously primed emotions. We show that specific, equally valenced emotions (guilt and sadness) can be subliminally primed, remain inaccessible to conscious awareness, and still differentially affect behavior. We prime emotions by subliminally flashing emotion adjectives. Individuals report no differences in their consciously experienced emotion across the prime conditions, yet behave consistently with the specific emotion primed. We argue that two interrelated processes underlie these effects: nonconscious activation of emotion-constructs and nonconscious activation of emotion-regulation goals (Chartrand & Bargh, 2002).

First, subliminal emotion priming nonconsciously activates emotion-constructs associated with each emotion type (Lazarus, 1991; Lerner & Keltner, 2000). Subsequently, activation of these negative emotion constructs leads to automatic and nonconscious activation of emotion-regulation goals (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999; Erber, 1996; Larsen, 2000).

Such emotion-regulation goals are pursued differently by sad versus guilty individuals. Individuals feeling sad find an unpleasant helping task unappealing for emotion-regulation (Isen & Simmonds, 1978), whereas individuals feeling guilty may find such a task appealing and useful (Bybee, 1998; Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Similarly, individuals feeling guilty find indulging unappealing for emotion regulation (Tangney & Dearing, 2002; Bybee, 1998) whereas individuals feeling sad find indulgence helpful (Rehm & Plakosh, 1975). Hence, guilt-primed individuals are expected to show reduced indulgence and increased helping compared to sadness-primed individuals.

However, emotion-regulation goals are also pursued differently based on individual coping characteristics, such as guilt-proneness (Morris & Reilly, 1987; Tangney et al., 1992). Specifically, individuals feeling guilty and high in guilt-proneness typi-

cally respond to guilt with reduced indulgence or increased helping. Thus, an automatic emotion-behavior link is formed between guilt and these behaviors for high guilt-prone people (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999). However, individuals feeling guilty and low in guilt-proneness do not tend to cope via reduced indulgence and enhanced helping, and therefore will not have such an automatic emotion-behavior link. Thus, we predict that individuals primed with guilt and high in guilt proneness will show less indulgence and more helping than guilt-primed, low guilt-proneness or sadness-primed participants, despite a lack of differences in conscious, reported emotion.

In study 1 participants are subliminally primed with either four sad words or four guilty words using Chartrand and Bargh's priming paradigm (1996). Then, an enhanced PANAS scale including the word primes and additional guilt adjectives (previously shown to differentiate conscious guilt and sadness; Zemack-Rugar, 2006) is administered. Next, participants complete a "consumer survey" and indicate how much of a \$50 coupon (which they may win) they would like to allocate to either school supplies or a CD/DVD (pretests show CD/DVDs are considered an indulgence); dollars allotted to the CD/DVD is the main dependent variable. Finally, participants complete the TOSCA measure of guilt-proneness (Tangney et al., 1992).

As expected, participants primed with guilty words and high in guilt-proneness show lower levels of indulgence than all other participants. Additionally, a hanging neutral control condition indicates that the reduction in indulgence is absolute. Importantly, participants in the sad, guilty, and neutral conditions report equal conscious levels of positive, negative, and guilt-specific emotions. Despite lack of conscious awareness of the prime or the activation of the emotion construct, participants behave in accordance with the prime they received and their individual coping characteristics.

In study 2 participants complete the same subliminal priming procedure, followed by an option to participate in an unpleasant helping task for charity. The amount of time allotted (0-20 minutes) is the main dependent variable. As predicted, participants primed with guilty words and high in guilt-proneness allot more time to the helping task than all other participants. A hanging control condition reveals that this increase in helping is absolute. As in study 1, participants in all conditions report equal positive, negative, and guilt-specific emotions.

The findings of studies 1 and 2 may have been generated by two possible mechanisms. One mechanism is semantic or ideomotoric (Prinz, 1990); certain emotions are semantically linked to certain behaviors, so that verbal activation of those emotions can lead to enactment of linked behaviors. Alternatively, the emotion-behavior link may be motivational, with activation of a negative emotion-construct leading to activation of an emotion-regulation goal (Morris & Reilly, 1987; Bargh & Chartrand, 1999). To examine whether the effects are goal-driven, an established dissociation paradigm is utilized (Bargh et al., 2001; Dunn & Kirsner, 1988) by adding a 5-minute time delay between the emotion prime and the behavior of interest. If behavior is semantically driven, effects should fade with delay (Anderson, 1983); however, if behavior is goal-driven, performance should not fade over time (Atkinson & Birch, 1970).

In a pretest we demonstrate that performance on a semantic task (word-search with prime-related words) diminishes over time, whereas performance on a goal-driven behavior (indulgence) does not. In studies 3 and 4 we add a 5-minute time delay and replicate our prior findings. This persistence of the behavioral effects after a 5-minute time delay suggests that the effects are driven by an emotion-regulation goal.

"Circles, Squares, and Choice: Graphical Priming Effects on Uniqueness and Variety Seeking"

Michal Maimaran, Stanford University

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Research on human information processing shows that people are adept at disambiguating ambiguous stimuli and making generalizations from limited information (e.g., Higgins, 1996; Schank & Abelson, 1977). These processes can occur spontaneously, without the intention or awareness of the perceiver (e.g., Uleman, Newman, & Moscovitz, 1996). In this paper, we test the limits and implications of these processes by examining whether people will extract higher-order constructs from impoverished stimuli that have no inherent meaning, such as arrays of geometrical shapes, and whether exposure to such arrays will systematically affect consumers' choices without their awareness or intention.

Specifically, we propose that individuals spontaneously and unintentionally extract abstract concepts from simple arrays of shapes, such as OOOOXO.¹ Being primed with these types of arrays, we argue, can lead to activation of abstract concepts (in the above example, the concept of uniqueness), making them more accessible. We further propose that the activation of such constructs can affect consumer choice in a manner congruent with the activated construct. In contrast to most prior research on priming and automatic behavior, which has employed words (e.g., Bargh, Chen, & Burros, 1996) or pictures or objects with inherent meaning or existing associations as the priming stimuli (e.g., Kay, Wheeler, Bargh & Ross 2004; Aarts & Dijksterhuis 2003), our paradigm uses novel arrays of shapes without any inherent meaning or preconditioned associations.

We conducted three studies in which we found effects on cognitive accessibility of uniqueness concepts, preference for uniqueness, and preference for variety seeking. We initially focused on these concepts because of their importance and centrality to consumer behavior. Nevertheless, we believe our findings can be generalized to other concepts, such as cooperation and defection in strategic situations. More generally, these arrays can be used in very mundane situations, such as logo selection by brands, to subtly convey various concepts.

In Study 1, we presented participants with either "uniqueness" arrays (e.g., OOOOXO) or "homogeneity" arrays (e.g., OOOOOO). These and subsequent arrays were pretested to ensure that they conveyed the appropriate concepts. During the priming procedure, participants were instructed to count the number of circles and squares in each stimulus array. The presentation of arrays was combined with a lexical decision task, in which participants were asked to identify as quickly as possible whether a string of letters is a real word or not. As hypothesized, we found that participants shown uniqueness arrays were faster in recognizing "uniqueness" words (e.g., 'unique', 'single') than either "homogeneity" words (e.g., 'similar', 'uniform') or "neutral" words (e.g., 'review', 'thirsty'), indicating a greater accessibility of the uniqueness concept. Importantly, in all studies, careful debriefing revealed that no participants consciously perceived any pattern to the stimulus arrays or believed that exposure to the arrays affected their behavior.

In Study 2, participants were presented with either "uniqueness" arrays or "homogeneity" arrays and were asked to count shapes as in Study 1. As compensation, participants were given the opportunity to select one from a set of milk chocolates. As hypoth-

¹Throughout this abstract, 'O' represents a circle, 'X' a square and 'V' a triangle

esized, those shown uniqueness arrays were significantly more likely to choose the unique chocolate (a milk Hershey's kiss wrapped in a different color) than those shown homogeneity arrays.

In the third study, we extended our examination to variety seeking. We presented participants with either "variety" arrays (e.g., OVOXOVXO) or "homogeneity" arrays (see above). As compensation, participants were offered a choice of three chocolates. As hypothesized, those shown variety arrays were significantly more likely to exhibit variety seeking in their choices (i.e., choose three different types of chocolates) than those shown homogeneity arrays.

Taken together, these studies show that individuals spontaneously extract meaning from ambiguous stimuli and their behavior unintentionally follows in kind. These studies reflect two key themes in the study of human perception and behavior: that individuals extract concepts beyond those inherent in the stimuli they encounter and that individuals' behavior is driven by factors of which they are unaware. That these studies used impoverished stimuli for which individuals had no prior associations illustrates the pervasiveness of these tendencies and suggests that the applicability of these broad principles to consumer behavior processes may be greater than suggested by prior research and theorizing.

"Be Better or Be Merry: How Mood Affects Self-Control"

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Aparna A. Labroo, University of Chicago

Are happy (vs. unhappy) consumers more or less likely to read an emotionally disturbing charity appeal and donate money toward the advocated cause? Are happy (vs. unhappy) consumers more or less likely to attend to an ad appeal that warns them about the adverse effects of caffeine consumption and advises them to change their wayward ways? Such issues that involve motivating consumers to incur short term pains for long term gains are often at the helm of public policy planning, and whereas the literature suggests that consumer moods will affect self control and adherence to goals, the evidence on what the effect will be and what the underlying process may be is mixed. On the one hand, the literature on mood indicates that happy individuals are more likely than neutral or unhappy individuals to seek positive and avoid negative stimuli, which suggests that they would be less likely to engage in unpleasant tasks involving self control. On the other hand, the literature also reports that happy (vs. unhappy) individuals seek out negative information when it is self relevant, which suggests that at least on some occasions they may be more likely to engage in self control.

The current investigation addresses this controversy from a perspective of recent research on goal priming. Since the pursuit of many long-term consumer goals requires overcoming conflicting short-term motives (e.g., Loewenstein, 1996; Metcalfe & Mischel, 1999), contextual primes for an overriding goal are often not sufficient to promote goal-congruent actions. Under these conditions, happy (vs. neutral) individuals are better able to pursue primed long-term goals because positive mood is a signal to approach any accessible goal, whereas unhappy (vs. neutral) individuals are more likely to deter from pursuing primed long-term goals since negative mood is a signal to avoid an accessible goal. Importantly however, happy (vs. unhappy) individuals are expected to demonstrate increased self-control only when the higher order long-term goal is primed. Since positive mood serves as a booster, facilitating adherence to *any* primed goal, happy individuals are further expected to adhere to a contextually primed short-term goals such as maintaining their positive mood, whereas unhappy individuals would deter from such goal. As a result, happy individuals work harder on a task that serves an accessible long-term goal of self-improvement, but abstain from this task when primed with an incompatible mood-management goal. On the other

hand, unhappy individuals deter from a task that serves an accessible long-term goal of self-improvement, which they are more likely to pursue when primed with an incompatible mood-management goal.

Four studies tested whether happy (vs. neutral and unhappy) individuals adhere to accessible goals regardless of their content (self-improvement or mood maintenance). These studies manipulated participants' mood (happy, neutral, and unhappy) and accessible goal (self-improvement vs. mood maintenance) and measured for performance on self-control tasks. Study 1 indicated that happy (vs. unhappy) individuals with an accessible self-improvement goal donated more to a charity campaign that involved exposure to negatively valenced emotionally draining materials; however, they withheld their donations (compared to unhappy individuals) when their accessible goal referred to mood-management. Study 2 expanded these findings to performance on a difficult and challenging creativity test depicted to be a valid indicator of future professional success. It finds that individuals in a happy mood with a salient self-improvement goal performed better on the test compared with unhappy individuals, but happy mood led to lower test performance among participants whose accessible goal referred to mood-management. Study 3 indicates that a positive mood further facilitates physical endurance, as measured by persistence on squeezing a handgrip described to participants as an indicator of future healthiness, but only when the task was compatible with a primed self-improvement goal. When the task was incompatible with a primed goal of mood-management, happy individuals did not express greater physical endurance than others. Finally, Study 4 examines the effect of mood on recalling negative information and it finds that happy individuals spent more time than others recalling the health consequences of caffeine consumption and that they ended up recalling more information—but only to the extent that they were primed with self-improvement rather than mood-management goal.

By addressing the effect of moods on adhering to accessible goals, this research integrates two lines of research of the relationships between mood and self-regulation: research on mood as the ultimate goal of self-regulation (e.g., Diener, 2000; Gilbert et al., 1998; Kahneman, 2000) and research on mood as a resource for self-regulation (e.g., Aspinwall, 1998; Leith & Baumeister, 1996; Raghunathan & Trope, 2002). We propose that when people experience mild positive mood, they are more likely to adhere to contextual goal primes. Under these conditions, when the mood-management goal is accessible, positive mood discourages choice of actions that undermine this goal. However, when the accessible goal refers to self-improvement, positive mood improves performance and hence it serves as a resource for self-regulation. Task performance thus depends upon whichever goal is more salient because of contextual primes. Happy individuals are better able to regulate either of these accessible goals.

"Individual Susceptibility to Priming Effects"

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Catherine Poynor, University of South Carolina

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New research in priming suggests that our old beliefs about the inefficacy of subliminal advertising may need to be qualified (Bargh 2004). Researchers have demonstrated, in diverse paradigms, how people may respond to concepts that they have been exposed to below conscious awareness. Although priming effects are robust across reported studies, within-study variance suggests that some individuals are more impacted by the primes to which they are exposed. The purpose of this research is to test this concept and identify the characteristics that would contribute to individual differences in susceptibility to priming (STP). While priming

researchers may benefit from an STP scale as a useful covariate, consumer behaviorists are likely to be interested in the concept of STP due to its implications for advertising efficacy. If advertisers use priming to make salient those goals, ideas, or evaluative criteria that are most advantageous to the company, which consumers are most likely to be vulnerable to this nonconscious influence?

Hypothesis. We posit that people who are confident, socially poised, creative, and thoughtful are those who are most susceptible to priming. Stated broadly, one may interpret this as counterintuitive because of an expectation that those consumers who would be most at risk from subliminal advertising (or any form of manipulative advertising) are those who are characteristically vulnerable due to lower than average capabilities in cognition or communication. Yet, the mechanisms by which priming work suggest the opposite. Priming works through a spreading activation process in which a prime (e.g., a concept like “luxury”) automatically activates related nodes without the conscious control of the individual. Thus, primes require 1) physical (but not necessarily aware) exposure and 2) associative processing. This suggests two paths to priming susceptibility. First, individuals who are confident and socially poised may be more likely to exhibit an “approach” attitude to the environment and thus may naturally attend most to their immediate environment—this promotes physical exposure to a prime. Second, individuals with high need for cognition and creative or association-based thought (e.g., imaginative or interdependent thinkers) may favor thought processes that facilitate the spreading activation of primes.

Study Protocol. To test this hypothesis, we measured a population ($n=112$) on eight different trait scales that tapped into attentional or associative factors (Self Esteem, Need for Cognition, Self Monitoring [Attention to Emotion and Ability to Modulate], Action-Orientation, Imaginativeness, Interdependence, and Closemindedness) prior to their attendance at a research session. At the later session, participants engaged in several unrelated tasks, one of which was a priming study. Procedures similar to those used by Chartrand and Bargh (1996) were used to prime memory goals. Participants were randomly assigned to either the memory-prime or no-prime exposure condition. After the prime exposure, participants were directed to an ostensibly unrelated task in which a computer program self-guided participants through a product evaluation task. Participants received information about a new type of sports drink and were asked to read this information carefully. The screen then displayed 11 statements about the drink. After the 11 statements had been displayed, participants were given a questionnaire that asked them to recall as many statements as possible about the sports drink. Thus, priming effects would be demonstrated by primed participants recalling more words than unprimed participants.

Results and Discussion. Two coders, both blind to the study hypothesis, counted the number of discrete thought units correctly listed in participants’ free recall. Participants in the memory prime condition recalled significantly more words ($M=9.91$) than those who received no prime ($M=8.54$; $F(1,108)=5.16$, $p=.025$). We then considered each individual difference scale separately to assess its impact on priming efficacy. A median split for each scale created two groups who scored either higher than or lower than the median. Five of the eight traits had a material influence on the priming effect as indicated by significant Prime x High/Low [scale median split] interactions. These traits included two attention-oriented tendencies (Self-Esteem and Attention to Emotion) and three associative tendencies (Action-orientation, Imagination, and Closemindedness).

A post-hoc formative scale to measure STP was constructed by selecting representative items from each of the scales. We selected the two items that had the highest item-to-total correlation

within each respective scale. This 16 item scale showed remarkable reliability (Cronbach’s $\alpha=.672$) despite its amalgamation from several distinct constructs. We then divided the participants into two groups based on a median split of the STP scale (median=77). As expected, the Prime x High/Low STP interaction is significant ($F(1,104)=6.14$, $p=.008$, one-tailed). Those who scored high on the STP scale showed a significantly stronger priming effect; primed participants recalled more words ($M=10.89$) than unprimed participants ($M=7.79$). This simple contrast is significant ($F(1,46)=11.09$, $p=.002$). For those low in STP, the prime did not have an effect on the number of words recalled ($M_{\text{prime}}=9.08$; $M_{\text{no prime}}=9.03$; $p>.95$). This protocol was repeated in a second study that examined a different type of priming task (achievement goal).

Overall, we demonstrate that people are differently susceptible to priming influences. This finding, and the development of a short-form STP scale, offer interesting implications for psychology, consumer behavior, public policy, and advertising and would generate an interactive and insightful discussion within the ACR forum.

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ROUNDTABLE SUMMARY

Exploring the Co-Evolution of Possession Constellations, Self, and Identity: Part Two—Mundane Consumption

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Twenty eight scholars gathered at Exploring the Co-Evolution of Possession Constellations, Self, and Identity, a 2005 ACR roundtable session, to discuss the intersection of possession constellations (Solomon and Assael 1987), self, and identity. The quantity of participants, and quality of the discussion, demonstrates that this theme provides a common thread linking seemingly diverse topics in consumer research. Representative topics thus linked include: self-extension (Belk 1988), possession attachment (Ball and Tasaki 1992; Kleine, Kleine, and Allen 1995; Wallendorf and Arnould 1988), possession value (Richins 1994), authenticity (Grayson and Martinec 2004); identity salience effects (Reed 2004), identity schemas (Kleine, Kleine, and Kernan 1993), Diderot effects (McCracken 1988), possession collections (Baker and Martin 2000); brand communities (McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig 2002; Muniz and O'Guinn 2001), disposition (Lastovicka and Fernandez 2004; McAlexander 1991; Price, Arnould, and Curasi 2000), involuntary possession loss (Sayre 1994), and anti-constellations (Hogg and Mitchell 1997).

Discussion at the 2005 roundtable was lively, engaging, and generative. Thematically, the discussion emphasized identity issues. After the 2005 roundtable, several participants volunteered their interest in continuing the discussion at another roundtable, with emphasis to be placed on the ordinary product side of the identity/possession dialectic.

The ordinary products an individual uses in day-to-day living—food eaten for breakfast, a pen to jot a note, a scraper to remove ice from a windshield—are neither dramatic nor seemingly extraordinary. Perhaps because such products seem so ordinary, their consumption is often overlooked in consumer research. Yet, ordinary consumption objects fill consumer's homes, and the consumption of them pervades consumer's daily lives (Douglas and Isherwood 1979). Consumers spontaneously use mundane objects such as "utensils, chairs, clothing, foods, and cleansing products" to "account, or provide a perspective for action" on a regular, ongoing basis (Heisley and Levy, 1991; p. 263) suggesting that such everyday objects are not so ordinary, on a functional level. Moreover, mundane consumption objects contribute to, and reflect, identity (e.g., Kleine, Kleine, and Kernan 1993). The most common and pervasive identity projects in which consumers engage often involve the most ordinary objects. Occasionally, mundane objects precipitate extraordinary, unintended consequences (McCracken 1988), or become objects of attachment (Ball and Tasaki 1992; Kleine, Kleine, and Allen 1995; Wallendorf and Arnould 1988). Ordinary consumption objects used regularly have extraordinary implications.

The goals of this Part 2 Roundtable are to:

- Continue and complement conversations initiated at last year's roundtable, "Exploring the Co-Evolution of Possession Constellations, Self, and Identity." Twenty eight (28) scholars participated in the 2005 roundtable. Discussion was lively, engaging, and generative. Thematically, the discussion emphasized identity issues. After the 2005 roundtable, several participants shared their interest in continuing the discussion at another complementary roundtable at which the primary emphasis is placed on the

ordinary product side of the identity/possession dialectic. Hence, discussion at this roundtable will emphasize mundane consumption.

- Bring together consumer researchers interested in exploring the intersection of identity and consumption generally, and the role of mundane ordinary products in consumer's daily lives specifically.
- Initiate establishing a research agenda to further understand such mundane consumption.
- Enable networking of interested scholars leading to research alliances to further understanding of mundane consumption.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Space, the Final Frontier: Consumer Adaptation, Resistance and Redefinition of Spatial Limitation in the Marketspace

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SESSION OVERVIEW

Anyone who has broken a leg can attest that most people go through their day blissfully oblivious to small gradations in slope, curbs, cramped aisles or tight parking places. Nearsighted baby boomers are discovering that poorly lit aisles make reading labels or credit card numbers difficult. Parents of newborns quickly realize that their prime shopping opportunities are often late at night when stores may be closed but, thank goodness, the internet is open. In each case, marketers have assiduously worked to fine-tune the place component of the marketing mix, only to have consumers face idiosyncratic spatial impediments that limit the exchange process.

The focus of this session is to explore the meaning that consumers attach to their spatial relationship with and spatial movement through the marketplace, particularly when experiencing spatial impediments. The topic is approached from a theoretical perspective propelled by existing theories in sociology, geography and semiotics. The social construction of the market defines normative “movement” and thus identifies consumers who cannot participate like everyone else as *other*. Social exclusion is a term used in policy discourse in relation to individuals that are outside the mainstream of the labor and citizenship (e.g., illegal workers, the homeless). At its heart, social exclusion reflects both isolation and segregation (Sommerville 1998), elements that normally reflect *abstract* notions of separateness as well as physically grounded *spatial* disconnection. Research in the area identifies physical disconnection as a manifestation of abstract separateness (e.g., unwillingness to leave the neighborhood due to language barriers) or as impediments to inclusion (e.g., the persistence of enclaves of minorities) (Massey and Denton 1993).

Using ethnographic and interview methods, the presenters investigate the meaning of moving through market space to engage in exchange via the lens of consumers who face specific challenges, either in mobility restrictions, homelessness, or information processing deficits. The three papers address questions of 1) how consumers adapt to being denoted as *other* in this setting, 2) how they resist this demarcation, and 3) how they redefine the market space to make it inclusive rather than exclusive. Building on existing theory in socio-spatial relation that addresses the spatiality of social life (Richardson and Jensen 2003) and extending this thinking into the spatiality of market exchange, the presenters draw from their empirical work to argue that the inherent nature of space, the control of the space, norms and rules about space, and even the language of space are socially constructed and closely linked to power.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“Expanding Retail Spaces: Website Accessibility for Consumers with Visual Impairments”

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“When I go to store I find it embarrassing I can’t find what things are without touching them and have to ask for help and sometimes people can’t or will not help. I have to go with people. Shopping online lets me be independent (Teresa, 24).

When examining the experiences of persons with a specific disability, such as vision impairments, it is unclear exactly what their experience of shopping space has been and what, if any, new opportunities are offered by shopping online. The goal of this study is to address these questions building on the work of Baker (2006, 2001) and her work with visually impaired consumers in the physical marketplace.

As Baker (2006) notes, retail store “spaces” are designed assuming that most customers have usable vision and are able to fully experience the colors, décor, displays and signage. Essentially, the physical shopping market defines normative “movement” as being able to drive, walk, or take mass transit to shopping locations, and often is constructed so that the shopper relies on visual cues to determine their route through malls and stores. Moreover, a basic assumption is that all customers can search on their own, navigate through each store, and respond to store cues in making their decisions and purchases. Nothing is further than the truth for consumers who are have significant visual impairments, since the limitations and effort of traveling to the retail space, navigating through unseen or poorly-seen space, and receiving help in shopping may undermine the degree of independence or normalcy that these consumers experience.

The built or physical environment has been criticized as being designed from an “ableist” perspective, assuming that physical places are constructed so that persons who are able-bodied will participate (Chounard 1997; Imrie 1999). Basically, persons who are not able-bodied are not expected to participate, and thus are not “expected customers.” Such criticisms are typically made of the built environment rather than the virtual world of the Internet. In essence, shopping in cyberspace “should” be like taking a trip to the mall without the physical limitations found in most built shopping spaces. That is, it allows persons with disabilities “to transcend the issues of time, space, communication, and the body” (Seymour and Lupton 2004), and more importantly, allows the shopper to feel “normal” in that setting (Baker 2006).

Depth interviews were conducted with 45 persons who have visual impairments in order to examine their comparisons of physical spaces with the virtual space of online stores. Each was interviewed for approximately 30 to 60 minutes concerning their use of the Internet, their assistive technologies, and the web access issues that they felt were most important. The participants had web access and varying degrees of experience and expertise with online shopping. Results show that multiple themes emerged from analysis concerning individuals’ concern for independence, empower-

ment, and quality of information that is engendered through availing themselves of online access to shopping. Additionally, interviews identified a series of impediments to their online shopping experience. These impediments included; the nature of website construction (the lack of Alt tags on pictures), the need for assistance from others to fulfill certain online purchasing tasks (e.g., completing purchase forms), and in many cases, the ambiguity of product descriptions (e.g. ambiguous color names).

Preliminary analysis indicates that the question as whether they choose electronic markets over physical markets because of problems with bricks and mortar stores is a simplistic one. There are multiple issues involved.

- Independence: Many enjoy shopping in physical stores, but complain that their shopping trips are limited to “purpose-driven” outings restricted to the sections of their destination stores that either store employees or personal assistants choose for shopping. Areas with spatial challenges are avoided, eliminating the merchandise from these areas as well.
- Empowerment: Some gather and analyze product and store information online, with subsequent purchase in stores or by telephone. Browsing becomes possible for the first time.
- Improved quality of information: The web provides information that is inaccessible in many store spaces, such as reading product labels (such as, through screen readers) or enlarging patterns and designs.
- Less information: Unable to touch certain types of products for examination.
- Unanticipated problems in storespace: They indicate they may avoid the physical store space due to problems that they have encountered, such as spilled items that present dangers to their guide dogs.

When Baker’s dimensions of normalcy are considered:

- Online shopping not only maintains a feeling of participating in the marketplace for persons with visual impairments. In many instances it increases it.
- To some extent, online shopping allows them to feel treated as individuals, but they prefer personal contact in stores for social interactions.
- Online shopping allows them to feel empowered with new access to information.
- With online shopping, persons with visual impairments feel a more equal access to products and information. A new equal access to written information such as labels can be found.
- Websites are uneven in their accessibility and may assume visual scanning by the user. Information may lack necessary detail to be useful. Designs of certain web elements may not be compatible with assistive technologies.

Our analysis gives new insights into spatial tradeoffs that persons with visual impairments make when choosing a marketplace for their shopping purposes. It is not an “either-or” decision, but instead each type of marketplace presents its own opportunities and challenges.

“The Homeless Renegotiating Marketplaces: Hey! Why is Your Store in Our Living Room?”

Natalie Ross Adkins, Creighton University

Susie Pryor, University of Nebraska

Hill and Stamey (1990) boldly ventured into a previously unresearched area in the consumer behavior field when they sought to understand how the homeless acquire possessions and attach meanings to them. Their research vividly stresses how the homeless face multiple structural impediments to basic interactions within traditional marketplaces (Hill and Stamey 1990; Hill 1991). Homeless consumers routinely experience multiple disadvantages and increased risks for victimization due to their social structural location and “restricted access to housing, employment, and public spaces” (Gatz 2004; Roschelle and Kaufman 2004). Rising rates of homelessness especially among families exacerbate these risks. The National Alliance to End Homelessness estimates the magnitude of people without domiciles in the United States to approach nearly 3 million people per year and more than 750,000 people per night with more than half being comprised of homeless families (www.endhomelessness.org 2005).

For many domiciled consumers and consumer researchers, the homeless are invisible with only occasional glimpses into this reality offered when approached by a panhandler on a city street corner. Due in part to negative public sentiment, disengagement and self-marginalization, and harassment by society and police, many of the homeless avoid use of public spaces for shelter and other living necessities (Hill and Stamey 1990). In sharp contrast, this research examines the socio-spatial dynamics of homelessness in a well-defined downtown retail area (DRAs).

Marketing scholars’ understanding and investigations of the interplay of social and commercial elements in marketplaces, like DRAs, remain limited, although a growing body of work recognizes DRAs’ roles in community development and life (Shils 1997; Presti 2003). Drawing upon the marketing literature on co-production which primarily focuses on its proximal benefits for co-producers (i.e., efficiencies for marketers and services from products for consumers; Bendapudi and Leone 2003; Vargo and Lusch 2004), this research examines other less proximal and more general consequences, including the production and negotiation of marketplace meanings by merchants, domiciled consumers and the homeless inhabiting the research area. We will discuss how in a given community, the creation of meaning is renegotiated through the symbolism of the marketplace and is a source of identification for those involved (McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig 2002).

Specifically, we explore how the homeless in a downtown retail area negotiate and survive in the physical space of the marketplace which was neither “designed nor intended for residence and basic subsistence activities” (Harter, Berquist, Titsworth, Novak and Brokaw 2005, p. 315). Similar to the findings of Adkins and Ozanne’s (2005) study of consumers with low literacy, homeless consumers who successfully reject and renegotiate the negative label and derogatory identities associated with it feel empowered to exert control, choice, and influence in the marketplace (Buffalo and Rogers 1974; Hill and Stamey 1990; Pryor 2006).

The study site was a downtown retail area in a Midwestern city with a population of approximately 90,000. The area encompasses 27 block sides with 130 stores, service establishments, and restaurants. Data collected over a 3 _ year period using multiple ethnographic methods including participant and non-participant observation; semi-structured field interviews; long interviews with retailers and domiciled consumers; and secondary data collection of artifacts (including marketing collaterals and communication materials).

Marketers and consumers who used the DRA in different ways expressed different views about its meanings. These meanings were social, cultural, economic, and political, as well as consumption-related, in nature. Additionally, tensions and inconsistencies in their views about the marketplace's formal, commercial, festive, and other qualities exist between the various groups (Pryor and Grossbart, forthcoming; Peñaloza 2000; Sherry 1990). Yet, there are socially acceptable variations in marketplace meanings because, as it has in other settings, the resulting social capital in the area fosters tolerance or reconciliation of differences (Flora and Flora 1993).

Historically, the merchants and the domiciled consumers in the DRA organize and support charitable events designed to provide resources for the needy and homeless. However, more recently, the merchants in the area have become actively involved in pressing the city to move social service resources out of the DRA and for the passage of additional ordinance and policies governing the transient population and to protect the aesthetic qualities and appeal of the downtown area. As one merchant explained,

"I am entirely tired of the street musicians who hang out across the street from my business," he said. "Many of my customers are senior citizens who find them intimidating and frightening." (FN, DLI meeting, 2001)

We explicate the manner in which several of the homeless engage in co-production with an established spatial area and add "flavor" to the marketplace environment. By actively co-opting marketplace symbols and structures for their own purposes, such as "homeless Santa" who uses the commercial symbolism of Christmas to panhandle and street musicians who sit by entrances to retail outlets singing and playing for a coin, the homeless in the DRA are challenging local merchants efforts to define the space without them.

"Marketplace Power Struggles: Families Confronting Spatial Limitations"

Marlys Mason, Oklahoma State University

Teresa Pavia, University of Utah

As most parents of newborns discover, the ability to move through the marketplace that most able-bodied adults take for granted is immediately changed by the arrival of a child. Over time, families become adept at meeting the physical challenge of engaging as a parent-plus-child consumer aided, in part, by marketplace adaptations such as car seats that integrate into a carriage or parking spots reserved for parents with small children. While physical impediments may be overcome or accommodated, various marketplaces, are understood to be off limits to the parent-with-child consumer due to social norms (e.g., a very fancy restaurant), legal restrictions (e.g., bars or strip clubs), or environmental stresses (e.g., extreme adventure travel). For a variety of reasons most people believe such social exclusion policies are not only acceptable, they are commendable and proper.

The dark side of social exclusion, however, is condemned. Laws and policies have been enacted to ensure equal access to marketplace regardless of diverse attributes (e.g., race, ethnicity, disability). Sellers portray their spaces as accessible and open to all, with mixed races, ethnicities and genders commonly appearing in promotional materials. Is the space of the market really accessible and open to all though? This question raises two issues: can the individual *physically* move into the marketplace, and is the individual *socially excluded* from the marketplace. Families with a child who has a disability provide a window into the complex

relationship that consumers have with the *space* of the market, exclusions consumers experience, and notions of activities that are appropriate for the public sphere.

In the U.S. approximately 20% of the 54.4 million non-institutionalized children between 5 and 20 years of age are designated as having some type of disability (US Census Bureau 2005, Table 34). Although the disabilities in question span a wide range of cognitive, physical, and sensory disabilities, all families of children with special needs remain challenged by barriers that the marketplace presents for far longer than the average family with a typically newborn or able-bodied child.

Using a phenomenological approach, this paper explores the lived experience of families with a special needs child in marketplaces constructed with 'normal' consumers and families in mind. Following prolonged immersion into the special needs community, twenty two in-depth interviews were conducted, with each lasting approximately 1-2 hours. The interviews were largely unstructured using broad guiding questions as initial prompts.

Specifically, we investigate 1) the spatial challenges (both physical and social) that families face in marketplaces, 2) the means that families use to adapt to these challenges, and 3) identifiers of the "other" that consumers experience in the marketplace.

This research has descriptive findings that center on concrete elements of spatial exclusion, and theoretical findings that address the abstract exclusion experienced by the "other". On the concrete level, all informants describe retail environments as not understanding special needs children and families when designing the marketplace. For example, they discuss too few handicapped parking spaces, inappropriate store services and displays targeted to normal kids that trigger inappropriate outbursts in those with behavioral impairments. These negative consumption experiences elevate the family's awareness of the disability and at times create such difficulties that the family voluntarily excludes themselves from the marketplace. To accommodate the special need, our informants discuss making adjustments in fundamental and specific areas such as shopping (e.g., locations, time, medium), travel and vacations, recreation and leisure, vehicles, living spaces, celebrations and holidays, etc. They also discussed larger shifts related to consumption including employment choices that allow the parent the flexibility to work, and major shifts in family roles, particularly roles related to movements between different spatial spheres of the family (e.g., teen doing routine grocery shopping, a shift to traditional gender roles of the mother at home, care giving, and the father outside the home as breadwinner).

The theoretical contributions of this research center around persistent inversions of commonly held notions of spatiality that these families face. Scarry (1985) argues that a unique aspect of pain derives from "an almost obscene conflation of public and private" in which activities that are normally private (such as crying or vomiting) become public, and activities that are normally public (such as eating or conversation) must be done in solitude. The pain of the marketplace for consumers living with physical/mental limitations arises in part from public aversion to a body that does not follow convention public/private norms. At the same time, informants express distress that the acutely visible limitations they display appear to evoke no market response in terms of new products, environments or understanding.

Demarcated as the *other*, parents report both avoidance and resistance, depending on the situation. For example, informants move between in-your-face, up close and personal advocacy for their child, and striving, conformist behaviors such as dressing the child in brand name clothes for outings so he/she looks "cute". Parents report managing their space in ways that increase privacy

and decrease the judgmental public stare: some assume health care tasks specifically to remove other providers from the home, some limit face-to-face confrontations by employing e-mail or letters, and many refuse to meet other shoppers'/patrons' eyes when in public. Parents report assertively managing their environment, but report that most victories are hard won and often transitory. That is, small accommodations are made, but there are no changes to the system to formalize the adaptation.

Our analysis highlights the symbolic meanings that the families attach to their spatial limitations in the marketspace and their adaptations. Consumer resistance is traced both as straightforward complaining and as more subversive "rule bending"; consumer conformance is noted primarily as an effort to fit in and be accepted. These informants speak for other consumers who redefine what they want and will accept from the marketspace and in doing so simultaneously redefine spatiality in their consumption and demand a renegotiation of power between themselves and the marketplace.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

How Long Does it Seem? Advancing the Understanding of Past and Future Time Perception

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SESSION OVERVIEW

Consumers often must estimate the lengths of time intervals when making decisions. For example, they might forecast the time until a payment will be received when evaluating interest rates, or might estimate how long they waited in line when deciding whether to revisit a store. These estimates are likely to be influenced by factors beyond objective duration, such as judgments of frequency or likelihood are often biased by ostensibly irrelevant factors (Gilovich, Griffin, and Kahneman, 2002). To further our understanding of how consumers perceive time, the papers in this session explore factors that make time intervals of equal objective length seem long or short. Specifically, these papers examine how the events involved in a time interval affect perceptions of that interval's length.

Faro, McGill, and Hastie begin by examining how perceptions of a past time interval are affected by the relationship between the events denoting the interval's beginning and end. They find that intervals seem shorter when their beginning and ending events have a strong causal relationship than when the causal relationship is weaker; they also find that the type of cause connecting the events heavily influences length judgments. Diehl, Levav, and Zauberman augment this finding by focusing on the *number* of events perceived to have been caused by the beginning event. They find that intervals begun by an event that triggered many subsequent events seem longer than do intervals begun by an event that triggered few events. Finally, LeBoeuf and Simmons extend these findings to perceptions of future time. Building from the suggestion that past intervals seem longer when they contain more events, these authors investigate whether perceptions of future intervals are similarly affected by whether the intervals seem full of events, as opposed to empty. Daniel Read serves as the discussant; his work on intertemporal choice, and particularly on the sensitivity of discount rates to the framing of time intervals, lends him an ideal perspective on this work.

This session highlights common themes emerging from these independently developed streams of research, thereby facilitating general conclusions about factors affecting time perception. These papers thus shed light on important practical issues, such as how consumers perceive, for example, the length of time that they waited for a shipment to arrive or the length of time that they must wait for an investment to mature. Interestingly, the papers presented here also suggest ways in which past and future time perception differ, highlighting the need for additional research to examine whether other established properties of past time perception hold in the relatively unexplored domain of future time perception. More broadly, this research has implications for theories of memory, planning, and intertemporal choice, as discussed in the papers that follow.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“How Long Did That Take? The Role of Causal Attribution in Estimating Elapsed Time”

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Ann L. McGill and Reid Hastie, University of Chicago

Consider the time that elapses between a cause and an effect. For example, the time between using a product and experiencing its benefit, placing an ad and seeing its impact on sales, or developing

a new product and, in doing so, triggering a competitor's response. Understanding retrospective judgments of the time between cause-effect events is important because people rely on these when they later face similar situations (“How long shall I wait for a pain killer to show its effect before I take another pill?”) and when they evaluate efficiency of actions (“How quickly did Microsoft react to Apple's introduction of iPod?”).

Recent research has shown that people rely on their impressions of the strength of the causal relationship between two events as a cue to judge the time between them. A stronger perception of a causal relationship results in shorter judgments of time (Faro et al. 2005). The present work examines the psychological underpinnings of this tendency. We suggest the time-shortening effect of causality reflects a default physics-based view of causal mechanisms. Temporal proximity is an important cue in perceiving causality between physical objects (e.g., Michotte 1963). Given its prominence and early use, the temporal proximity cue might be generalized to other domains (Heider 1944). However, recent research showed that people do not always expect events to be proximate in time in order to link them causally. If the mechanism by which the events are believed to be related entails temporal delay, or a causal force that does not lose its impact over time, the events can be seen as causally related in spite of the lack of temporal proximity (Brickman et al. 1975; Buehner et al. 2003; Haggmayer and Waldmann 2002).

In the first two studies we manipulate participants' salient mental model of causality and examine its effect on time estimates. Building on the above research, we hypothesize that if causes are perceived as factors that lose their force over time, a strong impression of causality will result in shorter time estimates. If, however, causes are perceived as factors that have stable or increasing force over time, an impression of causality will not shorten time estimates.

In the first study participants made elapsed time judgments for causally related pairs of events. Prior to making time estimates, participants were asked to choose (from provided lists) either a) which emotions are associated with the actors in the events, *or* b) which trait characteristics are associated with the actors in the events, *or* c) which situational factors are associated with these events. In a fourth, control condition, participants made time estimates without any choice task. We predicted that emotions would be perceived as a causal force that dissipates over time and hence focusing on these would result in shorter time estimates. In contrast, focusing on traits and situational factors, which tend to be causal forces that have stable impact over time, should result in longer time estimates. Results were in line with these predictions.

In the second study, prior to making time judgments, participants were asked to explain in writing the workings of three physical processes or three biological processes. We hypothesized that thinking about physical processes would trigger a view of causal forces that dissipate over time while thinking about biological processes would trigger a view of causal forces that increase over time. Participants in the physics-prime conditions judged the subsequent pairs of events to be closer in time than participants in the biology-prime condition.

The first two studies manipulated the type-of-cause and showed that the impression of causality shortens time for dissipative causes (emotions, physical forces) but not for stable or increasing causes

(traits, biological forces). This suggests that the inference of short time from causality is a heuristic driven by people's dominant physics-based view of causality. Previous research has shown that people who are low in NFC are more likely to use heuristics for judgment. This suggests that people who are low in NFC would give shorter time estimates for causally related events than people high in NFC. Participants in the third study made elapsed time judgments for causally related pairs of events, but also for pairs that were pre-tested to be causally *not* related. They then completed the NFC scale (Cacioppo and Petty 1982). Results revealed an interaction between NFC and type of event-pair. For the non-causal events, there was no difference between the time estimates for the high and low NFC participants, suggesting that NFC does not affect time estimates in general. For the causal pairs however, as predicted, low NFC participants gave significantly shorter time estimates than the high NFC participants.

The three studies reveal a common pattern. Participants gave shorter time estimates when they focused on dissipative causes. In addition, participants who tend to rely on heuristics gave shorter time estimates for cause-effect pairs of events. The findings suggest the time-shortening effect of causality reflects a default physics-based view of causal mechanisms where the force of a cause dissipates over time. The physics metaphor is a prominent mode of thinking about causality in other contexts and domains (Heider 1944). This form of thinking about causality and its shortening implication for time judgment might underlie the underestimation of time and the impatience with causal processes observed in many contexts.

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"1995 Feels so Close Yet so Far: The Effect of Event 'Markers' on the Subjective Feeling of Elapsed Time"

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Why do some events feel more distant than others? Past research has documented a number of factors contributing to this phenomenon, reporting positive correlations between feelings of recency and greater event importance, vividness, and emotionality. But what about events that are equally vivid or emotional? We

argue that equally vivid or emotional events can feel more or less distant in time depending upon the perceived number of subsequent events precipitated by the target events. We call these subsequent events "memory markers." We hypothesize that events associated with a larger number of markers will elicit feelings of greater temporal distance than equally vivid events that are associated with fewer markers.

Associative network models of memory predict a positive relationship between the number of events subsequent to a target initiating event and the activation of the target event. Greater activation—and stronger memories—should reduce feelings of temporal distance because people typically hold lay theories about the positive relationship between memory strength and memory recency (Schwarz 2005). We predict the opposite: Associating a greater number of subsequent events should divide time into more discrete segments, which will in turn increase the perceived temporal distance of the initiating event. This idea is most in line with the conveyor belt model of memory (Murdock 1974), which suggests that, when trying to assess an event's timing, people scan backwards from the present to the target event. Recency is a function of the memory traces encountered in the scan. This model, however, was tested mainly in laboratory settings using simple word list tasks and has not been extended to the kind of emotional, real life experiences that are of interest to us here.

Note that we are not interested in people's assessments of the exact time an event happened; instead, we focus on how long ago an event *feels* like it happened. In contrast, prior research has focused on people's estimates of elapsed time by comparing respondents' judged timing of an event with its actual calendar date (e.g., Thompson, Skowronski, and Lee 1988). Using the dating method, researchers have identified the phenomenon of "telescoping," which refers to people's tendency to report distant events as having occurred more recently than they actually did (forward telescoping) or the tendency to report that more recent events occurred in the more distant past (backward telescoping; e.g., Morwitz 1997).

We conducted a computer-based survey to investigate our marker hypothesis. Seventy-seven undergraduate students were asked to indicate how recent 19 vivid, national and school-specific public events felt to them. The study was conducted in November 2004 and all target events had occurred in the 2003 calendar year. For each event, participants first indicated their subjective feelings of when the event had occurred using a scale anchored at 1 (feels very recent) and 15 (feels very distant); they could also indicate that they were not aware of the event. Participants assessed their feelings of recency for all 19 events. They then rated the extent of their feeling that each event caused subsequent events on a scale from 1 (triggered no event) to 7 (triggered many events). They also indicated how well they remembered each of the target events (1—not at all, 7—perfectly) and how emotional they judged the event to be (1—not at all emotional, 7—extremely emotional). The order of the events participants responded to was randomly determined for each measure. Finally, they were asked to indicate the month and year that the event occurred.

Accuracy Results. While we were mostly interested in respondents' subjective feeling of elapsed time, we assessed dating accuracy by calculating the difference in months between the dates provided by the respondents and the actual dates on which the events occurred. Using this measure, positive numbers indicate backward telescoping and negative numbers indicate forward telescoping. Across all events of which participants were aware ($n=1150$), we find some evidence of backward telescoping: participants dated the events as having occurred about 2.5 months earlier than they actually did ($t(1149)=7.66, p<.0001$). Unsurprisingly,

dating accuracy increased the more memorable the event ($F(1,76)=13.29, p<.001$), but did not depend on the how emotional the event was judged to be ($F(1,76)=0, p>.8$) or the number of subsequent events that had been triggered ($F(1,76)=0, p>.8$).

Subjective Feeling of Distance Results. Our main prediction regards the *subjective* feeling of elapsed time. Subjective feelings of elapsed time were positively and significantly correlated with the reported ($r=0.25, p<.001$), as well as the actual ($r=0.15, p<.001$), number of months passed. However these correlations were small, suggesting that factors other than objective time may drive feelings of elapsed time.

We performed a median-split based on participants' assessments of the number of events triggered by a target event. For each event we calculated the median number of subsequent events reported. We then determined whether for a given participant an event was perceived as having triggered many versus few subsequent events relative to that median. Next we estimated the effect of this dichotomous variable on participants' experience of elapsed time, while controlling for actual time passed, event memorability, and event emotionality. As one would expect, actual elapsed time had a significant positive effect ($F(1, 76)=35.41, p <.0001$) and event memorability had a significant negative effect ($F(1, 76)=44.39, p <.0001$) on how distant the event felt to participants. Emotionality of the event did not have a significant effect ($F(1, 76)=1.77, p>.18$). Since emotionality and memorability were significantly correlated ($r=0.52, p<.001$), multi-collinearity is a concern. However, estimating the same model excluding memorability also does not reveal a significant effect of emotionality at conventional levels of significance ($F(1, 76)=2.39, p>.12$). More important for our prediction, however, events perceived to have triggered many subsequent events were felt significantly more distant than events that triggered few such events ($F(1, 76)=7.64, p <.01$).

In sum, this study tests whether the perceived number of subsequent events triggered by a target event affects the subjective feeling of time elapsed since the target event. Our findings support the notion that feelings of elapsed time depend on the perceived number of memory markers, even after controlling for the actual time elapsed since the event as well as the event's emotionality and memorability. To test our explanation further, in our next experiment we will manipulate the number of subsequent events that are associated with the target event.

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"Perceptions of the Length of Future Time Intervals: A Simulation Perspective"

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Consumers often make decisions about future events and transactions. These decisions range from the relatively mundane (e.g., scheduling dental appointments) to the potentially life-altering (e.g., saving for retirement). While researchers have examined specific questions about how consumers discount future dollars

(see Loewenstein, Read, and Baumeister 2003, for a review) and plan future tasks (Buehler, Griffin, and Ross 1994), relatively little work has examined the more basic question of how consumers perceive future time. Even the influential construal-level theory (Trope and Liberman 2003), which discusses how consumers react differently to near-future versus far-future events, is relatively silent on the factors that might make a given event *seem* near or far. In this paper, we explore such factors to understand what makes future time intervals of equal objective length seem relatively long instead of short.

Our work builds on research on past time intervals, and particularly on the finding that past intervals containing many events tend to be estimated as having lasted longer than intervals containing relatively few events (Fraisse 1984). We investigate whether a similar pattern characterizes the perception of future time intervals. Our work also builds on the recent finding that extent-described future intervals (e.g., "four months") tend to be perceived as longer than equivalent date-described intervals (e.g., "June 1 to October 1"), potentially because the former descriptions direct attention to interval length in a way that the latter do not (LeBoeuf 2006). This finding suggests that consumers may be more sensitive to nuances in interval presentation when intervals are described by extents instead of dates.

We thus predict that future time perception should be affected by whether future intervals seem "full" instead of "empty," and that fullness effects should mainly manifest for extent-described intervals. More specifically, our hypothesis is an *interval-simulation* one: those facing extent descriptions may naturally simulate interval passage whereas those facing dates may not; this may lead participants facing extents to be more affected by factors, such as the number of intervening events, that might impact simulations to make an interval "feel" long or short.

Study 1 therefore had a 2 (interval description: date or extent) x 2 (number of events: 0 or 6) x 2 (interval length: four or six months) design. Length was varied within subjects, and the other factors were manipulated between subjects. Some participants were asked to list six things that would happen during a presented interval, whereas others were not; all participants then rated the perceived length of that interval on a seven-point scale ranging from "seems very short" to "seems very long." As predicted, filling date-described intervals did not impact length perceptions. However, filling extent-described intervals made those intervals seem *shorter* than did contemplating empty intervals. Thus, the perceived length of extent-described intervals was sensitive to interval fullness, but, unlike full past intervals, full future intervals seemed shorter than empty ones. This finding makes sense if people naturally simulate the passage of extent-described intervals: Simulating an empty interval may suggest that the interval will feel like a long wait. Simulating a full interval, however, may lead to perceptions of a busy interval passing by quickly.

Study 2 explored the impact of the type of event with which participants filled extent-described intervals. As before, prior to rating interval length, some participants contemplated an empty interval, whereas others were asked to fill the interval with any six unspecified events. A third group filled the interval with six "rare" events, and a final group filled it with six "frequently occurring" events. We predicted that filling the interval with frequently-occurring events would make the interval seem busy, and hence shorter, whereas filling the interval with rare events would make the interval seem empty and long. We found once again that filling the interval with events of unspecified frequency made the interval seem shorter than did filling it with no events. We also found, as predicted, that filling the interval with frequent events made it seem shorter than did filling it with rare events. These results thus suggest

that length judgments depend not only on whether participants fill the intervals, but also on inferences about how full the intervals seem, with fuller-seeming intervals appearing shorter.

An alternative explanation is that length judgments are driven by difficulty, rather than perceived fullness. It may be harder to list rare than frequent events; increased difficulty, rather than decreased perceived interval fullness, may have led intervals in the “rare” condition to seem longer. Study 3 pitted these two explanations against each other by requiring participants to either list five or twelve events in an upcoming six-month interval. If fuller intervals seem shorter, the twelve-event interval should seem shorter than the five-event interval, but if easy-to-fill intervals seem shorter, one would expect the opposite (as participants found it easier to generate five events than to generate twelve). Twelve-event intervals were rated as shorter than five-event intervals, suggesting again that perceived fullness drives length judgments.

Thus, our findings support an interval-simulation hypothesis: when judging the length of an extent-described interval, participants may mentally simulate interval passage. Intervals that feel full and busy seem to “fly” by and are judged as short. Intervals that feel empty are judged as long. Individuals facing intervals described by dates seem less affected by these factors, perhaps because the date format does not lend itself to natural simulation. These results have implications not only for the psychology of time perception, but also for consumer decisions about future events. Consumers scheduling future services, for example, may be affected by how long the intervening interval seems (and thus, by whether that interval is presented as full or empty). Similarly, discount rates will likely be affected by factors, such as those identified here, that increase or decrease perceived interval length. This investigation into future time perception should aid theoreticians and practitioners alike in their attempts to understand and anticipate consumer behavior.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY
The Effects of Mortality Salience on Consumption

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SESSION OVERVIEW

Understanding whether and how consumers react to the possibility of dying is becoming an important issue in marketing. Car accidents, terror attacks, cancer, and other causes of death are becoming more salient in individuals' minds due to their increasing frequency and extended media coverage. Terror Management Theory (TMT; Greenberg et al. 1997) provides an explanation for behaviors exerted when individuals are prompted to think about mortality. TMT suggests that when individuals are reminded of their death they experience existential anxiety, which they try to relieve by bolstering cultural world views and/or enhancing self-esteem. In Western cultures, consumption is an important source of self-esteem. The research in this session contributes to the literature by examining the impact of mortality salience on different consumption and choice patterns. In particular, the first paper shows that different death causes impact differently consumption behavior and product evaluation, as a result of a desire for control. The second paper provides an in-depth view into the moderating effect of mortality salience on the desire for control. The third paper investigates how and why mortality salience changes consumption choices and focus.

The first paper, by Herzstein and Horsky, compares predictions drawn from TMT with how individuals in terrorized areas behave. Three experiments and numerous in-depth interviews were conducted in Israel where terror attacks are frequent. The authors find that these attacks have caused individuals to behave in ways that presumably exert some individual control over the uncertain situation (in order to mitigate their fear of death and continue with their lives). This systematic change in behavior affects products' evaluations and choices. Specifically, luxury items that symbolize high status within the culture were more appealing to participants who were prompted to think about death (by causes such as cancer or car accidents) compared with those who were prompted to think about dying in a terror attack. Luxury products with characteristics that may allow individuals to feel more in control of their environment were also rated higher on the luxury scale by those in the death condition, but those in the terrorism condition stated higher purchase intentions for those products. Individuals' locus-of-control moderated this relation.

In the second paper, Ferraro and Agrawal suggest that one way to relieve anxiety resulting from mortality salience is by bolstering self esteem through desiring and exerting control. Having a greater desire for control counteracts the lack of control over one's death. The authors test this prediction in two experiments. In study 1, they directly measure desire for control and in study 2, they compare the benefits individuals may experience when choosing from a larger set with the psychological costs of such a choice. They find that when mortality is salient, having "too much choice" leads to greater satisfaction than having only limited choice.

The third paper by Mandel and Smeesters examines how mortality salience affects how much consumers buy and how much they spend. Across five studies the authors demonstrate that individuals who are primed to think of their mortality choose to purchase more of the same product for a weekly consumption, buy more products within a food category and spend more money than individuals in the control condition. The authors attribute these results to consumers' need to "die broke" and not to their need to endorse the cultural norm of consumption. The effects of mortality

salience on consumption were more pronounced for consumers with low self esteem, as spending their money makes them feel good again.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"Marketing under Frequent Terror Attacks"

Michal Herzstein, University of Delaware

Sharon Horsky, IDC, Israel

Becker (1973) suggested that fear of death must be present in all human functioning so that the organism is able to arm itself toward self-preservation. However, Becker added, it can not be present constantly in an individual's mental functioning; it must be repressed so he can function normally. Building on that, Terror Management Theory (TMT; Solomon, Greenberg and Pyszczynski 1991) posits that events making an individual's death and mortality more salient lead to existential anxiety. TMT suggests two mechanisms to relieve this anxiety, defending one's cultural worldviews and bolstering one's self esteem. That is, individuals may avoid experiencing existential anxiety by making an enduring mark on the world, for example, through acquisition of items that symbolize high value within their culture (Mandel and Heine 1999). Despite Becker's suggestion that an individual should repress his/her fear of death to allow normal functioning, there are situations in which repression is difficult. For individuals who live in terrorized areas, not thinking about their mortality is practically impossible. For instance in Israel, since September 2000 there have been over 7,000 civilian casualties from more than 80 terror attacks (taking into account population size, this is equivalent to 445,000 casualties in the U.S.). Attacks occurred in buses, coffee shops, restaurants, shopping malls, markets and streets of major cities.

We suggest that when terror attacks are frequent and therefore death is constantly in mind, individuals account for the possibility of dying in a terror attack in their daily functioning, and systematically change their behavior. We confirmed this hypothesis through in-depth interviews we conducted with men and women of diverse ages that live in different cities in Israel. Further, we analyzed secondary data—interviews that were conducted in Israel in 2002. We found that interviewees consistently spoke of ways by which they are managing the risk of terror, and of their need to feel in control. For example, a young man said "when I go out I go only to a specific pub, because it has one door, no glass walls and I sit in the back. So if there is an attack, by the time the suicide bomber comes, I will be able to run away". That is, when the possibility of death is constantly in people's minds, they try to control it by behaving in a calculated manner.

In this research we show that predictions drawn from TMT regarding consumption behaviors do not hold when terror is frequent. Specifically, TMT suggests that concerns about death increase the appeal of products that imbue their owners with status. However, we show that this only occurs when individuals are prompted to think about death as a result of accidents, health related etc. This will not be the case when individuals are prompted to think about their death as a result of terror attacks. We tested the above hypothesis using luxury and non-luxury products in three studies. Participants were undergraduate students at a private college in Israel. In our studies we manipulated mortality salience to create three conditions: terrorism, death (other means of death), and

control (visiting the dentist). We followed standard mortality salience manipulations. The choice of Israel is straightforward as consumers live with daily terror; nevertheless given the globalization of terror the results of this research are indicative for other places.

Following Mandel and Heine (1999), in study 1 after the manipulation and distraction task, participants received four advertisements: two for luxury products (Jaguar and Rolex) and two for non-luxury products (local brands of pretzels and soft drink). After seeing each advertisement, participants were asked three questions (that were combined with good reliabilities): effectiveness of the advertisement, interest in product category and purchase intention for the specific brand. We found that Jaguar appeals more to those in the death condition compared with those in the terrorism and control conditions (results for Rolex were directional and marginally significant). However, there were no differences in the appeal of the non-status products among the three groups. The first study confirmed that while participants in the death condition follow predictions drawn from TMT, participants in the terrorism condition did not. As expected, participants in the terrorism condition did not find luxury products as appealing as those in the death condition.

TMT posits that the protection afforded by subscribing to cultural worldview confers a sense that the world is stable and controllable. According to Arndt and Solomon (2003), reminders of death should increase people's desire for personal control when they have faith in a cultural worldview. However, when faith in the worldview is tenuous, or a basic tenet of the cultural worldview is threatened, the world may seem chaotic rather than controllable. Under these circumstances, Arndt and Solomon found that mortality salience engenders less desire for personal control. However, we found that the frequency of terror attacks has led individuals to behave in ways that presumably exert individual control over an uncertain situation. Further, their need for controllability impacts their products' evaluations and changes their consumption patterns. Therefore, we suggest an exception to our findings from study 1: when high-status products are perceived as fulfilling consumers' controllability need, those in the terrorism condition will state higher purchase intentions but those in the death condition will state higher evaluations. Therefore, the products will be rated higher on the luxury scale by those in the death condition, but will be purchased more by those in the terrorism condition. Locus of control, which assesses the extent to which individuals believe they control their own destiny, will moderate this relation. Specifically, higher purchase intentions will be among those in the terrorism condition that have internal locus of control, as they believe in their ability to control their fate.

The second study featured a 2 (mortality: terrorism vs. death) X 2 (locus of control: internal vs. external) between subjects design. While the former condition was manipulated, the latter was measured. After the manipulation and distraction task, participants saw an advertisement for a high-end home espresso machine. We tested whether home espresso machines could substitute going out to coffee shops (where many terror attacks took place). Results show that participants in the death condition rated the espresso machine as more luxurious than those in the terrorism condition. However, those in the terrorism condition reported higher purchase intentions for espresso machines. In addition, we found that participants in the terrorism condition who have internal locus of control had higher purchase intentions compared with all others.

In the third study, we further investigated the need for controllability. The design was 3 (mortality: terrorism, death, control) X 2 (controllability: high vs. low) between subjects. Controllability

was manipulated by creating two advertisements for the same espresso machine, one suggesting that consumers can invite friends and family to their in-home coffee shop instead of going out (high controllability—no need to go to coffee shops where a terror attack may occur); and the other only mentioned that this espresso machine makes great espressos and cappuccinos (low controllability). Similar to study 2, participants in the death condition rated the espresso machine higher on the luxury scale compared with those in the terrorism and control conditions. Furthermore, those in the terrorism-high-control condition had higher purchase intentions for the espresso machine compared with the other conditions.

In sum, across three studies and numerous in-depth interviews we show that the possibility of an individual's upcoming death has a significant role in how he/she reacts and behaves. The need to feel in control of one's environment is more pronounced when the possibility of death by terror is high. As a result, predictions drawn from TMT do not hold—individuals do not need to perceive themselves as people of significance in the cultural drama to which they subscribe through acquisition of luxury items. The exception of this finding is products that are perceived to allow individuals the feeling of control over their destiny.

“Mortality Salience, Control, and Choice”

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Given that people are exposed to death on a regular basis (e.g., a murder on the TV news, a movie with violent themes), it is likely that awareness of mortality can lead to systematic changes in people's behaviors. Recent research in marketing has also suggested that mortality salience (MS) can have an impact on consumption related behaviors, including regulatory choice (Maheswaran and Agrawal 2004; Ferraro, Shiv, and Bettman 2005).

Terror Management Theory (TMT; Arndt et al. 2004) posits that MS leads to existential anxiety and that people cope with this anxiety through bolstering self-esteem or cultural worldviews. The TMT research suggests that after mortality has been made salient, people will seek opportunities to express themselves, to behave materialistically, and to exhibit control over their environment. Based on these findings, we build the case that mortality salience may influence consumers' desire for more options in choice contexts.

A traditional view of choice suggests that more choice is better. Indeed, most people would prefer to choose from larger sets (Iyengar and Lepper 2000). Choice may be seen as an expression of control and empowerment, and so choosing from larger sets might be more desirable and empowering. Choice also provides a sense that people have the opportunity to select the best item and reinforces materialistic opportunities. But choosing from larger sets might also lead to psychological costs resulting from having “too much choice” (Iyengar and Lepper 2000) which manifest in lower satisfaction with the chosen alternative. As a result, while people like to choose from larger sets, they may be more satisfied with options chosen from smaller sets. However, there might be conditions when people are able to overcome the psychological costs of choosing and to experience the pleasures of too much choice.

We propose that MS alters perceptions of the psychological benefits (i.e., the opportunity to express control over one's environment) and costs (i.e., difficulty of making the choice) of choosing from large sets, resulting in the benefits overriding the costs. When mortality is not salient, there is no pressing need to exert increased control or acquire the best option so the costs of choice override its benefits. We suggest that MS will reverse set size effects such that

people under MS will be more satisfied with a chosen alternative if they chose it from a large (vs. small) set. When mortality is not salient, we expected to replicate past research showing that people are more satisfied with options picked from small (vs. large) sets.

Study 1 was a 2 (mortality salience vs. control) X 2 (small vs. large set size) design. MS was manipulated by asking participants to think about their own death or dental pain. Participants were presented with an assortment of six (i.e., small set) or 30 (i.e., large set) chocolates on the computer screen (Iyengar and Lepper 2000). They were asked to hypothetically choose a chocolate from the given assortment. Participants then rated their anticipated satisfaction with the option they selected and with the choice process. There was a significant interaction between MS and set size on satisfaction with the choice process. Participants in the MS condition with 30 options felt more positive about the choice process than did participants with only six options. Participants in the control condition felt equally positive in the small and large set conditions. Also, the results indicate a significant interaction between MS and set size on feelings of having too much or too little choice. In the dental pain condition, participants with 30 options felt they had too many options to choose from while participants in the six-option condition felt they had too few to choose from. This effect was attenuated in the MS condition, with both those having six-options and 30-options feeling more comfortable with the number of options available. This suggests that participants whose mortality was made salient were not overwhelmed by larger sets.

Study 2 was a real choice situation. It was a 2 (mortality salience vs. control) X 2 (small vs. large set size) design. MS was manipulated using drunk-driving advertisements. In the MS (vs. control) condition, participants read a print ad that explicitly mentioned (vs. did not mention) death as a possible consequence of drunk-driving. Participants were presented with an actual assortment of six or 30 chocolates and asked to choose and taste a chocolate from the assortment. Participants then rated their satisfaction with the selected option and with the choice process. Consistent with prior research, in the control group, participants' satisfaction with the chocolate was lower in the 30- as compared to six-option condition. In contrast, in the mortality salience conditions, participants' satisfaction was higher in the large set than the small set. This same pattern was found for participants' feelings about making the choice. There was also a significant interaction with regards to experienced regret. In the control group, participants experienced more regret at having selected the given chocolate in the large rather than small set condition. The effect was reversed in the mortality salience condition, with less regret exhibited in the 30 option condition.

What is the underlying reason why this would occur? We posit that the psychological benefits of more options override the costs under mortality salience due to increased perceived control over the choice environment. We expect that mortality salience increases people's desire for control and this then affects perceptions of control over the choice context. In Study 3, we examine whether mortality salience increases people's desire for control. Indeed, participants in the mortality salience condition expressed a greater desire for control. This effect persisted even after controlling for participants' trait anxiety. Furthermore, the differences in desire for control were not driven by mood.

These findings enrich the literature on both MS and choice. We identify how consumers might use choice situations to exert control and consequently deal with the anxiety produced from mortality salience. Our studies identify MS as a moderator of set size effects as well as explore when and how the benefits of "too much choice" may override its costs.

"Shop 'Til You Drop: The Effect of Mortality Salience on Consumption Quantity"

Naomi Mandel, Arizona State University

Dirk Smeesters, Tilburg University

Since September 11, 2001, Americans have become increasingly aware of their own inevitable mortality. Many people believe that "danger seems to lurk in every corner of life, from children's toys to McDonald's coffee, anthrax to secondhand smoke, West Nile virus to SARS." (Spencer and Crossen 2003). One way that individuals cope with their existential concerns is through their purchasing habits. For example, Mandel and Heine (1999) found that consumers exposed to death-related information demonstrated increased interest in purchasing luxury brands, such as Lexus and Rolex, which may reinforce a consumer's perceived value within a consumer-driven culture. These results have also been replicated among Japanese consumers (Heine, Harihara and Niiya 2002). However, because the above researchers did not control for the prices of the items chosen in their study, an alternative explanation for their results is that mortality salient individuals simply want to spend more money than do control individuals, regardless of the status of the products purchased.

To investigate this possibility, the current research examines whether exposure to death-related stimuli can affect the quantity of items purchased, as well as the dollar value of the purchase. Unlike the few studies that have previously addressed the effects of mortality salience on consumers (e.g., Ferraro, Shiv and Bettman 2005), this research focuses on the quantity of products purchased and consumed, rather than consumers' choices between a given assortment of products. In a series of experiments, we demonstrate that consumers who have been recently reminded of their own impending mortality wish to purchase higher quantities of products, such as food and drinks, than do their control counterparts. We also examine several possible explanations for our results. The various explanations we test are all derived from Terror Management Theory, because mortality salience can affect individuals through various paths.

In Study 1, the mortality salient (MS) group wrote a short essay about their thoughts regarding death, while the control group wrote a short essay about going to the dentist (both of which should result in negative affect, but not necessarily death-related thoughts). Participants were then told to circle all of the items from a prepared grocery list that they intended to buy in the next week. MS participants selected significantly more total items ($M=30.64$ vs. 23.28 ; $F(1, 30)=7.47$, $p<.01$) than did control participants, including significantly more fresh vegetables, fresh meats, canned meats, and frozen foods, as well as snacks and drinks. Therefore, it is unlikely that our participants simply wished to "eat, drink, and be merry" (Ferraro, Shiv and Bettman 2005), since they increased their consumption of both healthy and unhealthy foods. Study 2 utilized the same manipulation as study 1, but asked participants to imagine that they were hosting an informal party for friends, and to circle the items on a hypothetical shopping list of items they might buy for a party. MS participants selected more items from the grocery list ($M=25.64$ vs. 22.73 ; $F(1, 384)=4.84$, $p<.05$), spent more total dollars ($M=\$139.85$ vs. $\$125.02$; $F(1, 384)=4.70$, $p<.05$), and spent a higher percentage of their budgets ($M=131\%$ vs. 113% ; $F(1, 384)=5.84$, $p<.05$) than did control participants. Study 3 replicated these results with individuals' choices of snacks and drinks, and also established self-esteem as a moderator. The MS effect was more pronounced for low self-esteem individuals than for high self-esteem individuals.

The goal of study 4 was to examine whether activating mortality salience also activates the cultural norm of conspicuous

consumption, causing individuals to purchase more as a way to prove their value to society. If this explanation holds, we might expect that activating mortality salience should also activate constructs related to consumption and materialism. Therefore, participants should be more likely to complete word fragments with words related to shopping, money, and/or eating. We also altered the control manipulation (from “dentist” to “pain”) to control for an unintended alternative explanation for our prior results: that people simply don’t like to think about eating immediately after going to the dentist. And while we replicated the main effect of mortality salience found in studies 1-3, there were no significant differences in the number of word completions of investment words, shopping words, or eating words as a result of the MS manipulation. Therefore, the cultural norm explanation was not supported.

Study 5 explored whether MS individuals wish to consume higher quantities in the present time frame because they have a higher discount rate. In other words, perhaps because they believe that they might die soon, they would rather spend their money on items that can be consumed immediately, rather than to save their money, which will be useless to them upon their deaths. If this reasoning is true, they should be willing to spend more money than control subjects in order to consume a product now, rather than at a later date. Following a procedure similar to that of Loewenstein (1988), in one condition we asked participants how much they would be willing to pay to speed up delivery of a purchased item, and in a second condition we asked participants how much less they would be willing to pay in order for the delivery of an item to be slowed down (from its expected delivery date). Manipulations were as in study 4, resulting in a 2 (Prime: death vs. pain) X 2 (Delivery Change: Slow down vs. speed up) between-subject design. As predicted by the “die broke” explanation, MS participants were willing (in both the slow-down and speed-up conditions) to pay a higher premium than were control participants to receive both an iPod (M=\$39.33 vs. \$25.31) and a gift card (M=\$27.29 vs. \$18.52) immediately, rather than later.

In sum, we demonstrated consistently the effect of MS on consumption quantity, using different manipulations of MS and different measures of consumption quantity and spending. We also tested various explanations for this effect. The results indicated that consumers engage in higher consumption and spending, not because they want to endorse a predominant cultural norm (i.e., the norm of consuming), but rather because they want to “die broke”. Consumers may also want to boost their self-esteem by spending their money to make them feel good again. Therefore, effects were more pronounced for low self-esteem consumers than for high self-esteem consumers.

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Ordinary Resistance as a Parasitic Form of Action: A Dialogical Analysis of Consumer/Firm Relations

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INTRODUCTION

Holt's (2002) article on dialectical relations between consumers and brands has usefully stressed the centrality of the market as the locus of construction of people's identities. Postmodern as well as critical approaches of resistance tended previously to overemphasize either consumers' freedom through emancipatory projects (Firat and Venkatesh 1995) or the market's domination through imposed codes and seductive practices (Murray and Ozanne 1991). But it seems as inaccurate to idealize consumer power, as it is to overvalue market dominance. In challenging the first perspective, poststructuralist approaches have unveiled the mechanisms by which individuality is originally constructed by social fields that tend to shape and reproduce a system of tastes (Bourdieu 1984). As a consequence, consumers are neither ontologically free to choose, nor ontically free to escape socially constructed mental structures acquired primarily through language (Elliott and Ritson 1995). For that reason, individuals are constrained, most often unwittingly, by a web of power-based relations.

Conversely, the taken-for-granted hegemony of firms needs also to be reconsidered. Firms mainly owe their existence to a sufficiently long-lasting willingness on the part of consumers to buy their offerings. They can be challenged both by dissatisfied consumers who denounce their social or commercial practices (Kozinets and Handelman 1998) and by alternative forms of communities, which create shared solidarity upon adversary actions (Giesler and Pohlmann 2003; Hemetsberger 2006). Both parties—firms and consumers—are in fact indissolubly linked by common interests (Holt 2002). Moreover, since each interpretation seems to be shaped by a particular socio-ideological framework, they tend to conceal the inherent nature of power—which is both dialogical and dialectical and cannot be grasped, except in a simplistic manner, from a single perspective. As Foucault (1982) pointed out, resistance must be regarded as the telltale sign of power relations, just as power relations should be considered as inherent elements of social relations. But resistance is also a contingent reaction: though coextensive with human interplay, it does not necessarily happen everywhere, all the time, among all consumers or in opposition to everything. It represents a specific type of response that occurs at the intersection of individuals and their interpretations of a situation. It acts as a sometimes vehement, but other times silent, denunciation of the discourses and practices of power (Hirschman 1970).

In accordance with this dialogical conceptualization of power and resistance, this paper first puts forward a theoretical framework capable of grasping and classifying a wide range of resistant behaviors that have been identified and depicted in recent consumer research literature. Three levels of resistance are suggested—each of them corresponding to a specific means used by firms to make consumers act in expected ways: against the discourses and codes they mobilize through brands and advertising; against the practices and mechanisms they deploy; and finally against firms themselves, rejected as relationship partners.

The paper then defends the idea that uncovering the dynamic and dialectical process by which consumers interact with markets requires going beyond an analytical and often static standpoint. To this end, a phenomenological research approach was chosen as best suited to the exploratory nature of the study. A two-stage procedure, involving introspective essays followed by three in-depth interview sessions, was adopted over an 18-month period. Eight consumers whose profile was delineated as reflexive and critical-minded were recruited by networking through colleagues. The aim of the investigation was to examine which dynamics resistance followed over time, and how it could be related to biographical information. The results are discussed in the third section, in accordance with this constructed and dialectical perspective of resistance. They reveal the importance of the psychic economy of individuals (Bourdieu's concept of *illusio*) through the way people act and respond to firms' strategies.

THEORY

The existing literature on consumer resistance covers a wide range of critical or emancipatory positions adopted by consumers. Writers of a primarily Marxian inclination tend to stress the ideological domination of the market and the consequent need for reflexivity and code-conscious distancing (Hetrick and Lozada 1994; Murray and Ozanne 1991). Within this perspective, consumers are perceived as targets, victims of semiotic formatting through advertising discourses, fashion and constructed mythologies (Barthes 1972; Baudrillard 1998). Exaggerated systems of status differentiation are thus exposed as the result of a constant production of signs. Some authors also accused the system of taking control of the desire of individuals (Dichter 1960), transforming them into conformist and other-directed personalities (Riesman 1950). More recently, other commentators have elaborated approaches to emancipation based upon consumer practices and "bricolage" in a fragmented world (de Certeau 1984; Firat and Venkatesh 1995). Such contributions highlight the various ways in which consumers appropriate goods, discourses and codes in a subtle and creative manner through individual or collective actions (Elliott and Ritson 1995; Thompson and Haytko 1997; Thompson, Pollio, and Locander 1994). Resistance to cultural ideologies is thus manifested by the ability of consumers to decipher and contest meanings embedded in products and services (Duke 2002), sometimes beyond their own conscious awareness (Moisio and Askegaard 2002; Thompson 2004). Communal consumption has also revealed its emancipatory and oppositional power by generating, around a shared outlook, dialectical positions of differentiation and integration/exclusion (Giesler and Pohlmann 2003; Hemetsberger 2006; Kozinets 2002; Muniz and Hamer 2001). Nevertheless, if consumption can be conceptualized as an arena where individuals collect a range of cultural components for constructing their personal or social identities, very little research has given prominence to the interactive construction of resistance (Holt 2002). As made clear by Giesler and Pohlmann (2003), the prevailing static approach to consumer emancipation and the lack of a dynamic perspective calls for new studies able to capture the tensions between consumers and markets.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Of particular relevance to the present research context are Foucault's writings on power (1982), which emphasize the dialogical nature of social relations and the inescapable and structural

¹Funding Acknowledgement:



presence of forces and tensions therein. In this work, we extend his interactionist model of power by examining how resistance is produced as a response to the practices, discourses and even existence of firms. Our conceptual framework supports the idea that resistance would benefit from being analyzed as a diachronic process.

Micro-Physics of Power

Beyond Weber's ([1968] 1921) macro-level conception of political and sovereign power, Foucault (1982) has depicted a micro-level theory of power as the very essence of social relations. Power is defined by Foucault as the ability to govern the actions of others and to structure the scope of their activities. Power works on the field of possibilities of active subjects by prompting, inducing, diverting, facilitating or impeding their room for maneuver. It is always a means of acting on other people's actions and controlling their behavior. Yet power is not violence, nor does it imply submission. On the contrary, power exists only in relation to free subjects who face a wide range of potentialities and have various ways to react. When situations are completely determined, as in slavery, there are no power relationships, only force or physical constraint. Hence, power and liberty are not mutually exclusive; rather freedom is the necessary condition for the existence of power. According to Foucault, power relationships and in submission are structural components of social interplay:

'Power relations are rooted deep in the social nexus, not reconstituted 'above' society as a supplementary structure whose radical effacement one could perhaps dream of... A society without power relations can only be an abstraction' (Foucault 1982, p.208)

In social relations, this micro-physics of power can be located anywhere, although some institutions are more likely than others to exert this type of disciplinary control over individuals (Foucault 1975). Prisons, schools, army camps, hospitals and churches in particular combine both discursive and non-discursive practices that aim at breaking in bodies and commanding souls through internalized mechanisms. Constant self-examination, evaluation and confession are examples of how the micro-physics of power contributes, through individualization, to the binding of subjects to themselves and to ensuring their submission to others. In line with Foucault's approach, the disciplinary power of marketing practices has been analyzed by Marsden (2001) in terms of three main instances: market research information technology as a tool of surveillance; segmentation as a means of categorizing and labeling individuals; and advertising as a way of channeling prescriptive and corrective messages. In contrast to Weber's theory in which power is considered predominantly as domination, Foucault's approach gives a less rigid, deterministic and top-down reading of the distribution of forces. Although institutions and organizations may try to exercise power through disciplinary techniques, subjects are likely to free themselves from these constraints. Power and rebelliousness do not confront each other in a simple oppositional relationship, but exist in a permanent state of provocative tension.

Strategies of Legitimization By Firms and Consumer Tactics of Resistance

By considering the position of manufacturers and retailers, Emerson (1962) and Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) showed how the uncertainty of consumer markets threatens the long-term dominance or even survival of firms. By refusing to buy their products, consumers can adversely affect the achievement of company objectives. They have power over firms to the extent that firms depend

on their cooperation. Because power is primarily founded on dependence, Pfeffer (1981) suggests that legitimization is a relevant strategy to alleviate the vulnerability of firms, by trying to persuade consumers that their offerings are of particular importance for them. To this end, they draw on consumer representations and attempt to alter them in favor of their own interests. They mobilize information, expertise, and selective interpretation of rules, language and symbols to present their corporate decisions as coinciding as closely as possible with the presumed outlook and thinking of their targets. Such legitimization tactics are likely to succeed insofar as they suggest consonant decisions, so reducing the gap between consumer objectives and those of the company. In order to persuade consumers to make the hoped-for decisions, firms can act at three levels (Bourgeois and Nizet 1995): through the products and services they offer; through procedures whose enactment and performance must appear fully to respect consumers' freedom of choice; and by presenting themselves as valued partners in the exchange process. These three levels of legitimization are also implicitly the echo chambers in which consumer discontent is amplified. As shown in Table 1, we propose analyzing the motives for consumer resistance as specific responses to different companies' modes of action. First of all, the content of presumed relevant and congruent decisions presented to consumers are swept aside by consumer claims to freely chosen codes and signs. The repudiation or avoidance of products and brands (Fiske 1994), engagement in oppositional practices, and rejection of mass-marketed meanings and discourses exemplify some reactions of this type. Secondly, consumers can also feel saturated and repelled by the manipulative, if ineffective, advances made by companies (Fournier, Dobscha, and Mick 1998). Selling tactics and "capture plans" are resisted in the name of autonomy and ethics. Complaints, negative word-of-mouth, retaliation, boycotts, subversion and "culture jamming" (Handelman 1999) are among the expressions of dissatisfaction, feelings of harassment and moral sanction applied against companies. And finally, consumers get to the point of questioning the very existence of certain companies as acceptable current trading partners and as responsible actors for future generations. Whereas firms urge consumers to trust them, consumers often choose to ignore or avoid them, and instead opt for voluntary simplicity, patronize alternative distribution channels such as second-hand markets or favor gift-giving and consumer-to-consumer exchanges.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Consistently with the exploratory and discovery-oriented nature of the research, the methodology consisted of a survey carried out over an eighteen month period in a major European capital city. Informants were selected via a "snowballing" technique, initiated by asking colleagues to introduce the researcher to acquaintances they felt to be resistant consumers. A brief definition of resistance was given to identify potential informants, following Fournier's (1998) conceptualization of it as a continuum of opposing forces, ranging from avoidance behaviors to active revolt. Eight volunteer participants of varied gender, age, origin and religious affiliation were finally recruited after agreeing to participate in the two-stage research program.

Stage 1 consisted of a diary study in which participants were asked to note down over a 6-month period (1) perceptions, judgments and feelings they could express in relation to their day-to-day life experience as consumers, and (2) example accounts of what was likely to trigger their distrust, dissatisfaction, irritation and other negative emotions and opinions about the discourses, offerings and practices of companies. Through introspective essays, they were also encouraged to recall, as far as they could, how they had come to react in such a way, against what in particular, and why. They

TABLE 1
Company levels of legitimization and consumer expressions of resistance

Levels of legitimization by companies	CONTENT OF DECISIONS Objects, discourses, signs and values	BEHAVIORS in commercial (capture devices, selling tactics), environmental, social and ethical terms	COMPANIES Themselves as qualified partners
Motives for resistance	Freedom of choice (code-conscious)	Autonomy (trap-conscious)	Electivity (self-definition of who to deal with)
Individual expressions of resistance	Distinction “ Bricolage” Oppositional Loyalty	Complaining behaviors Negative word of mouth Retaliation	Alternative channels Second-order marketing systems Voluntary simplicity
Collective expressions of resistance	Boycotts Counter-cultures Subcultures	Boycotts, Buycott Subversion, Attacks, activism, hacktivism	Communal consumption Gift-giving communities

were also asked, in terms of possible reflexive changes in their consumption choices, what had evolved over time.

Stage 2 consisted of three in-depth interview sessions, each lasting from one to three hours. The first interview aimed at bringing out more information about the events and stories recounted in the introspective essays, in order to acquire a clear sense of the informants' perceptions and meanings. In particular, special attention was paid to potential changes they might have noticed over time in their own feelings toward the functioning of the market. The second interview was guided by a set of questions related to their general consumption choices, life styles and values. This phase was helpful for understanding how their stories could be related to the critical attitude to consumption expressed and enacted in their day-to-day lives. The third interview consisted of a conversation about salient autobiographical elements, i.e. the socio-economic, family, cultural and religious environment in which they had grown up. This stage provided further information for a deeper understanding of informant backgrounds, sensitivities and ways of reacting. The profile was also supplemented by additional interviews with informants' acquaintances in order to triangulate across sources. The interviews took place in the homes of the participants and were loosely structured. All interviews were recorded and transcribed before they, as well as the diaries, were analyzed in terms of content.

Despite the small size of the sample, respondents were almost equally distributed by gender and age, and belonged to several occupational categories (see Table 2). No claim of representativeness is made here, since the research objective was to gain deep insight into their individual trajectories using a biographical framework for analysis. However, several criteria were used to ensure the trustworthiness of the research. The first criterion was persistent and prolonged engagement, which is one of the basic techniques for obtaining a rich description in a research field (Geertz 1973; Lincoln and Guba 1985; Wallendorf and Belk 1989). In this qualitative in-depth study, reliance was placed on lengthy acquaintance with the personalities and stories of informants. Secondly, triangulation was made across sources and methods, using different ways of capturing what informants meant. Thirdly, feedback was obtained by submitting the author's conclusions to the informants. Most respondents agreed with these conclusions, and any that were questioned were re-examined. Finally, variety and contrast were

taken into account for recruitment, with respondents chosen sequentially and selectively in a constant comparative method and search for varied ideological beliefs and critical positions in relation to consumption (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

FINDINGS

Conflicts of representations, denunciations and levels of resistance

The accounts of the informants present themselves as acts of enunciation and of denunciation of what places them in opposition to the discourses and practices of firms. From this standpoint, introspective essays and interviews have functioned, as Boltanski, Thévenot and Porter (2006) show, as opportunities for revealing conflicts that individuals maintain with the commercial world and for justifying values they defend. The main claims underlying their critiques chime with the three levels of resistance referred to in the theoretical approach: resistance to the stratagems deployed by firms, that threaten their autonomy; resistance to promises, injunctions and temptations that hamper their freedom; and, ultimately, choosing consumer practices more in keeping with their own system of representations, their values or sometimes their utopias. Secondly, their discourses also reveal how different psychic economies transmit dominant tonalities to their modes of reaction, of which we attempt to sketch the main elements from their personal trajectories.

Resisting Stratagems, Pressures and Manipulation

“Grandmother, what big teeth you have got! “All the better to eat you up with.”

The first salient theme of the testimonies brings to light the sense of pressure and manipulation that the respondents perceive on the part of firms. Following the deconstruction made by Cochoy (2004) on the snares used by the wolf in Little Red Riding Hood, consumers are aware of the “capture devices”, sometimes crude and often visible, which firms use against them. Three types of practice are thus denounced. Echoing the long-established but still relevant findings of Vance Packard (1957), advertising discourses appear first always as the prototypical instrument of their seductive and dishonest intentions, as indicated by the following example:

TABLE 2
Summary of respondent characteristics

Name	Age	Gender	Occupation, marital status, background, income level	Personal profiles and salient values
Barbara	22	Female	International business student single. Hispanic origin. No income	Artist milieu. Fair Trade and anti-brand oriented.
Vath	25	Male	Student– applied modern languages. Single. Asian origin (Cambodian). No income	Buddhist. Detachment and indifference to material culture.
Elisabeth	38	Female	Interpreter. Single. Polish origin. Low/middle income	Motivated by altruism, pacifism and sustainability. Subscriber to consumer magazines. Non-practicing Catholic.
Sandra	42	Female	Secondary school teacher. Divorced. 2 teenage daughters. Greek origin. Low/middle income	Self-defined as an intellectual rebel. Secondhand and savvy shopper.
Daniel	51	Male	Telecom engineer. Married. 2 children aged 13 and 15. French origin. Middle/high income	Involved in charities, union and green activities. Voluntary simplifier and anti-advertising.
Patrick	61	Male	German teacher. Single. German origin. Middle/high income	Independent. Hoarding behavior, reluctance to spend, high discernment when shopping
Marc	68	Male	Retired art school teacher. Married 1 son aged 39. Judaeo-Spanish origin. Middle/high income	Secondhand shopper. Motto: “ No god no master” . Nonconformist and independent. Agnostic.
Maria	72	Female	Retired nurse. Divorced. 1 daughter aged 40. French origin. Low income	Independent and not easily influenced. Wary and strongly attached to personal freedom. Practicing Catholic

“...You know the Taillefine de Lu biscuits from Danone? They chose a name that makes you think it’s diet product, but in fact they’re laughing at us. The more you eat, the fatter you become!” [Sandra]

Secondly, some respondents denounce “tricks designed to justify higher prices for non-recognized benefits” in brands [Patrick]. The status and effects of fashion in particular are arguments that they dismiss in favor of reasoning based on the use value of a product and its value for money. Finally, some respondents particularly blame sales techniques, which they denounce for their heavy-handed approach and which reveal, not uncynically, paradoxical realities. For example, they draw a parallel between the “humanized robots” that companies use for their vocal servers and the “robotized humans” working in call centers “who articulate stereotyped discourses” [Sandra]. Among some respondents this dehumanization creates a sense of general discomfort, which sometimes gives rise to intense aggressiveness towards remote sales services departments accused of “transforming people into selling machines for other people who have become buying machines.” [Barbara]

Resisting Discourses, Promises and Temptation

“The serpent deceived me, and I ate” -Genesis 3:13

The second resonant theme concerns the content of decisions that firms suggest to consumers. Numerous illustrations insistently

evoke the lack of congruence between the images and representations conveyed by advertising, brands and companies, and the values of the respondents. They feel themselves interpellated in registers that do not correspond to them and which seem to negate their feelings, personality and individuality. Echoing the criticisms of the Frankfurt School on mass culture (Horkheimer and Adorno [1944] 1972), the various comments often call into question the multinationals and the uniformization they produce. To this largely cultural resistance to advertising and the media are added other criticisms in different registers: economic and political (the effects of globalization), environmental (pollution and destruction of resources) and spiritual (anti-materialism and a refusal of excessive commoditization). As a result, resistance is experienced in accordance with three registers, of which the ethical underpinnings are clearly perceptible:

- first, not to give in and to fight against a loss of autonomy that is perceived as a weakness. Recalling the biblical story of the serpent, the temptation is primarily experienced as a loss of self-control,
- next, to draw satisfaction, pride and spiritual elevation from the strength of character that enables these attempts at seduction to be repulsed,
- finally, to accede to a sense of justice that covers various forms of condemnation of firms—their perceived power, the ideological representations they are accused of conveying,

or what they do to vulnerable sections of the population such as children or socially disadvantaged layers. Or, as one of the respondents expressed it:

“While visiting the Greenpeace website or those of other ethical vigilance associations, I see also those which sell GMOs without saying so, or which break the labor laws, or employ children, or make junk products, none of which they mention in their advertising. And I sanction them by not buying their products.” [Daniel]

Selective Consumption: Modulating the Choice of Products and Channels

Since the practices and discourses of firms are central to consumers' themes of resistance, their choice of consumption is built or is modified over time according to their changing relation to the market. The procession of representations and lived experience lead them to avoid the products, brands and firms which become distant from their value system, in accordance with a distinguishing process (Bourdieu 1984). This reasoned identification of a non-self, marked out and kept at a distance, leads them tailor their repertory of consumption through rejection and avoidance or by selecting alternative partners, whether they be competing companies that are more respectful at the economic, social or environmental level, or other market or non-market exchange networks. Thus some respondents say that they turn towards sustainable commercial products [Barbara, Elisabeth], some prefer to supply their needs from secondhand markets [Daniel, Marc, Sandra] or through barter [Daniel], and others tend to reduce their consumption [Marc, Vath, Patrick]. The practices chosen are in any case not mutually exclusive and reflect rather an idiosyncratic blending of micro-practices consistent with their preoccupations. While Holt (2002) has shown how individuals on the margins of society construct themselves in and through the market, we attempt here to show how ordinary consumers, professionally and socially well integrated, question the meaning of their actions, try to find acceptable compromises and reorganize their mode of consumption by mobilizing devised selective repertories within, but also outside of, conventional distribution channels. In contrast to militants attached to alternative associations, who engage in serious, costly efforts highly oriented toward the type of resistance they support (Ferrando Y Puig 2005), these “ordinary” consumers try to cobble together sufficiently satisfying solutions and make use, in an opportunistic and irregular fashion, of the various means that best meet their material and symbolic needs.

No Escape but the Choice of Arms

While Kozinets (2002) and Holt (2002) have good reasons for doubting that consumers can escape the market, it is nonetheless interesting to observe, in day-to-day life and apart from extraordinary situations such as *Burning Man*, how they accommodate themselves to their dissatisfaction with market society. At a psychological level, the testimonies mainly reflect three types of coping strategy in response to the tensions which their relations with the market give rise to—confrontation, avoidance, and reasoned adaptation—which, depending on the circumstances, sometimes coexist. These adaptive strategies reflect some of the major dimensions of coping (Lazarus and Folkman 1984), with the first two tending to be based on emotion (aggressive emotional release or avoidance/disengagement), the third arising more from a positive adaptation based on information, evaluation and judgment.

Save Our Souls: Resistance as a Path to Salvation

Some interviewees mainly manifested an attitude of defiance in relation to the market, which was expressed in aggressive forms of practices and discourses [Sandra, Barbara, Daniel]. Their comments reveal the moral discomfort produced by their immersion in a society, which they felt they had not chosen. Conscious of being unable to escape it, but nevertheless constrained to participate in it, they tend to make their choices on the basis of combative postures, as if the blacklisting of certain firms and products or boycotting the market as a whole helped, through an intense emotional release, to relieve their conscience. Strong moral or religious sensibility in fact betrays a powerful sense of guilt either in relation to the feelings that the market cynically conflicts with, or in relation to the weakest social groups, which they feel they have robbed of a degree of happiness. This guilt then seems able to be considerably attenuated through a critical and distanced attitude towards consumption, as was expressed by one of the respondents:

“When one buys a product, one should ask oneself whether it's toxic, whether or not it contributes to polluting the planet over and beyond the immediate advantages it brings, who it was made by, how much the workers from the Third World were paid, and how many local jobs it's going to destroy.” [Elisabeth]

As Kozinets and Handelman (1998) have shown on the subject of individual boycott practices, resistance can represent a form of moral hygiene and be a means of self-transformation as a corollary to the hope of transforming the world.

The Three Wise Consumers: “See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil”

In contrast to the preceding correspondents, others develop a form of voluntary ignorance and mental deafness in relation to situations that disturb them [Maria, Vath]. This tactic serves to save the psychological effort which would consist of taking the risk of exposing themselves to messages in order then to be obliged to protect themselves from the emotional consequences of the content (tempting psychological stimuli and the conflicts that stem from them). As expressed by one of these two respondents:

“I don't look at ads. I see them, of course—on TV, in the street, in newspapers, but I'm not interested in them. Unconsciously, I don't want to be aware of trends or novelties. This enables me to think, in a way, that I resist the various techniques used by advertising to manipulate us and tempt us.” [Vath]

Forewarned is Forearmed: Positive and Reasoned Modes of Adaptation

Some consumers, on the other hand, stress the importance of adopting an informed, vigilant and adaptive attitude toward consumption [Elisabeth, Marc, Patrick]. Their reactions reveal fewer negative emotions—anger or avoidance—in favor of considered observation of the mechanisms of marketing functioning and a rational analysis of their scope of action. For them, consuming is a game in the sense of *illusio* (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992): an investment in the field of consumption which is not clearly codified, but the implicit recognition of which matches up to the energy it involves. These aware consumers, mobilizing their intellectual or cultural capital in decoding the practices and discourses of firms, try correctly to anticipate the tactics deployed—no longer being influenced by the latest advertising claims and constantly deconstructing

the stratagems used. Having the appropriate outlook and attitude for understanding the world of marketing, they enjoy participating in the game—not the game of believing the claims of the “adversaries” and of submitting to them, but of remaining actively present in the competition to which they feel themselves invited and whose scope they perceive. Resisting is experienced as an adventure, which calls for a vigilant attitude: against the ease suggested by the prevailing discourse, they thus set up a necessary reflexivity of which the stakes are precisely those of deciphering the day-to-day workings of the market.

DISCUSSION

The biographical backgrounds of the respondents make clear the strong links between the socio-psychological details that have shaped them and their modes of reaction as consumers. The field of consumption is therefore but one specific site of expression of their learned predispositions or habitus (Bourdieu 1984). Some respondents recognize themselves to have been instinctive rebels since childhood and their relation to the world of marketing is one situation among others where their propensity to resist is manifested. This tendency to revolt can be acquired in reaction to a parent, a milieu or an imposed education. For example, Sandra implicitly recognizes that her manner of purchasing is strongly colored by an almost structural vindictiveness in regard to firms—which she views as incompetent, unsatisfactory, and ultimately persecuting—as if the animosity that she says she feels toward her mother was displaced onto other more abstract and substitutive entities. Conversely, resistance can derive for some correspondents from their identification with parents who are themselves anti-authority, committed, militant or simply attached to certain ideas or values. Thus Daniel’s parental home, where the outside world is seen as threatening and full of traps, was able to train him to acquire the intellectual and cultural resources needed for an effective decoding of reality. Barbara reveals that the artistic milieu in which she grew up helped her discover her own clothing codes without having felt the need to conform to fashion, nor to have suffered the consequences of doing so in her relations with her peers. Similarly, among those respondents who favor avoidance over confrontation, philosophical, religious or spiritual trajectories can be found at the root of their tendency toward detachment and psychological distance. Vath, for example, feels himself to be strongly influenced by Buddhism, which both in regard to the world of marketing and in his life in general encourages him to distrust desires and the potential suffering that accompanies them. Maria makes numerous references to the Catholic education she received during childhood in support of her wish to distance herself from advertising discourses viewed as enticing.

While social class and income criteria do little to cast light on the results, the same cannot be said of age and the cohort effect it results in. Thus the oldest respondents are influenced by the very duration of their consumption experience. Born in less economically advanced times, they testify to a degree of disorientation in relation to the acceleration of technology and the overabundance of products, but also acknowledge an acute sense of wastage linked to the increasingly ephemeral nature of commodities [Maria, Patrick, Marc]. Conversely, the youngest, immersed in today’s shifting and evolving system are more aware of the spatial dimension of the world they inhabit. The abolition of distance by the media in general and the Internet in particular gives them a consciousness of universal belonging, which often makes them more sensitive to geographically distant peoples [Vath, Barbara, Elisabeth]. Between these two groups, young adults refer to their educational aspirations for their children, in whom they wish to instill an awareness of consumption that is as reflective and rational as possible, and for

whom they already weigh up the harmful consequences of uncontrolled development [Daniel, Sandra].

CONCLUSION

The aim of this article was to give another perspective on the exploration of consumer resistance strategies, of which many recent works have described the practices and modes of operation. In line with interactionist and contingent approaches to power (Foucault 1982), this paper proposed examining more closely the finely woven fabric of relations between consumers and the market, and going to the source of their resistant postures, using an in-depth approach drawing on their life histories.

As summarized in Figure 1, the main results of the research could make a contribution in terms of three points. First, resistance works like a reverse discursive mirror on the legitimation processes of firms, and does so at three levels: it dismantles the procedures used by companies to make consumers act in accordance with corporate interests; it deconstructs the meaning of decisions offered to them—discourses, products, codes—which they feel fail to correspond to their own value systems; and ultimately they question the legitimacy of companies as valid exchange partners.

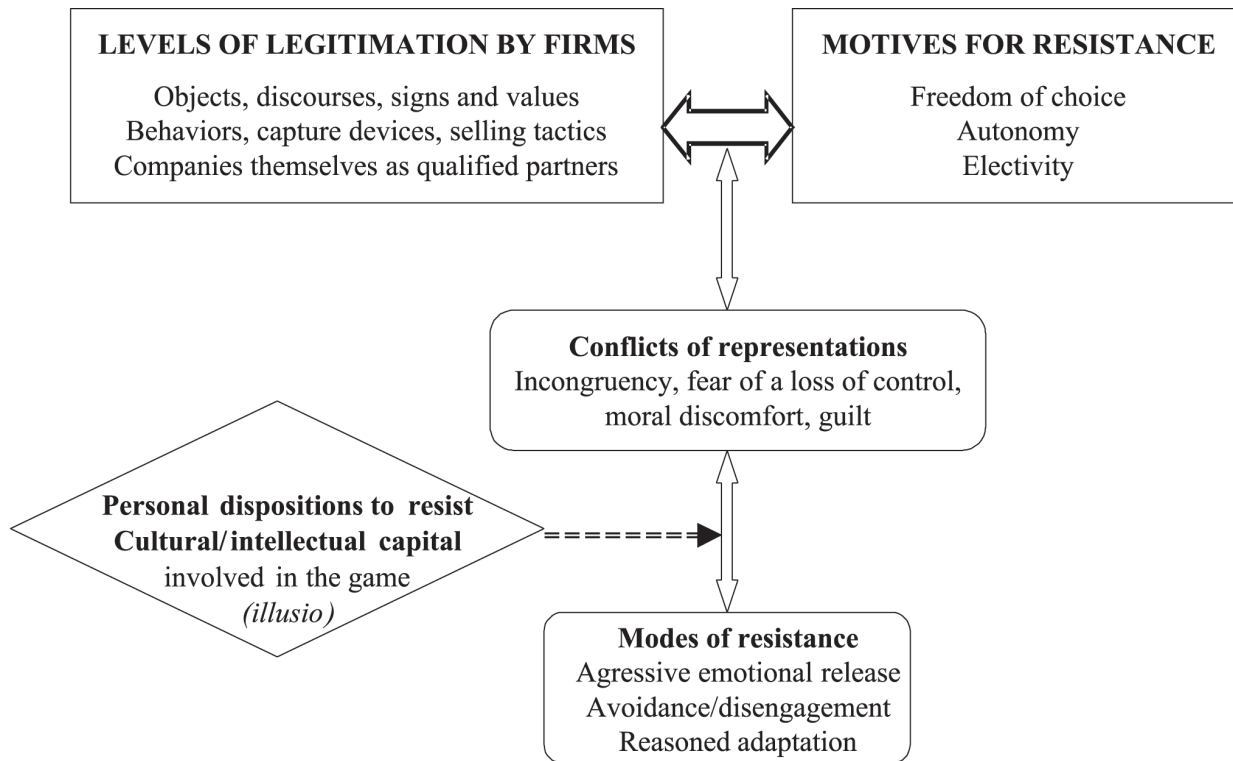
Secondly, in view of this reflexive capacity for decoding practices and discourses, the tactics of resistance vary, depending on the respondents, between confrontation, avoidance and reasoned adaptation. Their psychological profiles predispose them either to engage in the game with offensive or even aggressive energy; or to adopt defensive attitudes based on inertia, evasion or calculated ignorance; or to compose and assemble selective consumption/non-consumption within and outside of the conventional channels by mixing different supply systems.

Thirdly, individual commitments to the game depend on the intellectual and cultural capital that they are in a position to mobilize and which their own dispositions shaped by the environment predisposes them to use. In all cases, confrontation, avoidance and positive adjustment participate in a struggle against certain market realities and in using this to construct an identity-project (Castells 1997). From this angle, the conclusions drawn by Holt (2002) deserve to be re-examined. Although the market does not seem to be threatened overall by the resistance which it lives on and recycles, it does however seem to be parasitized by the critique that it helps feed.

The discourses and devices of firms participate in an exacerbation of decoding reflexes, deconstruction and critical distancing by consumers. Permanently playing with signs can both produce experts and give rise to habituation, saturation and disenchantment. The standard forms of frustration, retreat or guerilla warfare noted in this research are certainly not constructive or politically effective in the way emphasized by some observers or defenders of political consumption (Micheletti 2003). Nevertheless it would be a mistake to underestimate their interest or impact on the pretext that these acts are expressed only in the private sphere and develop in a sporadic and unstable fashion. Work on defection (Hirschman’s ‘exit’ 1970) and retaliation (Huefner and Hunt 2000) has already invited us to pay attention to opposing or reactive behaviors that crystallize an often silent and invisible rejection of the dominant ideology of consumption.

Though apparently inconspicuous and harmless, these behaviors do represent resistance as we defined it. Moreover, their covert nature makes them particularly dangerous for companies, which could easily underestimate their offensive potential. Indeed, many research avenues remain unexplored concerning the analysis and assessment of what de-consumption, alternative ways of acquisition, boycotts, negative word-of-mouth or disloyalty all together represent in terms of monetary losses and for firms and the overall

FIGURE 1
A Model of Possible Consumer's Resistant Responses to Firms



marketing system. Where the market's capacity for recuperation and regeneration has been emphasized as dependent on the very existence of resistance (Holt 2002), it can be said also that these forms of resistance live, in the manner of a parasite, at the expense of the actions and resources of firms whose everyday existence it nourishes. As in biological eco-systems, parasites, though having detrimental effect on their hosts, play however an important part in the regulation of populations. One suggestion, deriving from this metaphor and paralleling Holts' (2002) conclusion, would be that only those companies operating with respect and authenticity are in a position to resist consumers' deeper critical vigilance.

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Globalization and Rituals: Does Ramadan Turn into Christmas?

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how the dynamics of consumer culture and globalization interact with Islamic beliefs, rituals and behaviors, and revive and modify local rituals in order to fit with modern consumption-driven lifestyles. Specifically, we focus on urban Turkey and discuss how Ramadan rituals are being reinvented, modified and reinterpreted at the marketplace. We argue that the commercialization of Ramadan is neither an instance of cultural imperialism nor an instance of postmodern disorder. Rather, commercial logic and consumerist ideology hybridize Western and non-Western traditions and practices, creating new expressions of existing rituals.

INTRODUCTION

Across the Muslim world, there are numerous signs that Ramadan, a time of fasting, prayer and reflection, is transforming from a religious month to a cultural and commercial holiday. The spirit of capitalism is felt in practices ranging from the marketing of specialty items (e.g., fasting calendars, lanterns) emblazoned with company logos to the Ramadan feasts promoted by restaurants and hotels, the Ramadan greeting cards, the Ramadan sweepstakes, and the Ramadan themed shopping malls and supermarkets. During the holy month in 2005, to the surprise of many, a shopping mall in Dubai even featured “a Ramadan display with an uncanny resemblance to a nativity scene, complete with moving camels, a village elder reading stories and a desert scene” (Fattah 2005). It appears that Ramadan has taken on the commercial trappings of Christmas and Hanukah and is transforming from a religious ritual to a holiday marked by consumption. Intrigued by these developments, our paper explores how the dynamics of consumer culture and globalization interact with Islamic beliefs, rituals and behaviors and reshape them to fit with modern consumption-driven lifestyles. Specifically, we focus on urban Turkey and discuss how Ramadan rituals are modified, reinterpreted, and reinvented in the marketplace. We begin our paper by offering a brief review of the literature on holiday rituals and their transformation under the logic of capitalism and consumerism. Next, we present the findings of an ethnographic study conducted in the fall 2005 in the cities of Ankara and Istanbul in Turkey and outline the market and consumption related actors, activities, and experiences observed in the enactment of the Ramadan ritual. We conclude by discussing the implications of commercialization of rituals for consumers as well as consumer researchers.

RITUALS AND THE CONSUMER CULTURE

Following the interest in rituals as incidences of symbolic consumption (Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry 1989; Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Rook 1985) several studies investigating numerous consumption rituals appeared in the marketing literature (see Otnes and Lowrey 2004 for a recent anthology). Much of this work deals with the nature and implications of consumption during ritual occasions such as Christmas (Belk 1989; Sherry and McGrath 1989), Thanksgiving (Wallendorf and Arnould 1991), birthday parties (Otnes and McGrath 1994), and wedding (Lowrey and Otnes 1994). In contrast to Rook’s view of rituals as “extremely resistant to innovation or deviation” (1985, p.253), many studies demonstrate that rituals, ritual artifacts and ritual meanings are

subject to dynamic changes (Goodwin, Smith and Spiggle 1990; Otnes, Kim and Lowrey 1992), that rituals are influenced by and influence social and cultural contexts (Belk 1989; Otnes and Scott 1996), and that new rituals can arise as a result of rapid social changes (Kreinath et al 2004).

Studies of consumption rituals observed in non-Western contexts provide more insights into understanding the dynamism of rituals and the relation between rituals and structural developments, such as the effects of modernity and globalization. For instance, in their study of the Chinese religious rituals practiced in Singapore, Kiong and Kong (2000) show that because conditions of modern living—smaller dwellings with new spatial arrangements—altered the conceptions of sacred space, related rituals had to be redefined and even replaced by invented rituals. Similarly, work on henna night (Ustuner, Ger and Holt 2000) and dowry (Sandikci and Ilhan 2004) rituals in Turkey reveal that both rituals went through a period of demise, mainly as a result of changing lifestyles and roles of women, but then were reinterpreted and recontextualized in accordance with the conditions of modern living.

Another set of studies focus on the effects of globalization and discuss how Western-originated rituals get adapted in non-Western contexts. Prominent in this research stream is the work on Christmas and its global spread. As these studies document, Christmas is celebrated in non-Christian countries as diverse as Japan, India, Trinidad, and China (Bodenhorn 1993; Miller 1993; Moeran and Skov 1993; Kimura and Belk 2005). Yet these are creolized or hybridized adaptations, which help incorporate Christmas into local culture. Similarly, Creighton’s (1993) work, which offers an exegesis of Valentine’s Day in Japan, reveals how foreign rituals are not just adopted but domesticated.

Overall, research suggests that modernity, capitalism and globalization influence rituals in two major ways. On the one hand, one can observe revitalization of certain local rituals, resulting in reinterpretation of a disappearing or already lost rite through the lens of the contemporary consumerist lifestyle (e.g., henna night in Turkey). On the other hand, some rituals travel to cultures that did not historically observe them. In such instances, the ritual often gets reinterpreted in the imported context and is experienced through a combination of ‘original’ and ‘new’ artifacts, scripts and performances (e.g., Christmas in Japan). Whether proof of Western cultural imperialism and global homogenization or instances of hybridization and local appropriation, both the spread of Western rituals in non-Western countries and the revitalization of local rituals in new forms in diverse parts of the world are eminent. Furthermore, what is also eminent is that these processes are aided by multinational as well as local companies and media, who gain significant financial benefits from such adopted or reinvented rituals.

Indeed, commercialization surfaces as a key vector underlying the experience of rituals, be it Christmas or Ramadan, and the synergy between celebration and commerce continues to grow strong. Commercial logic and consumerist ideology hybridize Western and non-Western rituals, creating new forms of traditions. We argue that Ramadan in Turkey, and in many other Muslim countries, have become a mix of local and global, old and contemporary, religious and secular artifacts, performances, and meanings.

THE STUDY

Each year, during the ninth month of the lunar calendar, Muslims perform their religious obligation of Ramadan fasting. For a whole month, from sunrise to sunset, adult Muslims whose health permits abstain from food, drink, and sexual activity. Many modern Muslims consider Ramadan “the most important of the ritual duties” and “even if a person does not comply with the requirements of five prayers a day, observance of the fast is still likely” (Rippin, 1993, p. 133). Ramadan is regarded as a time for reflection and spiritual discipline, for expressing gratitude for God’s guidance and forgiveness of past sins, for acknowledgment of human dependence on God, as well as remembering and responding to the needs of the poor and hungry (Esposito, 1991). The month of Ramadan traditionally includes post-sunset feasts (*iftar*) and celebrations that are usually rather private and family centered (Jomier, 1991, cited in Keenan and Yeni, 2003) and followed by special night prayers. Nightly dinners are commonly provided for the needy, but here too, the focus tends to be on parents, children, friends and community alms-giving.

However, in recent years performance of Ramadan rituals in Turkey began to take place more in the public space and in a visibly consumption-oriented manner. For instance, five-star hotels offer lavish Ramadan feasts, Ramadan festivals take place in high-traffic historical sites, and shopping malls transform into Ramadan themed environments offering a variety of shopping and entertainment experiences. Underlying such changes are both state agencies and private companies who cooperate with each other to revive the interest in public celebrations of Ramadan and attract visitors. Indeed, more and more, Ramadan looks like other Western-originated holiday rituals such as the New Year’s, St. Valentine’s Day, and Mother’s and Father’s days that are already celebrated in Turkey but almost exclusively as holidays of consumption.

In this study we focus on three contexts that Ramadan celebrations take place. First, we look at Ramadan festivals organized by the Istanbul municipality. Each year, the municipality organizes three major festivals at three different sites: in the square next to the Blue Mosque, which is a major tourist area in Istanbul; in *Feshane*, a historical building converted to a convention center in the late 1980s; and, *Talimhane*, a recently renovated historical street next to Taksim square, which is both a commercial and tourist area. The second context that we explore is shopping malls, specifically, Bilkent Shopping Centre and Migros Shopping Mall in Ankara. Bilkent Centre is located in an upper class neighborhood whereas Migros Mall is located in a lower class district. Both places can be accessed by public transportation. Finally, we focus on up-scale hotels and restaurants in Istanbul and Ankara that offer *iftar* meals. These feasts were initially offered only by the five star hotels and up-scale restaurants. Observing their success, nowadays, several establishments provide *iftar* meals to a variety of market segments at a variety of prices.

We collected data in the fall 2005, before, during and after the month of Ramadan. The primary data collection method employed was an ethnographic participant observation of the different contexts. Observations were made in Istanbul and Ankara, in several shopping malls, Ramadan festival sites, streets, hotels and restaurants. Informal interviews with retailers participating to the different festivals as well as with the shopkeepers in the malls were conducted. Moreover, a collection of secondary data sources, comprising of advertisements, magazines, newspapers and Internet websites, informs our analysis. Once the data collection was over, the authors independently went through the field notes, photographs and the visual archive in order to identify conceptual categories and themes. Next, the categories and themes identified

were discussed among the authors and any disagreements were resolved.

RAMADAN FESTIVALS

Since the takeover of the governance of Istanbul by the Islamist Party after the 1992 local elections, the municipality has been organizing Ramadan festivals. Although there are some variations across the festivals conducted at different locations, what these festivals commonly involve are a wide selection of food and ample opportunities for shopping and entertainment. The municipality promotes the festivals as an attempt to revitalize the spirit of “old” Ramadans and constructing a space that brings together people from all social classes and creates a sense of community (Istanbul Bulteni, 2005). As no entrance fee is charged, indeed people with limited income can visit the festival areas; however, in order to partake in the joy of the festivals one needs to spend money, i.e., on food and entertainment activities.

The biggest and oldest of these festivals is the one held at the square next to the Blue Mosque. During October 2005, for a whole month, the area was transformed into a big market place, packed with more than hundred stands selling food and beverages as well as all kinds of paraphernalia. In each day of the Ramadan month, thousands of visitors crammed the square before the sunset and waited until the time that daily fasting would be over. After the meals were eaten shopping and enjoyment of various cultural activities began. The activities included religious panels addressing different aspects of Ramadan and Islam as well as artistic performances. The performances mostly included traditional art forms, such as *karagöz* (traditional shadow show) and *meddah* (an earlier form of stand-up shows), which have been very popular during the time of the Ottoman Empire but were long forgotten in the modern era. On the other hand, for those who were interested in shopping, the stands offered a wide range of selections from religious objects, such as Qurans and spiritual books, to electronic appliances and Chinese-made decorative ornaments. Moreover, several local and global companies promoted their products by distributing samples and other promotional materials. As in other festival areas, the stands were built in the style of the traditional Ottoman houses and the vendors were dressed in traditional Ottoman attires. Replicating the Ottoman house transformed the stalls into stores that tell stories, places that create a memorable consumer experience (Kozinets, et al., 2002).

Similar activities and goods were visible at the festival conducted at *Feshane*. Past the entrance gate to the building, one was confronted with the food court named as the “Ottoman Street.” Here as well, all the food stalls were in the form of miniature replicas of traditional Ottoman houses. After the *iftar* meal, visitors enjoyed their coffees and teas in a traditional coffeehouse located near to the food court. Next to the coffeehouse was a small theater where plays and concerts were performed. However, this entertainment was available only to those who paid the \$10 cover charge. The main building, on the other hand, was almost like a trade show; several companies were busy promoting their products and services to the wandering visitors. For example, banks promoted credit cards while mobile phone companies advertised their new fares. Not only information but also certain goods were distributed freely. Unilever Company, for example, distributed bowls of its newly launched instant soup and cups of Lipton brand flavored teas. There were also several brands of cars and motorcycles on exhibit. Many people waited in line to be photographed standing next to their dream car or motorcycle, while others posed with *Celik*, a cute robot functioning as the symbol of a local appliance manufacturer. At both festival places, a very popular activity was being photographed as an

Ottoman sultan. For \$10, one could be easily transformed to a sultan or his wife, complete with the period attire and look, and immortalize this instance with a color photograph. Couples as well as families rushed into, creating long queues every night. Candy and beverage stalls spread all over the festival areas were very popular as well.

While the Blue Mosque and *Feshane* festivals had a more mass appeal, the *Talimhane* festival claimed to offer a more “authentic” and exclusive Ramadan experience. The stalls placed alongside the street were again in the form of replications of the traditional Ottoman houses. However, instead of selling food and cheap paraphernalia, these stalls hosted craftsmen who were invited from all over Turkey by the municipality in order to promote and sell their art to the tourists as well as the upper-middle class residents of Istanbul. Along with handicraft replications of Ottoman art and jewelry the decorations used in the area attempted to create a more “authentic” revival of the past. Several real-life size black and white photographs portraying scenes from everyday life in the Ottoman period were placed next to the stalls. For example, visitors drinking Turkish coffee and smoking hookahs were sitting in front of a photograph of a traditional coffeehouse, while at the background of the visitors resting on an Ottoman style couch was a photograph of a living room of an Ottoman house. Moreover, actors dressed in Ottoman style dresses were strolling along the street, posing frequently with visitors to be photographed. Overall, for a month *Talimhane* was transformed to a nostalgic Ottoman neighborhood complete with the images of the Ottoman house, the grocery store, the coffeehouse, the spice store, and the whirling dervishes.

Taken as a whole, the municipality, by creating these festive consumption spaces, makes Ramadan an attractive event to the retailers, residents and tourists. In the mean time, the municipality also profits as it rents the stalls for around \$10,000. Through the intersection of sacred (religion and history) and profane (shopping and leisure), public authorities and retailers, attempt to sacralize the ordinary commercial commodities (O’Guinn and Belk, 1989), most of which are commonly available. Similar to theme parks like Disneyland, a “dedifferentiation of consumption” is evident as different institutional spheres become increasingly interconnected with each other (Bryman, 1999, p.33). This tendency is also evident in the Ramadan festivals as we see a tendency for eating, shopping and leisure to become “inextricably interwoven” and very difficult to separate (Bryman, 1999). Through a selective portrayal of history (Goulding, 2000), the Ramadan festivals also resonate with the trend of the “commodification of history” (Barthel 1996), which involves consumption practices related to the past. This themed past however, is cleansed from all the negative effects that may break the marketable theme and thus, places present a simulation of the Ottomans’ glory.

SHOPPING MALLS

Shopping malls become another site for the revival of the commodified version of the Ramadan ritual. The literature provides evidence that shopping malls have become venues for activities other than shopping and destinations in their own right (Bryman, 1999). Malls nowadays, provide a wide variety of services, such as restaurants, banking facilities, cinemas and leisure facilities for children, allowing individuals to participate in activities other than shopping (Sandikci and Holt, 1998). During the month of Ramadan, both of the shopping malls that we examined were turned into festive places themed with Ottoman symbols. Similar to the festivals organized by municipalities, the malls after *iftar* provided live music, shadow shows, and plays for the children.

The main entrance of the Migros Shopping Mall was decorated with some massive gold colored Tulips, which welcomed the

visitors with a reference to the old Ramadan days. The mixture of gold and tulips reminds the entrances of the luxurious Ottoman palaces with their renowned gardens and rich interiors, often described as paradises on earth. Located next to the main entrance were a miniature of the Blue Mosque in purple color and a miniature of an Ottoman neighborhood. The interior of the mall was further decorated with lively colored *fezzes*, which were initially used by the Ottoman soldiers and then were adopted as an everyday hat by the Ottoman men. Lively colored ribbons similar to the ribbons hold by the Ottoman army band were hanged between the *fezzes*. The corridors were decorated by purple lanterns, which connoted the lanterns used to light the streets in the Ottoman Empire. The decorations combined the pre-modern symbols of the most significant era of the Turkish history with modern and fashionable colors, such as turquoise blue, green, red and purple.

Apart from the decoration, the mall was transformed into a festival space after the post-sunset *iftar* feast. A traditional coffeehouse, with its stools and small tables, was set up on the third floor of the mall. In the same area, a small stage, where traditional performances (e.g. *karagöz* and *meddah*) and live music were performed, was built. Individuals could watch these activities from the upper floor as well, where the food court is located. Additionally, small stands were located all over the mall, which sold nostalgic candies and beverages (e.g., cotton candy, toffee apple, cotton halva).

Although the decorations in the Bilkent shopping mall were less spectacular, the atmosphere was similar. Here as well, a stage to host various performances was built. With Oriental lanterns and fabrics, Turkish carpets, a wooden carriage full of Ramadan candies, straws sprinkled down on the floor and waitresses dressed in Ottoman clothing, the place was reminiscent of the Ottoman past. The spirit of Ramadan also transformed the supermarkets located at the malls. Ramadan streets featuring different stands selling snacks eaten when breaking the fast, such as olives, dates and pitas, were built inside the supermarkets in both malls. The decorations at the Migros supermarket were an extension of the decorations used inside the shopping mall, colored fesses and ribbons, gold tulip-like decorations and different kind of lanterns were placed all over the shop. In the supermarket at the Bilkent shopping mall, there was a Ramadan Street comprising of stands made to look like the facades of the Ottoman houses. A wide variety of snacks and products that were related with Ramadan were available for purchase.

Overall, both malls attempted to create a simulation of the pre-modern agora or bazaar. The prehistoric market was essentially social, characterized by crowds, close physical context, and highly personal interchange, which provided for an exciting, festive environment (Gumpert and Drucker, 1992). Malls nowadays attempt to replicate the feeling of market through design and atmospherics, recreating a simulated controlled “urban” environment (Gottdiener, 2001). Likewise, shopping malls, through the commodification of social experience, seek to re-construct the spirit of the publicly-celebrated Ramadan experience, an experience that has lost its public appeal during the making of the modern republic. The Ottoman theming allows consumers to experience the collective but forgotten past through fantasy, similar to Disney’s Main Street, which allows consumers to experience a suburban town in America (Holak and Havlena, 1991). But although nostalgia draws from the past, it is clearly a product of the present. As Panelas (1979) argues nostalgia is always evoked in the context of current modern fears and anxieties. Shopping malls resolve the modern societies’ anxieties through providing security in all their entrances, offering a controlled environment cleansed from the unexpected events (pickpocketing, street fights etc.) that contaminate the municipality festivals.

HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

From fast-food chains like McDonalds to luxurious five star hotels, restaurants offer different menus in a variety of price ranges. The most conspicuous consumption of *iftar* feasts occurs in five star hotel and restaurants, which through advertising try to create an alternative “elite spirit” of Ramadan. The market offers to its elite Muslim followers the ability to experience the sacredness of the month at an exclusive environment. However, rather than being available to anyone wishing to attend (Procter, 2004), luxurious hotels and restaurants re-produce differences in class positions, as *iftar* dinners cost \$30 or more per person.

Similar to the other contexts, hotels and restaurants promote the revival of the ritual by emphasizing the Ottoman references. For example, the advertisement for Polat Renaissance Hotel portrays the Blue Mosque in the days of the Ottoman Empire. The picture shows Ottoman merchants gathered around the garden of the mosque dressed in the attires of that epoch. The ad attempts to draw an analogy between the mosque and the hotel by alluding to the fact that religious centers were also commercial centers in the pre-modern times (Ibrahim, 1982). Similar to the religious centers of the Ottoman epoch, the hotel creates a sacred centre in their commercial space. The hotel claims an “authentic” revival of the past and welcomes its visitors to the most “authentic” experience of Ramadan. Another five star hotel in Istanbul, Ceylan Intercontinental, associates its brand name with the word *iftar*. Just after sunset when the fasting is over, televisions channels declare the end of the fast by the announcement “Now, it is the time for *Iftar*”. Alluding to the announcement, the Ceylan Intercontinental advertisement reads “Time for Ceylan in Ramadan”. The ad also features the characteristic signature of the Ottoman Sultan in the form of a music note, which further emphasizes the courtly quality of *iftar* at Ceylan Intercontinental.

The Ramadan feast at the five-star hotels and up-scale restaurants included a plethora of dishes, starters, main dishes and sweets, which reflect the abundance of choices presented to the modern consumer. Consumers enjoyed their *iftar* either in set menus or in American style buffets. The choice of a menu dining was not limited to a single fixed menu. Rather, hotels and restaurants offered at least four different menus in order to respond to their customers’ tastes. Moreover, individuals could create their own customized menus. The food offered was a combination of the rich cuisine of the Ottoman Empire and a variety of options among Turkish and World cuisines (e.g. Mexican, Italian and Greek cuisine). The consumer was not limited to the local tastes of his/hers country; rather, food acquired a global taste. Not only the choices of the food, but also the presentation of the food created an elite feast. The food is often served in copper cutleries, which used to be the tableware at the Ottoman Empire. Live traditional Turkish music also was performed throughout the feast. In some of the restaurants, even *Whirling Dervish* performances were carried out. Some restaurants revived traditions that were long forgotten, such as “*Di? Kirasi*”. During the Ottoman times, when a family invited visitors for the *iftar* feast, the hosts also gave small gifts to their guests. Modernizing this ritual, an upscale restaurant, *Asitane* offered gifts like silver cigarette cases and amber rosaries to its patrons.

The nostalgia created in these contexts are based on an elite longing for the past, a longing for the lives of the Sultans and the life at the Ottoman palaces, rather than a longing for a collective past (Holak and Havlena, 1991). Ottoman Sultans enjoyed all aspects of the imperial glory such as the art, leisure and richness of the cuisine, without having to wait for the sacred month of Ramadan (Sakaoglu and Akpınar, 1999). Through their sophisticated decorations, selection of dishes and entertainment activities, the up-scale restaurants

and five-star hotels attempted to create a simulation of a Ramadan celebration at the Ottoman palace. Thus, although Ottoman theming was present in all three contexts that we discussed and similar cultural motifs were used to invoke the Ottoman past, their differential use enabled companies to differentiate the offerings in order to appeal to different consumer markets (Gottdiener, 2001).

CONCLUSION

This study contributes to the literatures on rituals and globalization by studying how rituals are modified, reinterpreted, and reinvented in the marketplace. We discuss how the interaction of the global and local revive and transform the practices and the meanings of Ramadan ritual. In their study of Christmas celebrations in Japan, Kimura and Belk argue that Western holidays like Christmas, Valentine’s Day, and Halloween, which have complex cultural ideologies behind them, “threaten to displace traditional local holidays” (2005, p.325). However, we argue that in some cases, rather than displacing, they might revive and modify existing local rituals. Our findings indicate that the commercialization of Ramadan is neither an instance of cultural imperialism where Western life forms erase local life forms under the disguise of globalization (i.e., McDonaldization, Ritzer, 1995), nor an instance of postmodern disorder, characterized by liberating experiences and themes erasing the limits of the modern project (i.e., Disneyization, Bryman, 1999). Ramadan is rather like “traffic in things” (Jackson, 1988) and a process of glocommodification (Ram, 2004). Jackson (1998) argues that commoditization is like traffic, in which various agents encourage the revival and transformation of meanings and responses. Similarly, Ram (2004, p. 27) discusses global commodification as a dual process that “combines structural uniformity with symbolic diversity”.

At the symbolic level, there are distinctive characteristics that differentiate the ritual of Ramadan from other holidays and create a unique experience for the Muslim followers. Different forms of post-sunset *iftar* feasts and celebrations together with the use of the symbols of the Ottoman Ramadan festivals encourage a local heterogeneity. On the other hand, contemporary rituals are still edited in accordance with the needs of the profit-oriented industries (Schmidt, 1991), and thus reproduce the deep-seated social relationships involved in their production and consumption (Ram, 2004). The global consumerist ideology facilitates and strengthens the consumption of “sacralized” commodities in the form of products, services, places, and experiences, and offer consumers a new occasion for shopping and leisure. Ramadan turns into a “glocommodified” (Ram, 2004, p. 27) ritual, combining a variety of symbols connoting religious values and beliefs as well as markers of global consumption ethos. Theming, which underlies all three contexts we discussed, operate as a major instrument of commodification.

Although this glocommodified ritual encompasses many features that appear to fit postmodern theories, many modern foundations shape the ritual. Unlike, Beardshow and Bryman (1999), who argue that themed environments include many of the reassuring securities of modernity such as physical safety, comfort and hygiene, we argue that more powerful actors such the nation state and the existing social hierarchies reproduce modern foundations. Our results indicate that local municipalities and the market have forged close ties for the revival of the religious ritual. Municipalities transform religious and historical places into temporary commercial markets. While the local government profits from organizing the sites, retailers profit by finding another channel to market their products. However, what underlies this cooperation is not only the profit motive, but also the state’s political ambitions.

The Islamist party, which controls the governance of major cities as well as the country, emphasizes both the religious and Ottoman values for the contemporary Turkish identity and takes advantage of any incidence that can be converted into some form of cultural and religious propaganda. As Kopytoff (1986) argues the commoditization of holidays is significantly related to “the cultural and ideological premises that suffuses its working”. Thus, in contrast to postmodernist theories, rather than an erosion of the state’s ability to forge national and in this case religious identities (Firat and Dholakia, 2003), the nation state becomes a primarily agent in the revival of the ritual.

A second feature that contradicts the liberating experiences of post-modernity is the reproduction of social structures, which creates a deprived experience of the ritual for many individuals. In contrast to the conceptualization of festival celebrations as being available to anyone who wishes to attend (Procter, 2004), Ramadan festivals reproduce social inequalities. For example, the luxurious feasts in five-star hotels and restaurants and certain forms of entertainment in the municipality festivals, which require payment of a cover fee, limit accessibility. Rather than acting as a ritual that emphasizes ultimate unity and equality of all believers before God (Esposito, 1991; Creighton, 1993), Ramadan festivals reinforce accepted social hierarchies.

Overall, this study offers an initial attempt to explore the forms of revival and modification of local rituals in the marketplace. As this study was primarily composed of an analysis of representation, more insights can be gained through conducting in-depth interviews with the agents that have the power to edit rituals, as well as the individuals, who consume these rituals. Questions of how rituals influence each other and how consumers make sense of the local and the global, the past and the contemporary, offer a range of opportunities for further research.

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Team-Sponsorship in the Formula One—Does it affect Brand Perception? An Empirical Assessment in the German Car Market

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INTRODUCTION

Sponsorship as a marketing tool has grown remarkably during the last two decades, especially with respect to the endorsement of worldwide sports events. Besides the FIFA World Cup™ or the Olympic Games, the Formula One is the only event with a comparable global character taking place in 17 countries all over the world, ranging from Brazil to Japan, from Australia to Italy and, for a short time, the US. It consequently stands to reason, that especially many big international companies use Formula One as a platform for building, strengthening and holding up their brand equity. With its extension to Shanghai in 2005, the Formula One has become fully globalized.

The Formula One Circuit is financed predominantly out of sponsorship money, while TV broadcast and entrance fees are of only minor importance. In the past, the Tobacco Industry has been one of the biggest contributors to the Formula One. Since the European Union ordered the tobacco companies to back out of the sponsorship deals by 2006, the teams now have to find new business partners. Consequently many global players like Emirates, Red Bull and Intel are entering the Formula One. However, companies that engage in Formula One sponsorship have to be sure about the effectiveness and efficiency of their engagement. Companies expect an effect of sponsorship on the brand, more specifically on brand awareness and on brand image dimensions. Brand awareness relates to the strength of a brand in memory, and the likelihood and ease with which the brand will be recognized or recalled under various conditions (Silverman et al. 1999). Brand image is defined as “perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory” (Keller 1993). The favorability, strength and uniqueness of brand image permit the brand to be strategically differentiated and positioned in the consumer’s mind.

In the present paper, I take a closer look at the Formula One activities of Toyota and its impact on the brand awareness and brand image dimensions in the German consumer market. In the last decades, the Toyota Motor Corporation (TMC) has been subject to several studies and been a main attraction to both competitors and the scientific communities (e.g. Womack et al. 1990). While the specific capabilities of TMC in technology, total quality management (Kaizen) and efficiency (Kanban) contributed to its current dominant position in most world markets (above 10 percent market share world wide), its market position in Germany remains weak (about 4 percent market share in 2004; Frank 2004). Especially in Germany, Japanese brands are valued for their functional attributes but are evaluated poorly concerning the non-attribute based image such as personality and character, attractiveness and likeability (Vogel et al. 2006). One of Toyota’s most important aims in the Formula One is to improve its non-attribute based image (Toyota 2005).

I contribute to the literature by analyzing (1) antecedents of sponsorship recall that can be explained through prominence heuristics and involvement, (2) consequences of sponsorship recall on the evaluation of brand awareness and brand image dimensions that are explained with mere exposure effects. (3) Both antecedents and consequences are analyzed for two measuring points using a panel of 2.116 (1.131) consumers. (4) Finally, I take a look at the change of brand awareness and brand image between the two measurement points and assess, whether the “fit” between the image of formula

one and the sponsoring brand plays a critical role in the process of image transfer.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

As sponsorship became more and more important in terms of growing budgets since the late 1980s, research on sponsorship had been intensified accordingly to this development. Five research streams (nature of sponsorship, managerial issues, measurement of sponsorship effects, strategic aspects, and legal and ethical issues) have been identified by Cornwell and Maignan (1998) and updated by Walliser in 2003 including later—primarily European—research. In this study, the issue of measurement of sponsorship effects is addressed.

Measurement of sponsorship effects is still a topic that is of growing interest to both the scientific community and practitioners. Sponsorship has been found to affect (1) brand awareness (e.g. Quester and Thompson 2001), (2) brand image/associations (e.g. Javalgi et al. 1994; Pope and Voges 1999,), (3) employees (e.g. Grimes and Meenaghan 1998), (4) purchasing intention (e.g. Bennett et al. 2002; Pope and Voges 1999, 2000; Speed and Thompson 2000), (5) and even investor relations and stock market prices (e.g. Cornwell, Clark and Pruitt 2004; Cornwell and Pruitt 2001). Especially the potential influence of sponsorship on brands has been subject of several studies (e.g. Grohs et al. 2004; Gwinner and Eaton 1999; Javalgi et al. 1994; Speed and Thompson 2000).

However, the analysis of the effect of sponsorship on brand image over time has been only subject of very few research works (e.g. Quester and Farrelly 1998; Becker-Olsen and Simmons 2002; Grohs et al. 2004; Pitts and Slattery 2004). A reason for that could be the lack of sound theoretical underpinning of the effects of sponsorship.

For instance, Cornwell, Weeks and Roy (2005, p. 21) claim, that research on sponsorship effects “is lacking theoretical frameworks of how sponsorship works in the minds of consumers” and provide a number of theoretical explanations of sponsorship effects. More precisely, they identify a number of processing mechanics that provide a theoretical explanation of sponsorship on a cognitive, affective and behavioral level (Cornwell, Weeks and Roy 2005, p. 22).

For my investigation of effects in the context of Formula One Sponsorships, I draw back on (1) prominence heuristics, (2) the mere exposure effect and (3) balance theory.

(1) Prominence heuristic, as analyzed by Pham and Johar (2001), proposes that well-known brands are recalled more frequently in comparison to less known brands. They claim, that sponsorships for brands that are less known should be avoided, when other—well known—brands are engaged in a sponsorship in the same field.

More specifically, sponsorship recall is influenced by existing knowledge about the brand, and the involvement of a particular person with the product category of the brand and the sponsored event. Following the heuristic of brand prominence, one can argue that high brand equity—which is defined as difference in consumer choice between the focal branded product and an unbranded product given the same level of product features (Yoo et al. 2000) will make it more likely that a specific sponsor is recalled. This rationale

is confirmed by the findings of Pham and Johar (2001). Therefore, one can hypothesize that

H_{1A}: The higher the brand equity of a specific sponsor, the more likely it will be recalled.

Furthermore, it could be expected that product-related involvement and involvement with the specific event will lead to a higher probability, that a person will recall the sponsorship stimulus. In a low-involvement condition, consumers will process the stimulus less intensively (Krugman 1965, 1966). This rationale is confirmed by the findings of Grohs et al (2004). Hence, it is proposed that

H_{1B}: The higher the product-related involvement, the more likely the sponsorship will be recalled.

H_{1C}: The higher the event-related involvement, the more likely the sponsorship will be recalled.

(2) The mere exposure effect suggests that in absence of other stimuli (Baker 1999), repeated exposure to a stimulus will lead to an affective reaction (Zajonc 1968). Sponsorship is—similar to advertising—often directed to respondents in a situation where they pay low attention to the stimulus (e.g. because of concentrating to the event). Therefore, it has to be repeated several times in order to attract the attention of a respondent's mind (Baker 1999). Existence of the mere exposure effect is confirmed by several studies (e.g. Bennett 1999; Olson/Thjomøe 2003).

On the basis of the existence of mere exposure effects, it is proposed that if a person is able to recall Toyota as a Formula One sponsor or advertiser, the awareness and image of the brand (as defined in the introduction of this article) will be significantly more favorable than for persons that do not recall the any of those two stimuli. This is in accordance with findings in existing literature (e.g. Bennett 1999). Hence, I hypothesize that

H_{2A}: If a sponsor is recalled, its brand awareness will be significantly more favorable.

H_{2B}: If a sponsor is recalled, its brand image will be significantly more favorable.

(3) The attitude toward the event (i.e., event image) is supposed to influence the processing of the sponsoring stimulus. Many authors claim, that a "fit" between the sponsored event and the sponsoring brand is essential to realize an image transfer (e.g., Cornwell et al. 2005; Dean 2002; Hastie 1980). However, learning is less likely to take place if sponsor and sponsored event are already perceived as "congruent". Following balance theory (Heider 1946, 1958), I propose that a positive distance in evaluation of the event relative to the brand in $t=1$ will lead to an increase in awareness and image transfer (increase in favorability of brand dimensions) in $t=2$. According to balance theory, people that identify a sponsor to be associated with an event or team in the first place and have a relatively negative opinion about the sponsoring brand in comparison to the sponsored event will evaluate the brand more positively over time. Based on assimilation-contrast theory (Sherif and Hovland 1961), a decrease in favorability of the brand dimensions is expected, if the brand is evaluated better than the event in $t=1$ using the same explanation as above. Since the brand is evaluated more positively than the event in the first place, the knowledge of a relatively negative cue (i.e., that the brand is engaged in sponsoring an event with a negative image) will lead to a less favorable evaluation of the brand in $t=2$. No effect is expected for a "fit" i.e. a relatively similar evaluation. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H_{3A}: A positive difference in evaluation of the event image relative to brand awareness/brand image leads to an increase in brand awareness/brand image favorability.

H_{3B}: A negative difference in evaluation of the event image relative to brand awareness/image leads to a decrease in awareness/brand image favorability.

METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire Development and Pretesting

To measure the respondents' perceptions with regard to brand awareness and brand image a pool of sample measures was generated based on literature review (see appendix). The items were pretested using a sample of 20 German undergraduate marketing students. These subjects did not participate in the following field survey. Regarding question content, wording, format and layout there were no signs of any misunderstanding reported by the respondents.

Measurements

On that basis a questionnaire was developed consisting of three different parts. In the first part, the respondents were asked to name car brands they could remember from (1) advertising and (2) sponsoring a Formula One team. Following Baker et al. (1986) and Keller (1993), I decided against asking for ad/sponsorship recognition, since the unaided awareness of a brand is supposed to be a required condition for the purchase of more complex products e.g. cars. Moreover, the measurement of recognition would be subject to several biases, e.g. interest of a person in the brand (Bennett et al. 2002, p. 177) and, more importantly, to a bias in the second survey.

In the second part, the respondents were asked to evaluate several brand related constructs (brand awareness, brand equity and several image attributes) for Toyota and one of 13 other brands.¹ These brands were only included in the questionnaire to avoid a possible identification of the questionnaires purpose in the second survey. Sponsor-related variables were measured using multi-item scales. All items are measured on 7-point Likert-type scales, with anchors of 1=strongly agree and 7=strongly disagree. Based on Yoo et al. (2000) 3 of their items were used to measure a sponsor's brand awareness and 4 items to measure brand equity. Several items from Verhoef et al. (2004) and from the Allison-Fisher Barometer of Awareness and Imagery (as described in the article of Scott and English (1989), see appendix for the list of items) were used to measure brand image and the image of the sponsored event. Conceptualizing brand image, Park and Srinivasan (1994) postulate that brand image consists of an attribute related dimension and a non-attribute component. I follow Park and Srinivasan (1994) and postulate that brand image (in the case of automobile brands) consists of two dimensions: Functional trust, which consists of attributes that are closely linked to quality and hedonic image which is built by attributes that represent the personality and imagery of a consumer.

Finally the respondents were asked for their interest in cars in general, their involvement with the Formula One and socio-demographics.

Sample and Data Collection

To test the hypotheses, data was collected via internet. A questionnaire was mailed to 40,927 E-Mail addresses in Germany.

¹These 14 brands were selected because they account for 86.06 % of the German car market in 2004. The remaining 13.94 % of the market contains several niche producers with little relevance to the market as a whole.

TABLE 1
CFA of Constructs

Factor	Indicator	Indicator Reliability	Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Product-related involvement	IP1	0,834	0,889	0,886	0,723
	IP2	0,753			
	IP3	0,581			
Event-related involvement	IE1	0,955	0,952	0,954	0,875
	IE2	0,937			
	IE3	0,733			
Event image	IF2	0,869	0,906	0,910	0,673
	IF3	0,529			
	IF4	0,874			
	IF5	0,712			
Brand equity	BE1	0,692	0,936	0,951	0,829
	BE2	0,865			
	BE3	0,914			
	BE4	0,845			
Brand awareness	BA1	0,581	0,768	0,663	0,498
	BA3	0,415			
Attribute-based image (functional)	F1	0,908	0,940	0,938	0,754
	F2	0,925			
	F3	0,699			
	F4	0,626			
	F5	0,613			
Non-attribute-based image (hedonic)	H1	0,752	0,927	0,930	0,691
	H2	0,694			
	H3	0,623			
	H4	0,696			
	H5	0,803			
	H6	0,579			

Goodness-of-fit statistics: CFI (0,942); TLI (0,933); RMSEA (0,071); SRMR (0,035).

The population was chosen based on a selection of E-Mail addresses that is representative to Germany concerning age, gender and region with support of CIAO Online Surveys. A total of 4,173 respondents answered the first survey in January 2005, 2,116 of them also participated in the second survey in July 2005 (one week after F1 season height in Hockenheim, Germany), equaling a response rate of 10.2% (50.5%). 48.1% (51.4%) of the participants were male, average age of the participants was 38.9 (standard dev. 11.6) and 38.5 (11.9) in the second survey. The first dataset was split into two equal parts. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted and all constructs were identified as proposed above. One item was eliminated from the brand awareness construct due to low indicator reliability (BA2) and from the event image construct (IF1) for the same reason. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis with the second part of the dataset are depicted in table 1 below.

RESULTS

To test the effect of brand equity and involvement on the recall of Toyota as a sponsor of a Formula One-team, a logistic regression

was conducted with the dichotomous variable “recall” as dependent, and brand equity, product-related involvement and event-related involvement as independent variables for one measuring point. Studentized residuals, Cook’s Distance and multicollinearity were examined to determine if assumptions of logistic regression were violated.

As can be seen from table 2, all three constructs exhibit statistically significant positive influence on the likelihood a sponsor is to be recalled. The influence of event-related involvement is highest, followed by brand equity and product-related involvement. All three Hypotheses H_{1A} , H_{1B} and H_{1C} are confirmed, also with the replication using the second dataset. The model fits well since only four iterations were needed until no further improvement of the likelihood was achieved (improvement $< .001$) and the likelihood-ratio test led to highly significant results. Nagelkerke’s R^2 ($NR^2 = .232/.184$) is satisfying.

The effect of Ad and Sponsorship recall on the dependent constructs is tested by conducting a MANCOVA. The required assumptions were checked as discussed in existing literature (e.g.

TABLE 2
Logistic Regressions of drivers of Sponsorship Recall (measuring times 1/2)

Independent Variable	Coefficient b (Significance)	S.E.
Product-related involvement	-0.139***/-0.099***	0.038/0.037
Event-related involvement	-0,383***/-0.335***	0.029/0.028
Brand equity	-0.112***/-0.134***	0.033/0.032

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1; Nagelkerkes R²=0.232/0.184; Model ended after four/four iterations.

TABLE 3
Results of MANCOVA (first dataset/second dataset)

Effect	Factor	Wilks-Lambda	F-Value	Eta-Square (η ²)
Main Effect	Ad recall	0.923/0.952	27.326***/12.051***	7.7 %/4,8 %
	Sponsorship recall	0.980/0.960	6.752***/9.947***	2.0 %/4,0 %
Interaction Effect	Ad recall x Sponsorship recall	0.997/0.990	0.946/2.366*	0.3 %/1,0 %
Co-Variable	Product-related involvement	0.938/0.978	21.450***/5.283***	6.2 %/2,2 %

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1; n₁=1040/n₂=784

Tabachnik and Fidell 2001 pp. 282 and pp. 329). Since the assignment to different groups (dependent on recall of the independent stimuli) could not be randomized by default, group sizes vary strongly. Therefore, the dataset was reduced in order to achieve equal group sizes (random samples from the larger groups). The constructs are not normally distributed and homogeneity of variances of the dependent variables was slightly different. According to Olson (1974, pp. 894) and Bray and Maxwell (1985, pp 33), these violations can be accepted if the dataset is large enough and the group sizes are equal. As described in table 3 below, cell size in the first dataset is 270 (2x2x270=1040 total) and 196 (2x2x196=784 total) in the second dataset.

Unweighted means of the item scores were used as values for the dependent constructs. The construct of event-related involvement interacts with the independent factors, therefore only product-related Involvement is used as a Co-Variable. Results of the MANCOVAs of the two measurements indicate significant main effects and an insignificant interaction effect. The influence of product-related involvement is also significant in both surveys. Following Cohen (1988), the strength of the effects is rather small (only ad recall yields the 5.9 % level of a middle-sized effect).

Follow-Up-ANCOVAs were conducted to determine the effect of the stimuli and Co-Variable on each dependent construct. As can be seen from table 4, all main effects are significant for each construct. However, the strength of the effects differs largely. In the first round, the effect of ad recall on brand awareness and non-attribute-based image is much higher than in the second survey, on the contrary, the effect of sponsorship recall is much stronger in the second survey. Since Toyota was relatively successful in the

Formula One Season 2005 up to the measuring point in late July (57 points compared to a total of 8 points in the 2004 Season), this offers a possible explanation of the increase in sponsorship effect. The weakening of the ad effect could be explained due to the fact that one of the most expensive advertising measures of Toyota—the role of media presenter of the German Soccer League “Bundesliga” – was absent for more than a month because of the season break.

Lastly, post-hoc-tests were conducted to check, whether the hypothesized effects show into the proposed direction. As described in tables 5A (first survey) and 5B (second survey), the knowledge of a stimulus leads to a significantly better evaluation of each brand construct. Therefore, our Hypotheses H_{2A} and H_{2B} can be confirmed.

Finally, I take a look at the change of brand awareness and brand image dimensions between the two measuring points. As proposed in Hypothesis H₃, we a more positive evaluation of the brand Toyota in t=2 is expected if the image of Toyota is evaluated relatively worse comparing to the image of Formula One in t=1. Only consumers are included in this analysis that could at least once recall Toyota as a Formula One sponsor. Results in table 6 show that only the group that evaluated Toyota relatively worse comparing to Formula One (“positive distance”) in the first place has a significant awareness/image enhancement, giving support for Hypotheses H_{3A} and H_{3B}.

IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study confirm that sponsorship recall is significantly influenced by perceived brand prominence (brand equity) and both product- and event-related involvement. There-

TABLE 4
Results of Follow-Up-ANCOVAs (first dataset/second dataset)

Faktor	Brand awareness	Attribute-based Image (Functional)	Non-attribute-based Image (Hedonic)
Ad recall	53.058*** (5.1 %)/ 10.973*** (1.5 %)	46.453*** (4.5 %)/ 34.288*** (4.6 %)	63.261*** (6.1 %)/ 21.590*** (2.9 %)
Sponsorship recall	5.840** (0.6 %)/ 19.858*** (2.7 %)	18.368*** (1.8 %)/ 19.380*** (2.6 %)	3.071* (0.3 %)/ 4.609** (0.6 %)
Ad recall x Sponsorship recall	0.642 (0.1 %)/ 0.009 (0.0 %)	0.396 (0.0 %)/ 1.049 (0.1 %)	2.691 (0.3 %)/ 5.220** (0.7 %)
Product-related involvement	28.992*** (2.9 %)/ 0.464 (0.1 %)	26.952*** (2.7 %)/ 5.502** (0.8 %)	0.036 (0.0 %)/ 1.173 (0.2 %)

F-Values (η^2 in Percent) of Follow-Up-ANCOVAs; ***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1.

TABLE 5A
Results of Post-hoc-Tests (first dataset)

Dependent variable	Ad recall			Sponsorship recall		
	Brown-Forsythe	MV (SD)		Brown-Forsythe	MV (SD)	
		Yes	No		Yes	No
Brand awareness	53.736***	3.11 (1.48)	3.81 (1.56)	16.597***	3.26 (1.54)	3.66 (1.56)
Attribute-based image (functional)	42.368***	2.74 (1.32)	3.28 (1.32)	33.969***	2.76 (1.32)	3.25 (1.33)
Non-attribute-based image (hedonic)	67.555***	3.62 (1.41)	4.33 (1.32)	3.887*	3.88 (1.45)	4.06 (1.37)

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1; MV=Mean Value; SD=Standard Deviation

TABLE 5B
Results of Post-hoc-Tests (second dataset)

Dependent variable	Ad recall			Sponsorship recall		
	Brown-Forsythe	MV (SD)		Brown-Forsythe	MV (SD)	
		Yes	No		Yes	No
Brand awareness	12.739***	3.12 (1.48)	3.49 (1.47)	18.526***	3.08 (1.45)	3.53 (1.49)
Attribute-based image (functional)	31.731***	2.75 (1.29)	3.28 (1.33)	21.268***	2.79 (1.30)	3.23 (1.34)
Indir. effect	Ad Recall x Sponsorship Recall					
Non-attribute-based image (hedonic)	No Ad Recall			.450n.s.	4.18 (1.40)	4.09 (1.37)
	Ad Recall			6.732**	3.48 (1.38)	3.84 (1.34)
	3.166*	3.84 (1.34)	4.09 (1.37)	No Sponsorship Recall		
	24.750***	3.48 (1.38)	4.18 (1.40)	Sponsorship Recall		

***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1; MV=Mean Value; SD=Standard Deviation

TABLE 6
Regression of distance (Event-image-Brand) on change of brand evaluation

	Group with positive distance	Group with low distance (aFit)	Group with negative distance
Brand awareness	-0.116*	-0.073 ^{n.s.}	-0.004 ^{n.s.}
Attribute-based image (functional)	-0.236***	-0.029 ^{n.s.}	0.071 ^{n.s.}
Non-attribute-based image (hedonic)	-0.167***	-0.051 ^{n.s.}	0.038 ^{n.s.}

Standardized Beta, ***p<0.01; **p<0.05; *p<0.1

fore, the sole measure of recall does not offer an unbiased conclusion of sponsorship effectiveness. Moreover, the impact of sponsorship on the brand has to be separated statistically by other possible influences. A first attempt was made in this paper by including advertising recall as a complementary promotion action of companies. The change of brand awareness and brand image dimensions over time was found to depend on the relative evaluation of event image vs. brand image in the first place. This result is in accordance with balance theory and attribution-contrast-theory but contradicts empirical results of other authors (e.g. Speed and Thompson 2000; Dean 2002).

Further research should focus on gaining insights about how the sponsorship message is processed by consumers. Possibly experiments are particularly suitable to deepening the understanding about processing of the sponsorship message in comparison to field studies. However, especially from a practitioner's perspective, rigorously conducted field studies in a real context can lead to an improvement of current sponsorship evaluation practice which is often based on recall measures solely or evaluation of broadcast time. The use of panel data is adequate to analyze individual responses (e.g. change in attitudes or behavior) over time.

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APPENDIX

List of Items

Product-related involvement

- IP1 I am very interested in cars in general
- IP2 I know a lot about cars
- IP3 I regularly catch up on news about new car models

Event-related involvement

- IE1 I regularly watch Formula One
- IE2 Formula One is important for me
- IE3 Formula One means a lot to me

Event-Image

- IF1 Formula One stands for sportiveness
- IF2 Formula One is likeable
- IF3 Formula One is unique
- IF4 Formula One is attractive
- IF5 I can identify myself with the Image of Formula One

Brand Equity

- BE1 It makes sense to buy X instead of any other brand, even if they are the same
- BE2 Even if another brand has the same features as X, I would prefer to buy X
- BE3 If there is another brand as good as X, I prefer to buy X
- BE4 If another brand is not different from X in any way, it seems smarter to purchase X

Brand Awareness

- BA1 I can recognize X among other competing brands
- BA2 Some characteristics of X come to my mind quickly
- BA3 I can quickly recall the symbol or logo of X

Attribute-based Image (Functional)

- F1 I can trust X
- F2 I can rely on X
- F3 X is a really dependable car
- F4 Cars of Brand X last a long time
- F5 Cars of Brand X are excellent in workmanship

Non-attribute-based Image (Hedonic)

- H1 Cars of Brand X are good looking
 - H2 X builds cars with personality and character
 - H3 Cars of Brand X are sporty
 - H4 Cars of Brand X are attractive
 - H5 Cars of Brand X are desirable
 - H6 Cars of Brand X are young
-

The Commercial Appeal of Communism. Semiotic Tensions in the U.S. Stoli Advertising Campaign

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In 1994, the advertising campaign for Stolichnaya vodka appeared in the U.S. consumer magazines. The original works of young Russian artists were united into a campaign with the slogan "Freedom of Vodka." The ads attracted attention with colorful images created in the style of what a few in the U.S. have been familiar with as Russian Lubok, Russian Constructivism, and Socialist Realism. The Stoli advertising campaign is a juncture where several topics that have been the preoccupation of recent advertising studies, such as the predominance of visual imagery in contemporary advertising, the relationship between art and advertising, and the changing nature of advertising in postmodern age. The campaign provides a ground for advancement in the analysis of advertising. This article establishes a new visual figure of speech called "semiotic tension." Semiotic tension is the syntactic relation that binds two elements in their negative relation to each other. The specific quality of semiotic tension is the affective interpretive pleasure of tension. The moment of closure is focused more on the recognition of tension than the emergence of a coherent semantic solution. The dominant syntax of the Stolichnaya ads is based on the juxtaposition of opposites, driven by the basic antagonism of addressing North-American consumers with an anti-capitalist, Soviet-style aesthetics.

The time of the binary division between the "hard-sell" advertising with its logic and the "soft-sell" advertising, with its emotional appeal, is long gone. Instead, advertising together with the western affluent societies became more colorful, faster, louder, and more complex. The science of semiotics offered a set of tools to make this new world readable: as Saussure defined it, "a science which studies the life of signs at the heart of social life" (1974, 16).

In our analysis of the Stolichnaya campaign we want to demonstrate a semiotic process that has been neglected in advertising semiotics so far. We suggest a *layers of tension model*, that emphasizes an advertisement feature charged by a tension between elements within the ad. First, tension can be constructed on the level of re-contextualization, based on the use of referent systems in the ad. The second level of tension can occur in setting up the syntactical relationship between the relevant elements of the ad. While we take on a structuralist perspective in the textual mechanism of the ad, we do not assume a requisite resolution of the tension between the elements. In this aspect, we adhere to a post-structuralist perspective, emphasizing a more active reader in the negotiation of meaning and the possible openness of realized meanings.

Semiotic tensions are similar to the ad feature of resonance, developed by McQuarrie (1989), McQuarrie and Mick (1992). They define the rhetorical figure of resonance as a repetition of elements within the ad which echo with one another and lead to a multiplication of realized ad meanings. Resonance does not include simple ambiguity or opaqueness, but a doubleness of elements. Semiotic tension is also based on a syntactic relation, but, rather, the echo rests upon the negative feature of oppositions than the resonant positive feature of sameness. Metaphorically, the two semiotic features share a similar force binding two elements and can be distinguished as adhesion based on tension and cohesion based on resonance. Contrary to resonance, semiotic tension emphasizes more the interpretive process than the final semantic result. Based on the aesthetic theory of Berlyne (1971) and Meyer (1956) we

argue that for a positive affective aesthetic response to an ad the activated expectation is temporarily inhibited. In the semiotic tension model the disparate elements are the cause of the inhibition. Contrary to the post-structuralist position of permanently inhibited closure, we see the moment of closure in the perceived tension.

All the images of the 1994 Stoli advertising campaign have several features in common, such as original art stylized to look like early Soviet propaganda arts and the slogan, "Freedom of Vodka," written across each image. On the macro level, these features create a common tension in each image, such as a negative echo between the goals of public agitation, aiming to change the mentality of the whole human being versus commercial agitation, aiming to change one aspect of life, the purchasing patterns. Another persistent semantic tension is between the different meanings of freedom to the Soviets and Americans. While ideological propaganda claimed that Soviets were free from the oppressive forces of capitalism and hailed a freedom from unemployment, the U.S. ideological propaganda elevated freedom of choice, especially in the consumer goods realm; free to choose Stoli over other vodka. In addition, each ad contains individual tensions created by relations between elements that have to do with the meaning of symbols in a different cultural contexts.

The 1994 Stoli advertising campaign can be viewed as an act of symbolic cannibalism where representations of the enemy's ideology are appropriated. On an ideological level it definitely helped that the old enemy was brought down and lost the power of a latent threat. However, the old symbols still regained a certain charge, defined in a symbolic opposition.

We argue in this paper, that the quality of the campaign remains abstruse when analyzed in a post-structuralist and postmodern perspective. To see the Stoli ad as another example of a free-floating signifier chain is missing the point of a connectedness between the sign elements that comes from the negative echo of semiotic tension.

With our paper we nourish the hope for a more semiotically enlightened analysis of advertising that remembers again the virtues of methodological pluralism and gets over the choking postmodern fixation.

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Attribute-Value Functions and the Importance of Attributes

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Introduction

The validity and reliability of attribute-importance measurement is highly method-dependent. We propose to evade this method-dependency by shifting our attention to decision makers' value functions of attributes and investigate if and how the global and local shape of these value functions relate to different dimensions of attribute importance.

Attribute-value functions reflect the idiosyncratic valuation of an attribute at different attribute levels, relative to decision makers' reference points (Tversky and Kahneman 1991). We investigate the relationship between the *global* shape (i.e., S-shape, convex, concave) and the *local* shape (i.e., reference point, loss aversion, diminishing sensitivity) of attribute-value functions and the *global* and *local* importance of attributes (Goldstein 1990). The global importance of attributes reflects the importance of an attribute as a stable characteristic that does not depend on a specific stimulus set. The local importance of attributes reflects the importance in judgment and depends on the stimuli set under consideration.

Theory and Hypotheses

Our main proposition is that the shape of attribute-value functions relates to the importance of attributes. First, we hypothesize that *the global importance of an attribute polarizes and thus relates to decision makers' reference points* (H1), *increases decision makers' loss aversion* (H2) and *increases decision makers' diminishing sensitivity* (H3). These hypotheses are based on the notion that decision makers for whom an attribute is important based on personal values and needs (i.e., high global importance) will purchase products that perform maximally on that attribute and consequently develop a reference point that equals an attribute level at the end-poles of the relevant range of attribute levels (Kalyanaram and Winer 1995) (H1). Furthermore, the global importance of an attribute will positively influence the effects of changes in the attribute levels as reflected in decision makers' loss aversion (H2) and diminishing sensitivity (H3).

Building on the hypothesized effects of the global importance on decision makers' reference points, loss aversion, and diminishing sensitivity, we hypothesize that *the global importance of an attribute increases from decision makers with a convex value function for the attribute to decision makers with an S-shaped and concave value function* (H4).

The local importance of an attribute is generally operationalized based on the differences in valuation of attribute levels in a judgment or choice task. The difference in valuation depends on decision makers' reference points and loss aversion, which results in a steeper value function in the loss domain. Hence, *if (most of) the attribute levels in the judgment or choice task reflect a loss, the local importance will be larger than when (most of) the attribute levels in the judgment or choice task represent a gain* (H5). The relationship between the *global shape* of a value function and the *local importance* of an attribute follows a pattern comparable to that of the relationship between the global shape and the global importance of attributes (H6).

Study

To test our hypotheses, a study, involving 189 participants at a large southern university, was conducted. We studied rental

rooms on two attributes: monthly rent and size (square feet). The *global importance* of both attributes is determined using the direct rating method (1=not important, 9=important). A measure for the *local importance* of both attributes was obtained using a full factorial judgment task with five levels for each attribute. To determine the *global* and *local shape* of the value functions of both attributes, we asked the participants to rate their valuation of the full range of 12 relevant attribute levels for one attribute at the time. Participants rated their valuation of rooms with 12 different rent levels as well as their valuation of rooms with 12 different sizes (0=I do not appreciate it, 100=I highly appreciate it). The global shape of the value functions is estimated using the EXP-IPT technique, which fits the attribute-level valuations for each individual to both the negative exponential function (EXP) and the log of the inverse power transformation function (IPT) (cf., Pennings and Smidts 2003). The former function is either fully concave or fully convex over the entire value function. The latter function is S-shaped.

Next, the *reference points* for both attributes were determined by asking participants to indicate what the rent and size of their current room is. To establish participants' *loss aversion* and *diminishing sensitivity*, we rely on the direct-rating data and employ the two-piece value function technique. Based on the self report reference points, we divide the value function into a gain and loss domain and estimate the EXP function separately for both domains. The *loss aversion* for an attribute is calculated by establishing the ratio of the slope of the value function in the loss domain and the slope of the gain domain. To establish the *diminishing sensitivity* concerning an attribute, we use the second derivative of the EXP function, calculate the relative change in valuation for each pair of independent variable levels, and determine the average diminishing sensitivity across domains.

Results

In line with H1, H2, and H3, we find significant relationships between the global importance of attributes and participants' reference points, loss aversion, and diminishing sensitivity. In line with H4, we find that the global importance of an attribute is highest (lowest) among participants with a convex (concave) value function. The global importance of those with an S-shaped value function falls in between. We find a significant relationship between participants' reference point and the local importance of both attributes, confirming H5. In line with H6, we find that the local importance of an attribute is highest (lowest) among participants with a convex (concave) value function for the attribute.

Finally, we examined the predictive validity of the global and local shape of value functions and find that the global and local shape of attribute-value functions predict choice up to 85.3% correctly.

Conclusions

We conclude that the shape of attribute-value functions relates to the importance of attributes, and as such drive judgment and choice behavior. Hence, measuring decision makers value functions for an attribute may yield more valid and reliable attribute-importance measures.

Why Not Buy the Leading Brand? A Preliminary Investigation of the Dynamics of Brand Choice

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BACKGROUND

In most markets there is an identified market leader and several market followers. It has been suggested in the recent literature that although this is sometimes merely a pioneer effect, it may also be a consumer effect (Rettie et al. 2002). If the leading brand does indeed have a compelling competitive advantage, the question arises of why *anybody* should bother buying the follower brand?

We will first construct a (SEM) research model of the consumer selection process, couched in terms of perceptions of hedonism, utilitarianism and price fairness. These three latent variables are developed below. Differences in the evaluations of purchasers of leading and following brands, which might explain why people do sometimes opt for what appears at first sight to be a sub-optimal purchase solution, are then explored.

Price Fairness, Utilitarian and Hedonistic Perceptions

Cost-benefit perceptions are colored by the preconceptions of consumers about what is fair in regard to the price demanded in a trade (Kamen and Toman 1970); thus price fairness could form a reasonable perceptual proxy for actual price in a purchasing situation. Two items are drawn from Monroe (1990) to indicate the "Price fairness" latent variable in the research model.

Utilitarian benefits are primarily instrumental, functional and cognitive (Chandon et al. 2000). Following Keller and Davey (2001), Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) this latent construct is indicated by perceived brand performance, quality and credibility.

Hedonism represents the emotional side of purchasing (Ruth 2001). Brand feelings, from Keller (1993) and Keller and Davey (2001), is the most "generic" aspect, and forms the first indicator variable for the latent construct. Symbolic imagery, the second indicator variable, is the emotion related to the socially visible icon used in the marketing of the service or product (Solomon 1983). Once the imagery evoked in a brand has been interpreted, a consumer will relate the image to his or her own life and infer either positive or negative emotional values to them. This aspect of hedonism, our third indicator variable, is referred to by Keller (1993) as usage imagery. Finally, "experiential" hedonism stems from prior experience with the brand (Keller 1993; Mathwick et al. 2001). Our structural model simply postulates that the three latent variables, Price fairness, Hedonic and Utilitarian perceptions of brand leads to brand satisfaction which, in turn, drives repeat purchase intention.

RESEARCH METHOD

A short questionnaire was designed, and used with 405 university student. Responses provide information about their actual brand choice, and their perceptions of the price fairness, utilitarian and hedonic features of the brand selected and the brands in the unselected category. Each of the observed variables is represented by a single 7-point Likert-type item using questions drawn from the established scales used in the literature discussed above.

The markets selected were jeans, sneakers, digital cameras and mobile telephones. Most of the information needed to categorize market leadership was available from public secondary data, and where there was doubt then markers were approached and consulted to confirm the brand shares.

RESULTS

For the model using data from those purchasing the leading brand, all the paths are significant, with Utilitarianism having the highest standardized estimate—of .85 as against .41 and .35 for Price fairness and Hedonistic perceptions respectively). The model fit statistics are satisfactory for exploratory work (RMR=.12; GFI=.88 and AGFI=.80).

For the follower brand data the results are similar. The model paths are significant, with Utilitarianism again having the strongest standardized estimate, of .84 as against .44 and .33 for Price fairness and Hedonistic perceptions. The model fit statistics are also satisfactory (RMR=.17; GFI=.90 and AGFI=.82).

Scales are then formed for each of the latent variables. All scale items contribute toward their respective scale and the Alpha's are adequate (Alpha_{Utilitarianism}=.76; Alpha_{Price fairness}=.78; Alpha_{Hedonism}=.75. Scale means are then calculated to allow comparison between the perceptions of purchasers of Leading and Following brands by t-test.

We first consider the case of the purchasers of Leading brands, and compare their perceptions of the Leading and Following brands with respect to the three new variables. There is no significant difference between their perceptions of Price fairness between brands. However, the perceptions of this group of both the Utility and Hedonism of Leading and Following brands are significantly different (Hedonism_{Leading}=5.56, Hedonism_{Following}=5.19, $t=2.38$, $p=.02$; Utilitarian_{Leading}=5.87, Utilitarian_{Following}=5.14, $t=4.06$, $p<.001$).

When we consider the perceptions of purchasers of Following brands, a different picture emerges. Although there is no perceived difference in Hedonism between the brands, both Price fairness and Utilitarianism are seen to be superior for the Following brand (Price fairness_{Leading}=4.15, Price fairness_{Following}=5.11, $t=4.49$, $p<.001$; Utilitarian_{Leading}=5.90, Utilitarian_{Following}=6.37, $t=4.06$, $p<.001$).

DISCUSSION

Fundamentally, the differences between purchasers of leading and following brands lie in the trade-off patterns. Leading brand buyers trade off hedonism and utilitarianism with relatively little regard to price; whereas purchasers of Follower brands trade off price against utilitarianism with comparatively little regard to hedonism. Purchasers of leading brands believe that they gain greater utilitarian and hedonistic benefits from the purchase of the leading, rather than following, brand. Their counterparts—those who purchase one of the second-tier brands—believe that they not only get a fairer price but also get superior utility from buying the second brand. For these consumers, then, the trade-off is about price and utilitarian benefits.

Consideration of these results leads marketers back to basics. Functionality remains paramount—poor quality or low functionality

¹This work was supported by Korea International Research Foundation Grant (KRF-2004-B00206).

will surely result in the loss of custom even for Leading brands. Nevertheless, it seems as if perceptions of hedonism attached to brands is a differentiating factor between Leader and Follower buyers, although satisfaction stems primarily from utilitarian benefits. While those buying leading brands have no problem paying a price premium, price seems unimportant as an element of satisfaction relative to hedonistic and functional benefits.

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Utility Blindness: Why Do We Fall For the Deal?

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Although often viewed as a suboptimal consequence of price competition by many academics and marketers (Chandon, Wansink and Laurent 2000), sales promotion is not readily to be replaced by other sales policies such as everyday-low-price. Over years consumers and retailers seem to have an unceasing interest towards products in a deal. However, the fundamental question in promotion research—why consumers respond to the deals, has always been a controversial one. Behavioral literature on promotions is generally focused on either consumer demographics, or economic benefits from the deal (Chandon, Wansink and Laurent 2000). The psychological process under consumers deal responses are often either neglected or oversimplified. The present research addresses consumers' response to promotion from the information perspective and explores its underlying cognitive process.

Classical economics theory stresses maximization of utility under the assumption that consumers are rational buyers who maximize the economic gains from a purchase transaction. Richard Thaler (1985) came up with the theory of acquisition-transaction utility that consumers evaluate transaction by total utility, which is the sum of acquisition utility (utility derived from the purchased good minus the price paid for the good) and transaction utility (internal reference price minus the purchase price). The idea that consumers base their purchase decision on total utility has been widely accepted and applied to marketing research, especially in the sales promotions area (e.g., Grewal, Monroe, and Krishnan 1998; Lichtenstein, Netemeyer, and Burton 1990).

However, in the real life consumers often seem to disobey the principle of total utility. As indicated by the phenomena that nearly everybody's house contains something we bought in a deal but seldom or never use, consumers might fall for an attractive deal even when the total utility from the purchase is negative. There could be many reasons accounting for such blindness to utility, including consumers' deal proneness, overestimation of their consumption, etc. However, deal proneness alone cannot fully explain why a consumer would buy worthless things when the total utility is zero or negative, but reject an unattractive deal even if it does no harm to the total purchase value (Simonson, Carmon and O'Curry 1994).

The present research tries to address consumers' response to promotion from an information processing perspective, as well as explore the underlying process for consumers' deal reactions. In this paper we propose the notion of utility blindness, which claims that under limited information processing, consumers would base their purchase decision solely on the perceived gains from the deal (i.e. transaction utility) rather than total utility. When the deal is attractive enough, people would buy products even when the total utility is little or negative; on the other hand, an unattractive deal would decrease people's purchase likelihood even when the total utility is not affected by the promotion.

Three lab studies are described to test the existence and underlying process of utility blindness. In the first study, utility blindness is showed to exist even in knowingly "rational" groups like PhD students of economic/business major. When the deal is attractive enough, they would fall for the deal despite that buying the product would lead to little or negative total utility.

In study 2 we not only identify the salience of transaction utility as a moderator of utility blindness, but also demonstrated two

sides of the coin: when people perceive positive transaction utility in a deal, they are willing to buy the product regardless the total utility; while when they perceive transaction disutility (negative transaction utility) in the deal, they are not likely to buy the product even though total utility remains the same.

In a third study, we demonstrate that utility blindness occurs when people process the deal information in a limited manner. Priming subjects with different information focus (focusing on either benefit only or both benefit and cost) in a preliminary task should change their information focus, hence the tendency to fall for utility blindness. Effect of utility blindness is moderated by cognitive load, since it impairs people's capability and resources in information processing. People are more likely to fall for utility blindness when they are under cognitive load and when the transaction utility is salient. Such blinding effect of a deal is in spite of individual differences in deal proneness, mood, involvement, pre-vention/promotion focus, risk attitude, and need-for-cognition.

Contributions, managerial implications, and limitations of the present research are summarized in the conclusion section. For future research utility blindness could be extended into bad-deal-good-product scenarios, other economic contexts (time, money and effort) and social relationship problems.

The Effect of Mindsets on Consumer Decision Strategies

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Purchase decisions often involve two steps. First, consumers tentatively decide whether or not they want to make a purchase, based on the options available and their immediate need for the type of product being considered. Then, if this process results in a positive decision, consumers decide which of the potential alternatives they prefer. This sequence of mental actions is represented as a purchasing procedure in memory. Generally, a procedure is composed of subgoals that are causally or temporarily related. Thus the attainment of each subgoal is a precondition for pursuing the one that follows it. Consequently, the consideration of any subgoal presupposes that the previous goal has been attained successfully.

We propose that consumers whose attention is called to the first subgoal of deciding whether to buy are likely to engage in the operations required to attain it and, if the decision is affirmative, they may proceed to the next subgoal in the sequence. However, if consumers are induced to consider a subgoal at a later stage (e.g., deciding which to buy), they will presumably employ routines to identify the most preferred alternative. However, they are unlikely to reconsider whether they want to make a purchase at all. Instead, they will assume that they have already decided to buy something. As a consequence, consumers are ultimately more likely to make a purchase in the second case than in the first one.

Further, we propose that in the second case, consumers may develop a “which to buy” mindset that will guide them to make a selection among the alternatives. In the mean time, however, this mindset may also prevent them from considering the preceding segment of the purchasing procedure (i.e., whether to buy). If consumers are asked to consider whether to make a purchase at all at the outset, they are likely to develop a “whether to buy” mindset. Once a mindset is activated, it will also persist to influence one’s reactions to subsequent activities. Specifically, we propose that consumers who develop a “which to buy” mindset in one situation will be more likely to consider which alternative activity is better in subsequent scenarios instead of considering whether or not they want to engage in the type of activities. If consumers develop a “whether to buy” mindset, however, they are more likely to consider whether they want to engage in the type of activities at all in response to the same subsequent scenarios. In addition, the same reasoning suggests that people who develop a mindset in one situation will exhibit a similar mindset in a later purchase situation. Therefore, consumers who have a “which to buy” mindset are more likely to make a purchase again in an unrelated situation.

Three studies examined these possibilities. The first study showed that participants who were primed to consider which computer they prefer at the outset (preference-first condition) were more likely to make a purchase than those who were primed to consider whether or not they would like to purchase one of the computers at the outset (whether-first condition). And this is true no matter the two alternatives have all unique features, have unique positive features and common negative features or have unique negative features and common positive features. In addition, the same effect was observed regardless of whether the no-purchase decision was revocable or irrevocable.

In the second study, we used two methods to infer the existence of a “which to buy” mindset. In one case, participants stated which computer they preferred, and in another case, they indicated which

computer they disliked more. In a third condition, they were asked to decide whether or not they would like to choose one of the computers. Participants in both the preference-first condition and the dislike-first condition evaluated the two computers more favorably than those in the third condition, and this was true regardless of whether the two computers had all unique features, unique positive and common negative features, or unique negative and common positive features. The assumption that participants in the first two conditions developed a “which to buy” mindset was further evident in the thoughts they generated in response to eight unrelated scenarios describing decision situations in daily life. That is, their thoughts pertained more often to which of two activities they prefer or dislike to engage in rather than whether to engage in either.

The third study showed that participants who were induced to consider which computer they prefer in the first situation were more likely to choose one of two vacation spots in a subsequent situation (rather than deferring decision). Both the two computers and the two vacation spots had unique positive attributes and unique negative attributes. Thus the different purchase rates we observed in this study are consistent with our hypotheses but cannot easily be addressed by earlier theories of choice deferral (e.g., Dhar and Nowlis 2004; Dhar, Huber and Khan forthcoming).

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“Confidentially Yours”: Restricting Information Flow Between Trustees Enhances Trust-Dependent Transactions

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In marketing and social networking it often happens that an agent would like to build relationships with a multitude of other agents under resource constraints. For example, a firm may give discounts to a portion of customers to cultivate loyalty, but it cannot do too much of that to too many customers at the peril of profit margins. Moreover, discounts or other forms of relationship building gestures do not guarantee future benefits; much depends on the reciprocating propensity of the receiving agents.

Another important factor that potentially influences such strategizing is whether the receiving agents are allowed to communicate with each other about how much benefit they have received. The extent of information flow between receiving agents varies from case to case. In some types of buyer-supplier contracting, for example, the transacting parties are bound by the contract terms not to disclose deal information to third parties.

Our main objective in this paper is to study how restricted information flow influences the amount and distribution of resources put into relationship building. We attempt to abstract the relationship building aspects of the above mentioned scenarios into one involving a trusting agent and a number of potentially reciprocating agents, and study it through an extension of the well-known trust game or investment game in experimental economics. We investigate how restricting information flow between trustees can enhance trust and reciprocity in trust-dependent transactions through extending the traditional one-to-one trust game to settings involving $N > 1$ trustees. We consider: (a) investor's strategy in deploying investments, and (b) trustees' responding behavior, under conditions that vary in two parameters—the value of N and, more importantly, an information condition relating to whether a trustee only knows the amount received by her or whether every trustee knows the investment received by every other trustee.

We propose that, if the investor considers the problem based on a simplified, “baseline” model of expected trustee reciprocity, the optimal strategy of a risk neutral investor is one with which positive investment packages at no more than two different levels are sent out to some—but not necessarily all—of the trustees, while the remaining trustee(s) receive nothing (a set of investment packages has one level if all the packages are of the same amount, two levels if all the packages are of either one of two different amounts, and similarly for higher levels). We then investigate the effect of non-baseline concerns including investor risk aversion and, under the unconstrained information condition, (a) effects on reciprocity induced by uneven distribution of investments, (b) free-riding of the moral obligation to reciprocate, and (c) distributional fairness. In our theoretical development, we argue that the basic characteristics of the investor's optimal strategy in the baseline model would be preserved even if these additional concerns are included under the constrained information condition. Under the unconstrained information condition, our theoretical conclusion is that the investor's optimal strategy would include up to only one positive investment level, rather than two in the constrained information condition. Moreover, total investment would decrease when information flow is unconstrained, compared to when it is constrained.

We then report two experiments designed to investigate investor strategy and trustee behavior. In Experiment 1, we focus on investor behavior. Subjects were randomly divided into investors and trustees (neutral terms were used in the instructions). The

investor had an endowment of HK\$50 (1US\$=HK\$7.8) in each played game, while the trustees had no endowment. Any investment of the investor was tripled when it reached the trustee. The strategy method was used on the investors' side. That is, each investor was asked to decide how to invest in seven games varying in information condition and number of trustees; at the end, only one of those games was actually played with randomly and anonymously matched trustee(s). Within-subject analysis of the data lends support to all our investor hypotheses. Total invested amount increases and investment portfolio exhibits a greater variety (i.e. more levels of investment) when information flow between trustees is restricted, compared to when it is not so. We also observe, as predicted, that the number of trustees receiving positive investments does not change across information conditions; the increase in total investment is predominantly driven by an increase in average investment among trustees who receive positive investments.

Experiment 2 was designed to test trustees' behavior—in particular to try to isolate evidence of reaction to unfairness and moral obligation free-riding. Again, subjects were randomly assigned to be investors or trustees such that each investor was matched randomly and anonymously with two trustees. Both investors and trustees were presented with a menu of six investment patterns for the $N=1$ game and 12 investment patterns for the $N=2$ game with full information condition. The players' endowments and the general rules of the games were as in Experiment 1. Each trustee was then asked to decide, for each investment pattern, how much to reciprocate (if at all) if that investment pattern was chosen by the investor to be actually played. Within-subject analysis of the trustees' stated reciprocated amounts supports our conjectures regarding trustee behavior and considerations. Fundamentally, it shows that, in the full information condition, a trustee's reciprocating behavior is dependent not only on her received amount but also on the other trustee's received amount. The data are also consistent with our hypotheses about trustees' reaction to non-uniform investment distribution and moral obligation free-riding, although reaction to increased overall generosity may have weakened some of the predicted effects. In particular, we find evidence that a trustee's propensity to reciprocate in the full information condition can be undermined in the face of any unfair distribution of investments, including when the trustee him/herself is receiving more than the others—a significant example of scenarios in which being treated preferentially does not necessarily lead to better “performance” in return.

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The Effect of Superstitious Beliefs on Consumer Judgments

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Despite their large impact on the marketplace, we currently know very little about how superstitious beliefs influence purchase likelihood ratings and consumer satisfaction. In a series of studies, we show that consumers are less (more) satisfied with products following product failure for which they hold positive (negative) superstitious associations. Furthermore, we demonstrate that consumers are more (less) likely to purchase products with prices for which they have positive (negative) superstitious associations, even compared to the identical product priced lower (higher). These effects are limited to Asian consumers for whom the superstitious associations with the particular colors and numbers exist.

While academic research has recognized the importance of various elements of the social and cultural environments in marketing (e.g., values, Han and Shavitt 1994; goals, Aaker and Lee 2001; or language, Luna and Peracchio 2005), individuals' superstitious beliefs and their impact on consumer behavior have received very little attention. This lack of investigation into superstitious beliefs is all the more surprising given its strong impact on the marketplace. For example, between \$800 and \$900 million is lost in business in the United States each Friday the 13th because people do not want to go to work or tend to business in general that day. Additionally, an increasing number of U.S. companies are adopting the principles of feng shui, often hiring feng shui experts who apply these superstitious Chinese practices to offices in such esteemed companies as Smith Barney and Morgan Stanley (Tsang 2004).

However, we currently know very little about how superstitious beliefs (e.g., Vyse 1997) affect consumer behavior, and the current paper seeks to address this shortcoming. Over a series of studies, we explore how positive and negative superstitious beliefs influence purchase likelihood ratings and consumer satisfaction. Specifically, individuals often rely on superstition or superstitious rituals in the hope that these behaviors will help them perform better. Analogously, we expect that superstitious associations with product attributes will also influence expected product performance, and, importantly as investigated in this research, consumers' satisfaction following product failure. For example, Ang (1997) finds that quality expectations are greater for products with brand names for which consumers hold positive superstitious associations. Differences in expectations, in turn, are likely to influence how satisfied consumers will be (Oliver 1980; Oliver and Bearden 1985). Accordingly, we suggest that consumers are likely to be less (more) satisfied with a product for which they hold positive (negative) superstitious beliefs following product failure.

In Study 1a, we test if Taiwanese consumers would be less satisfied following the failure of a product for which positive superstitious associations with its color exist. In particular, we show that participants expect to be less satisfied with a red (positive superstitious beliefs) versus green (neutral) rice cooker following product failure. Next, in Study 1b, we generalize the previous findings from positive superstitious associations to negative superstitious associations, and to a new attribute (price). We show that Taiwanese participants are more satisfied with a failed product priced at TW\$ 6,444.44 than the same product priced at TW\$ 6,555.55.

While the first two studies demonstrate the effect of superstitious beliefs on satisfaction, the next two studies address the

question of whether superstitious beliefs will actually influence how likely consumers are to purchase a product. In particular, Study 1c test if participants are more likely to purchase a product with which they have positive superstitious associations, as compared to higher-priced product with which they do not. As expected we show that purchase likelihood for a portable radio is greater when it is priced at a "lucky" TW\$ 888 than at a "neutral" TW\$ 777. Next, Study 1d generalizes the previous findings from positive superstitious associations to negative superstitious associations and demonstrates that participants are less likely to purchase a product priced at an "unlucky" TW\$ 6,444.44 than the same product priced more expensively at a "neutral" TW\$ 6,555.55.

Study 2 tests and rules out an alternative explanation for these results that suggests that participants may have formed quality associations, expecting the higher priced radio or digital camera to be of better quality, which in turn may be reflected in the higher purchase likelihood. Eliminating the potential confound of price/quality inferences, we next investigate superstitious beliefs concerning numbers by manipulating the quantity of a product sold in a set. Additionally, Study 2 investigates the cultural basis of superstitious beliefs by including both Taiwanese and US participants. That is, if the findings we have obtained are based on culturally shared superstitious beliefs as we hypothesize, then we should replicate our previous results with the Taiwanese participants, but not with the US participants whose culture does not include these superstitions.

Providing evidence for the robustness of the effect of superstitious beliefs on satisfaction, Study 2 shows that following product failure, Taiwanese consumers expect to be significantly less satisfied with products that contain an attribute (i.e., the number in the set) with which they have positive superstitious associations, as compared to products that do not. However, confirming the culture-bound nature of superstitious beliefs, this effect is only obtained for Taiwanese consumers for whom the number 8 is associated with good luck. Additionally, we once again show that superstitious beliefs also affect purchase intentions. In particular, we find that superstitious associations with the number 8 led Taiwanese participants to indicate greater purchase likelihood for a set that contained fewer tennis balls, while the reverse was found for the US participants for whom superstitious associations with the number 8 do not exist.

Our studies thus demonstrate a robust effect of superstitious beliefs on Chinese consumers' behavior, including instances when superstitious beliefs cause consumers to make purchase decisions that run counter to economic rationality. That is, Taiwanese consumers are more likely purchase a product at the higher "lucky" price, are less likely to purchase a product with a lower "unlucky" price, and are more likely to purchase the "lucky" product with fewer units contained in the package. In contrast, the US consumers, for whom no such superstitions exist, adhered to the more rational choice paradigm.

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Ambivalent Relationships and Projection onto Indexical Objects

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ABSTRACT

It is well-established in consumer culture theory that an object's meaning often resides in its ability to represent or trigger memories of others or relationships with others. The context of familial intergenerational transfers of gifts and heirlooms has been a particularly fertile area for investigating this phenomenon. This article draws on the findings from a study of heirlooms. It merges insights from the semiotic perspective of objects representing others with a projection perspective where consumers project their ambivalence about relationships with others onto their relationships with the objects that index those others.

INTRODUCTION

In this article, we focus on the projection of ambivalent feelings regarding relationships onto objects which index those relationships. We discuss the importance of the construct of projection in making sense of this behavior. This behavior is most pronounced when the feelings are negative and possibly even socially unacceptable. Three examples are drawn from a study of intergenerational transfers to illustrate this phenomenon. In our data, consumers act out their ambivalence about significant relationships with objects that index those relationships.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ambivalence

Levy's work demonstrates his "...preoccupation with the inherent ambivalence that characterizes and energizes our cognitive and emotional lives." In "Stalking the Amphisbaena," (1996/1999) he chooses the mythological creature with a head at both ends to symbolize that ambivalence. We recognized the ambivalence toward familial relations evident in our data and corresponding acting out behaviors directed toward indexical objects. As we reviewed the consumer behavior literature to glean an understanding of this behavior, we were able to build several models of signification to help us understand the relationships between the consumer, objects, the origin of the objects, and groups. Finally, we turned to the projection literature to better understand the acting out behavior that we saw emerging as a result of consumer ambivalence.

Objects Represent Others

Consumers often have special possessions that represent other people in their lives. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) find that, when asked to name their favorite things, many people identify photographs, heirlooms or other such objects because they remind the owner of a loved one. Belk (1988) mentions heirlooms repeatedly in his discussion of the extended self, and adds "the acquisition of possessions of another person that have been intimately associated with that person" (p. 151) to Goffman's (1971) list of "six modes of interpersonal contamination." Wallendorf and Arnould (1988) find that favorite possessions reinforce social relationships, often through their ability to stimulate memories of others. In Grayson and Shulman's (2000) discussion of "irreplaceable possessions," (p. 17), they apply Peirce's semiotic model ([1897] 1940, pp. 98-101) and focus on the "indexical" function of

irreplaceable possessions. They conclude that "irreplaceable special possessions are indices because they have a "real, factual, and spatial" connection with the special events and people they represent" (p. 19).

This literature invokes five elements (see figure 1). The first element of the model is the object. The second element is the origin of the meaning of the object. This origin is most often a person, but it can also be an event or a place. The third element is the contamination process by which the object's meaning is individualized through association with the origin. The fourth element is the consumer. The fifth element is the indexical relationship between the consumer and the object. Our interest is in the consumer's relationship with the object and with the origin. We are not concerned here with issues such as ownership status.

Objects Represent Relationships with Others

A more complex view of the semiotic process focuses on relationships. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) found that many people, termed "warm," value possessions because of the relationships those objects represent. In the consumer behavior literature, Wallendorf & Arnould (1988) established that objects can also represent our relationships with others ("social linkage"). Richins (1994a) found that when informants were asked to think of a possession that was important to them, at least sixteen percent discussed "sentimental objects representing interpersonal ties (e.g., gifts, photos album, family heirlooms)" being outnumbered only by "assets (e.g. house, property, money)" and transportation as the most commonly reported type of valued possessions (p. 509). In Richins' piece on materialism (1994b), content analysis of special possessions yielded the dimension "representation of interpersonal ties" with sub-categories of "symbolic ties to others, gifts, and symbols of family history" (p. 527). Curasi, Price and Arnould (2004) discuss keepsakes as "indexical symbols, items with an evidentiary function, able to serve as a testament to important life events (Grayson and Shulman 2000), of immediate descendants' relationships with their deceased kinsfolk (Belk 1990), and provide vehicles for creating, shaping, and sustaining memories (Finch and Mason 2000)" (p. 610). The relationship model becomes a bit more complex (see figure 2). There is a relationship between the origin and the consumer, the origin contaminates and individualizes the object, and the object then serves the consumer as an index of his or her relationship with the origin.

Objects as Iconic Representations of Group Membership

In their study of intergenerational transfers within kin groups, Curasi, Price, and Arnold (2004, p. 619) differentiate between "the corporal indexical associations of irreplaceable individual cherished objects or keepsakes" and "inalienable wealth [which] is not an interpersonal, indexical symbol, as are keepsakes, but rather, in Pierce's terms, an iconic one." They go on to explain that "[a]lthough inalienable possessions lack the corporal indexical associations of irreplaceable individual cherished objects or keepsakes, they retain evidentiary associations that make them irreplaceable." Thus, for inalienable familial wealth, the relationship between the consumer and the origin is not necessary. The origin individualizes and contaminates the object. The object becomes an iconic representation for the group. The consumer's relationship with the object then serves as an index for their relationship with the group (see figure 3).

¹We thank Sidney Levy for comments on an earlier draft.

FIGURE 1
OBJECT INDEXES ORIGIN

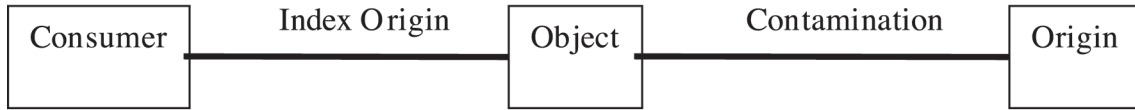


FIGURE 2
OBJECT INDEXES RELATIONSHIP WITH ORIGIN

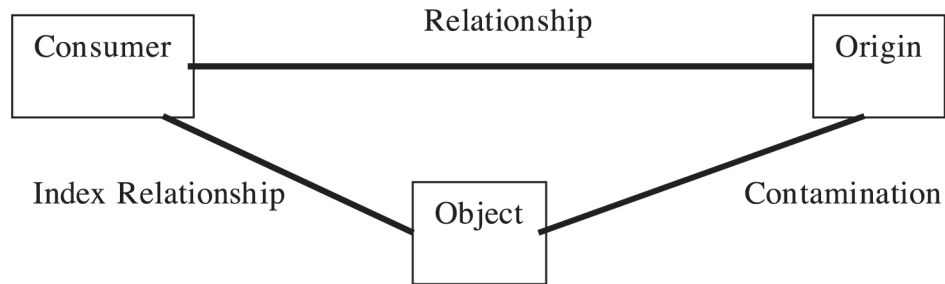
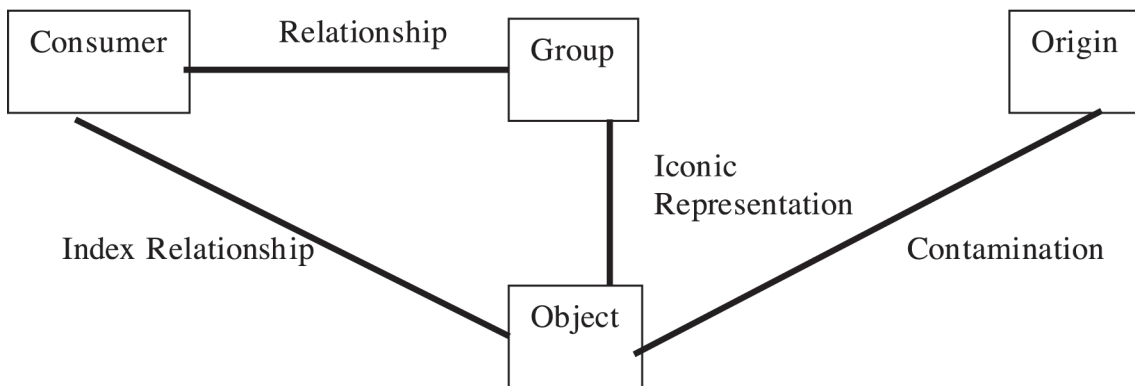


FIGURE 3
OBJECT INDEXES RELATIONSHIP WITH GROUP



Object Relations: Conceptual Grounding

Kleine, Kleine, and Allen (1995) studied “person-possession relationships” (p. 327) from the perspective of the self. They point out that one “archetypal theme” in the development of the self is “affiliation versus autonomy seeking.” “Affiliation seeking is apparent when possessions reflect connections with others, with one’s heritage or tradition, or with occasions spent with important others or reflect being in touch with or cared for by others” (p. 328). Again, semiotically, this is viewed as indexicality (Grayson and Shulman

2000). Kleine, Kleine and Allen go on to explicate the importance of consumers feeling that an object is “me” or “not me” in determining their attachment to the object. The “me-not me” distinction was previously mentioned by Levy (1963/1999) in his discussion of symbolism and lifestyle.

Fournier (1998) and Ahuvia (2005) establish brands as worthy of relationships and objects as worthy of love (respectively). Fournier points out that brands can become “animated, humanized, or somehow personalized” and that this is one way to “legitimize

the brand-as-partner.” That is, she first establishes that a brand can represent an “other,” and then argues that this representation makes the brand a legitimate relationship partner. She identifies three processes of animism. The relevant process for our study of ambivalence and indexical objects is when “these brands can become so strongly associated with the past-other that the person’s spirit comes to dwell in the brand and is evoked reliably with each use” (“[a] brand of air freshener that grandmother kept in her bathroom, a floor cleaner that an ex-husband always used”) (p. 345). Again, this represents indexicality. Ahuvia (2005) establishes a person’s ability to “love” an object, a term that is in a more limited sense reserved for living things. He concludes that love objects can “serve as indexical mementos of key events or relationships in the life narrative” (p. 179).

Neither Fournier’s or Ahuvia’s informants articulate the ability of an object to be equivalent to a person (instead of indexing one) and to therefore be an appropriate relationship partner as the following informant does:

“This [painting] is my great, great grandfather. I’ve had it since childhood. It’s more than just a portrait—it’s a person!” (Rochbert-Halton 1984, p. 171), as quoted in Belk 1988, p.149).

One could argue that for this informant, the object has moved beyond indexicality to iconic representation in which the object serves as more than a referent but as a veritable illustration or representation of the person (Grayson and Shulman 2000) or the relationship.

Object Relations: Behavior

The literature on the disposition of special possessions (Lastovicka and Fernandez 2005; Price, Arnould, and Curasi 2000), and on the creation of families’ inalienable wealth from individuals’ cherished possessions (Curasi, Price, and Arnold 2004) observe how a consumer’s relationship with an object impacts his or her behavior toward it.

Price Arnold & Curasi (2000) examine “older consumers’ disposition of special possessions” and determine that these possessions had meaning as “narrative mnemonic life tokens,” “totems (totemic symbols of skills and competence),” or “emblems of kinship structure” (p. 187). Notably they do link relationships with the object to disposition behaviors. However, they are examining a donor-object-recipient relationship from the perspective of the donor. We examine the behavior toward the indexical object from the recipient’s perspective.

More relevant to our interest in ambivalent relationships and indexical objects is the Lastovicka and Ferandez study on how “interpersonal relationships influence product disposition” (2005, p. 814). It builds on Kleine, Kleine and Allen’s (1995) work and examines how informants dispose of objects that have a negative valence and are either “never me” or are “extensions of a past-undesired self” (2005, p. 815). Similarly, Grayson and Shulman (2000) refer to a “negative case analysis” where “an indexical possession might be devalued (such as its representation of a disliked parent...)” (p.21). It is this sort of negative affect and socially undesirable feeling that encourages consumers to project their consumer-origin or consumer-group relationship onto the consumer-indexical object relationship.

Karen, one of Fournier’s (1996, rev. 1997) “brand-person relationship” informants, provides an example of how consumer *behavior* toward an indexical object can mirror feelings toward the origin. “Well, we were using the Hellman’s because that was the brand Jim [ex-husband] wanted. He hated the Miracle Whip...I

didn’t care much but now that I am alone, we’re back with the Miracle Whip. No more Hellman’s” (p. 15). Curasi, Price, and Arnould (2004) also discuss the behaviors surrounding inalienable wealth as “kratophony” when “caretakers are likely to encase objects in protected environments, subject them to ritual use, and limit who handles them” (p. 617). They mention display, careful packing, and storage. They also discuss the “failure of transmission” (p. 615) and the “stories of objects that should have been but were not kept” (p. 618) that indicate ambivalence.

Projection

Rook (2006) presents an excellent review of the use of projective techniques in marketing. Rook reports that the use of projective techniques in market and consumer behavior research declined dramatically in the 1970’s, but is now enjoying renewed interest. The seminal piece that renewed interest was Sidney Levy’s “Dreams, Fairly Tales, Animals, and Cars” (1985/1999). As Rook points out (p. 5), the use of projective techniques has been carried on mostly by a set of researchers who have been affiliated with Levy and the Marketing Department at Northwestern University at some point in their career (Rook 1988; Heisley and Levy 1991/1999; McGrath, Sherry and Levy 1993/1999; Belk, Ger and Askegaard 1997; Zaltman 1997).

Our data is not about projective techniques, but “projection” done by people in their symbolic life among objects and other people. Our informants use objects that index others or their relationship with others to act out their ambivalent feelings toward those people and/or relationships. The interpretation of the data requires an understanding of the psychological process of projection. Freud (1950) describes projection as a process that occurs in mentally normal persons; “The projection outwards of internal perceptions is a primitive mechanism” (p. 64). Internal perceptions (senses, emotion, cognitions), of which the person may not be even aware, are “ejected ... into the external world, and thus detached from them and pushed on to [something] else” (p. 62). Projection, in which the person is unconscious of the internal perceptions that have been projected to the external world, is more likely to occur when such projection would result in a relief of conflict (p. 92). This serves as a defense function, in which negative or conflict-laden emotion is “displaced” onto an object (p. 61). However, Freud maintains, projection “also occurs when there is no conflict” (p. 64).

Projection is a psychological process that has been much studied. As a general phenomenon it involves the transference or displacement of internal or “primary” emotions and cognitions onto secondary objects such as other people, experiences, and physical objects. Derived from psychodynamic study, the concept helps to explicate various behavioral processes of externalization. Harold Lasswell applied psychoanalytic theory to political processes, and referred to the displacement of private affects onto public objects in the political sphere (Baas 1979).

Projection serves to reduce conflict (ambivalence) that is often unconscious so that one tends to assert one response or the other, often denying negative feelings, saying one thing and doing another. Some forms of projection are called “acting out,” to indicate that the behavior is responding unreasonably to situations or objects in expression of inner needs. It was the resonance between our informants’ ambivalence in their relationships and their acting out toward the objects that indexed those relationships that in turn led us to the concept of projection.

METHODOLOGY

Nineteen in-depth interviews were conducted by trained graduate students at a major West Coast business school. The interviews lasted from 30 minutes to 2 hours in length. The interviews were

transcribed verbatim, resulting in hundreds of pages of data. Interviewers and researchers completed bracketing exercises and kept journal notes. All informants discussed the intergenerational transfers they had received. Nine of the informants had also been donors of intergenerational transfers. The sample consisted of 13 women and 6 men. The informants ranged from working class to upper-middle class. Informants were from twenty to eighty years old, represented all marital statuses, and were of Judeo-Christian background (including Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant). They represented different family structures, including families with adoptions, stepchildren, various ages of biological children, and childless adults. Sometimes we interviewed multiple informants from the same family. Data was thickly coded. In this article we highlight three instances of ambivalence, projection, and acting out from the 18 interviews.

THREE ILLUSTRATIONS

Similar to Mick and Buhl (1992), Fournier (1996 rev. 1997, 1998) and Ahuvia (2005), we will draw on three particular case studies to illustrate ambivalence, projection, and acting out.

Michael's Crystal

Michael goes to great lengths to save objects that were from his father, much as he tried to salvage his relationship with his estranged father. Mindy described some "heirlooms" that her husband, Michael, bought at the estate sale conducted when his absentee father died. Of particular concern to Mindy are the crystal glasses that have broken but with which Michael refuses to part. Mindy offers her own interpretation of the meaning behind Michael's fanaticism about keeping the broken crystal:

Mindy: "Also...I wanted to get on tape that heirlooms count extra in these 'dysfunctional' families. They don't have love. He [husband, Michael] is very sensitive about his heirlooms. He bought some [of the heirlooms] from the estate...so they would still be in the family.

[Some of the stuff was moved] from garage to garage, and the stuff was not wrapped correctly. We came across some broken crystal; the wine glasses' stems were broken. Then when we unpacked the stuff, he says 'this stuff can be fixed' and I looked at him, [and said] 'this cannot be fixed.' I have to tell you, I am super sensitive, but some of this cannot be fixed. [He told me,] 'I cannot throw this out; you will have to throw this out.' These were not glasses to him; it was like throwing out love.

Having no heirlooms I do not understand this, but I do know that his father was not around in his life. His father left when he was five. Never sent him a birthday card, and then when Michael was 20 he went to search for his father, he found him up in L.A. and he made a relationship with his father and his father's wife Joyce. He forged this relationship. But from ages 5 and up, I mean, we are talking no father, no nurture.

I guess the crystal means a lot more than broken glass. He couldn't throw it out; I had to throw it out. Some of it we saved [because] he thinks it still can be fixed, [it only has] tiny cracks. He says somebody can file the glass down. I don't know, eventually he will want it. He loves using stuff from his father and from his father's father."

Michael's father had abandoned Michael at a young age. Upon his father's death, Michael bought the crystal glasses to keep them

from leaving the family, much as he had tried to keep his father in the family. Even when the crystal breaks, much like the family was broken; Michael tries to save it, just as he tried to forge a relationship with his father. Others may not see much use for the box of broken glasses, just as some people might not have thought his father could be of much use to the family after having abandoned Michael. Michael holds hope that the glass can be fixed, just as he held hope that he could fix the relationship with his father, a relationship he worked hard to "forge." Michael is maintaining his relationship with his father through his hope about the broken glass. This example demonstrates the recipient's relationship with the object (Michael tried to save the crystal) as a projection of the recipient's ambivalent feelings about his relationship with the donor (Michael tried to "forge" a relationship with his father).

Sarah's Bracelet

Perhaps the most powerful instances of projection occurred when informants described negative actions and/or attitudes toward heirlooms that mirrored, though not necessarily consciously, relationships with the donors or recipients. They were often able to verbalize feelings about the relationships with the objects (representing the donors) that they might not have been willing or able to talk about if directly asked about the relationship with the donors.

One's relationship with heirlooms can reflect the anger, pain and disappointment that people experience in their families. For example, Sarah, an upwardly mobile MBA student, was resentful of her parents' working class background and their discomfort around nicer things. Sarah's mother kept her heirlooms (beautiful possessions that fit poorly in the working class existence) stored away in a box and, according to Sarah, had "no appreciation whatsoever for beautiful objects or objects of value. Like she doesn't care. She'd prefer that they didn't exist around her." Sarah is an upwardly-mobile, successful career woman. She aspires to those finer things around which her mother felt discomfort.

Striking projection occurs with Sarah's story about a bracelet she had been given from her family. Sarah is separated from her family by social class and through emotional distance. This distance is reflected in Sarah's actions toward an intergenerational transfer:

Sarah: "Although I don't consider it an heirloom, I did lose a really beautiful silver bracelet that had been my grandmother's or my great-grandmother's, I'm not really sure whose it was to begin with. But it was really, really pretty, and I wore it all the time and I thought it was so awesome, like totally, I *always* had it on. And when I was in Paris, it fell off. And you know what's really bizarre? This is really weird. I sort of knew that I had dropped it, I kind of felt it falling off, but I didn't stop for some reason. Like I'd look at my wrist, and in the back of my mind have the sense that I was losing my bracelet. Anyhow, it fell off. I never saw it again..."

"How did I feel? I felt like, 'Shit, I should have...' I felt like, three hours later, 'Oh my God, I really did lose it back there.' I thought that was really stupid that I sort of sensed that I was losing it and didn't stop to see if it was on my wrist or not. So mostly I felt dumb and stupid because I lost it."

Sarah was at a point in her life when she was trying to maintain a connection to her family while simultaneously distancing herself from her working class background. She is shamed by her family's class membership. As she is engaging in travel in Paris, a behavior that will contribute to her continued growth away from her working

class origin, her heirloom bracelet slips off of her wrist. She knows what is happening, just as she knows that her growth away from her family is happening, and she continues to walk down the streets of Paris, while her family literally slips away from her. Sarah's behavior reflects her ambivalence toward the family that the object represents. We note that Sarah explicitly states that she does not consider this bracelet to have been an heirloom, and that Sarah claims to be unclear about the object's history or origin. At a deeper level, Sarah's story about the bracelet allows her to express regret about her loss, but does not set her up for social disapproval for her actions. She would not be able to easily tell the same story about how she did not "look back" while allowing the distance with her family to build. Her relationship with the bracelet serves not only as a mirror of her relationship with her family, but as a vehicle to express emotion, such as regret, in a socially acceptable manner.

Deloris' Victrola

Deloris provided another example of how informants' relationships with objects reflect their familial disappointment. Deloris was adopted as a baby, but grew up to know her birth mother and her biological sisters, who had been raised by her biological parents. Deloris received only one object from her biological mother, a "tiny Victrola" that had "old fashioned, tiny records." Her behavior toward that object resonates with her relationship with her biological mother:

Deloris: "I sold it [loud squawk]. I wanted to lie to you and say I still had it, but I couldn't. I sold it, and it broke my heart afterwards."

Brent: "Why did you sell it? You just didn't feel you had any use for it?"

Deloris: "Well, at the time... I had it in one of the garages and we had a garage sale, and someone, a fellow said, 'Did you have any old things?' And I said, 'Oh well, come back to this old garage I have in the back.' And so he saw that and offered me some money, and I said okay. Never again, mm-mm. I really feel bad about that."

Brent: "And why do you feel bad about it?"

Deloris: "'Cause it's cute and it's antique and you'll never see another one like that. That was gorgeous. I must've been out of my mind when he wanted to buy it. I said okay. But I had so many things around; I wanted to get rid of things. And that's what happened."

Similarities between Deloris, the Victrola, and her adoptive experience are striking. The Victrola did not fit well into Deloris' life at the time (she had put it in storage). She transferred the object to a stranger. She felt remorse afterwards; she even wanted to "lie" about it and exclaimed "it broke my heart afterwards." Yet, she then distances herself from the object, as the adoption separated Doris from her birth mother. When asked why she feels bad it is because "it's cute" and "you'll never see another one like it. That was gorgeous." These adjectives sound like descriptions of a baby. We also note that Doris focuses on the attributes of the object and does not express remorse that she has lost a symbolic connection to her birth mother. The Victrola was the only object that Deloris received from her birth mother, yet she sold it from her garage to a stranger.

Deloris may be acting out her unresolved feelings of anger and abandonment toward her birth mother with the Victrola. Just as Doris had kept and treasured other objects as heirlooms from other people, her birth mother had kept and raised other children. As with Sarah's bracelet, the Victrola might have provided Doris with a means to express her emotion toward her birth mother's actions, the ability to give away something from her birth mother just as her

birth mother had given her away. It might be socially awkward for Doris to talk about these feelings about her mother and the adoption, but the possession provides the vehicle for her to tell her story.

Deloris' behavior with regard to the Victrola reflects the permanent status of her relationship with her biological mother. Sarah's rejection of her family as she moves socially upward may be temporary—once she becomes comfortable and accepted in her new social position, she may find a way to resolve her current discomfort with her family's position and re-establish ties.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The genesis of this article is the recognition of our informants' ambivalence toward certain relationships in their lives and the way this ambivalence manifests in acting out on objects that represent that relationship. This realization turns us toward the literature in consumer behavior on the meaning of goods, particularly where the object's meaning draws on relationships between consumers. Our data is drawn from our study of intergenerational transfers. The literature on symbolism and the meaning of things (Levy 1963/1999; Levy 1985/1999; Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly, and Rochberg-Halton 1981), favorite things (Wallendorf and Arnould 1988), special possessions (Price, Arnould, and Curasi 2000; Richins 1994b), irreplaceable possessions (Grayson and Shulman 2000), cherished possessions (Curasi, Price, and Arnould 2004), meaningful possessions (Lastovicka and Fernandez 2005), loved objects (Ahuvia 2005), and possession attachment (Kleine, Kleine, and Allen) is gleaned for insights. Much of this literature refers to objects that are intergenerational transfers within a kinship structure. We construct three models that represent the literature with regard to the relationship that can develop between a consumer, an object, and others, and the creation of meaning within that relationship structure.

We settle on the semiotic concept of the indexical object as a rich explanation of the relationship we observe between our informants and the objects they discuss in the interviews (Shulman and Grayson 2000). The contamination concept explains the individuation of the object by our informants' kin (Belk 1988). In order to understand the ambivalence that we observed in our informants' relationships with their kin and their concurrent acting out on the objects that index those kin, we turn toward the ambivalence (Levy 1996/1999) and projection (Rook 1988) literature. Finally, we take the reader through three case study examples of projection and acting out by the informants.

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The Spyglass Self: A Model of Vicarious Self-perception

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT:

How do we as consumers come to know who we are, and how does that influence how we act? Over a hundred years ago, Cooley (1902) described reflected appraisals—how people come to define themselves by observing how others appraise and respond to them—as the *looking-glass self*. We propose that consumers come to know who they are not only through a looking glass, but through a spyglass as well. That is, in addition to defining themselves by registering how others respond to them, we propose that observers can also define themselves by examining how psychologically close others respond—not to them, but rather to circumstances relevant to the observers' self-concepts.

In light of self-perception theory (Bem 1967), which posits that we infer our own attitudes and attributes from observing our own behaviors, and research demonstrating that individuals' self-concepts often expand to include close others, we suggest that when observing a behavior carried out by a close other, the attributes individuals infer from that person's behavior should carry over to inferences about *their own* attributes—almost as if they had observed themselves performing that behavior. This change in self-perception should drive these individuals to behave consistently with these new attributes, often leading them to conform to the originally observed behavior.

In this study, we propose and test a model of these vicarious self-perception processes and examine implications for behavioral conformity. According to the model, observers will internalize the attributes demonstrated in the actor's behaviors to the extent that the observer feels a sense of shared identity with the actor. In addition, self-perception changes on the part of the observer should only occur if the actor's behavior appears to be free of powerful situational forces—that is, changes should occur when observers have reason to make dispositional rather than situational attributions for the actor's behavior.

To test the central hypotheses of this model, participants read the transcript of a purported interview in which the interviewee helped give directions to a stranger who was lost. Before reading the transcript, half of the participants were informed that their and the interviewee's brainwaves greatly overlapped, creating a sense of merged identity; the other half were given no brainwave feedback. In addition, half of the participants learned that the interviewee helped because he or she was paid to do so (a powerful external controlling force for the behavior), whereas the other half of the participants did not learn this information. After filling out questionnaires assessing their perceptions of their own attributes, participants were asked if they would be willing to help the researchers by completing additional surveys.

Consistent with the proposed model, participants were more likely to help the researchers only when they shared a merged identity with the interviewee and only when they were led to make a dispositional inference for the interviewee's behavior. Moreover, the increase in these participants' prosocial behavior was fully mediated by changes in participants' self-perceptions relevant to the originally observed behavior (e.g., self-perceived generosity). The data also rule out potential alternative explanations such as modeling or associative priming.

This study also demonstrates the relative context-independence of vicarious self-perception by showing the predicted effects

despite the fact that there was little connection between the details surrounding the originally observed behavior (giving directions and guidance to a "lost" foreigner) and the details surrounding the helping dependent measure that we employed (aiding the researcher collect additional data). As Freedman and Fraser (1966) demonstrated in their investigation of the foot-in-the-door technique, participants need not see a clear connection between the content of the first request and the second. If changes in self-perceived attributes are driving these increases in prosocial behavior—which they appear to be—then the similarity of the details between the two requests are not of paramount importance; instead, what is critical is simply that the changes in self-perception following the first behavior are relevant to the attributes necessary to engage in the second.

One implication of these findings is that influence agents could potentially make use of vicarious self-perception processes in what could be considered the "vicarious-foot-in-the-door technique." In utilizing such a strategy, an influence agent attempting to secure a target consumer's compliance to a sizeable request could, in the presence of the target, make a smaller, seemingly unrelated request of someone with whom the target feels close. After securing compliance from the close other, influence agents could then make the larger request of the original target. So long as the target perceived the close other to have freely chosen to comply with the first request, this strategy should be effective, an outcome due to the target's self-perception changes after observing the close other comply with the first request. The target need not see a clear connection between the *content* of the first request and the second. Instead, as suggested above, what is pertinent is that the attributes relevant to the close other's compliance following the first behavior are relevant to the attributes necessary to comply with the larger request.

Although the current paper focuses on individuals' self-perceptions related to the area of prosocial behavior, a severely understudied area in consumer research, vicarious self-perception processes should operate in other areas as well. For example, if consumers observe someone with whom they feel close purchasing a product indicative of risk-taking (e.g., skydiving lessons), they should come to see themselves as more risk-taking. This change in self-perception should, in turn, affect the types of products that these consumers would consume, including products outside the domain of the observed behavior (i.e., in this case, outside the area of leisure activities). Specifically, such consumers might choose a product whose image is associated with greater risk-taking (e.g., Mountain Dew over Coca Cola), a hypothesis open to empirical verification.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Processes and Outcomes of Consumer Interactions within Brand Communities

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SESSION OVERVIEW

Over the last decade or so, customer communities have become established venues of marketing action for many products and services. The surging academic interest in this area can be traced to Muñiz and O'Guinn's (2001) seminal paper, in which they defined brand community as "specialized, non-geographically bound community(ies), based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand" (Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001, p.412), and laid the theoretical groundwork for studying such communities.

In many cases, brand communities are organized, sponsored, and orchestrated by marketers; in other cases, they are entirely developed and run by enthusiast customers. Brand communities are interesting for various reasons. One reason is that they are relatively new, and so, from a managerial standpoint, much remains to be learnt regarding how to make them work effectively as marketing programs, how they compare with more traditional programs like image advertising or event sponsorships in reaching the desired outcomes, and what their limits and limitations are. From a consumer behavior standpoint, there are many interesting psychological and sociological processes at work within these communities, often in conjunction with each other, that haven't yet been studied.

In this session we bring together cutting-edge research studying the processes and outcomes of consumer-consumer interactions within brand communities. The findings of the first paper by Muñiz and Schau reveal that the use of community-generated content impacts brand community members in interesting and significant ways. Using a netnographic approach, they studied the firm-sponsored community of the Jones Soda Company, and discovered it to have all the key markers of community that prior research had identified (Muñiz and O'Guinn 2001). Yet, the firm tried to make the brand marginal to the community by strategically providing choices of flavors, promotional materials and distribution. The authors consider the theoretical and practical implications of this approach.

The second paper by Prykop, Tavassoli, and Herrmann bases its analysis on the sociological concept of scenes (Irwin 1973) where a shared fascination with an activity or topic provides a feeling of belonging to participants. The authors then adopted a social psychological lens to study the role of self-definition and social identification on brand choice within customer communities organized around product categories. They also studied how to persuade customers effectively under the different conditions, employing a structural equation model to test their hypotheses.

The third paper by Almeida, Dholakia, and Vianello uses a netnographic approach to compare customer behaviors and outcomes of managerial significance in firm-managed and customer-managed communities. They found that firm-sponsored communities tend to be targeted toward specific, well-defined consumer segments and seem to be used by consumers more for instrumental purposes. In contrast, customer-managed communities are more broadly appealing and are used for "off-topic" conversations and activities.

Despite the diversity in these papers, as evidenced by authors' different disciplinary perspectives, their use of diverse methodological approaches, and differences in the specific issues emphasized in the studies, they all unequivocally show that empowered and socially interacting consumers are transforming the way marketing is practiced by consumer-oriented firms.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"The Impact of Market Use of Consumer Generated Content on a Brand Community"

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Hope Jensen Schau, University of Arizona

Many studies have demonstrated that members of brand communities are capable of extensive, and increasingly professional, creation of brand content (Brown, Kozinets and Sherry; Schau and Muñiz 2006). Indeed, the ascendancy of communally-embedded, empowered consumers is now a marketplace reality (Flight 2005; Ives 2004; Morrissey 2005). However, little work has examined how the use of such community-created content impacts the community or its members. While several marketers have played lip-service to this idea, and a few have included token amounts of user-authored content in advertising campaigns (Ferriss 2002), only a few marketers have made extensive efforts to use consumer-created content. As a result, we have no insight into how extensive use of consumer-generated content will impact a brand community.

Jones Soda relies heavily upon its community of loyal users for the creation of branding content (Business Week 2005). From product innovations (flavors) to packaging (labels, cap quotes), promotions (stickers, web content, price points) and advertising, Jones Soda gives its 12-24 year old target consumers considerable input into the brand's attributes and personality (Underwood 2005). Through the Jones Soda interactive website, consumers are asked to rate suggested new flavors and are invited to submit photos and copy that would fit in advertisements and on the packaging. Jones Soda representatives follow up website research with a mobile Jones promotional vehicle that arrives at events like the X Games and high schools sports competitions to give away promotional material and have consumers try and rate Jones soda products. The promotional vehicle stocks flavors of interest (new and experimental) and actively solicits consumer feedback on site.

Jones Soda thus has several points of departure from most previously encountered brand communities. It is a new brand, which actively solicits and applies user input. It is from a product category not previously examined-consumer package goods-and thus represents a broadening of focus. It is largely inorganic, a corporately created brand community. Based on these difference, one could expect a vastly different form of brand community.

We conducted a netnographic study (Kozinets 2002) of the Jones Soda brand community. This community possesses all three of the markers of brand community identified by Muñiz and O'Guinn (2001). We found a brand community that relies extensively on the Internet to organize an immediate feedback loop between consumers, the firm and the marketplace. We also witnessed an attempt by the marketer to make the brand marginal via the strategic choice of flavors, promotional content and distribution strategy. This strategy may have been designed to instill "desired marginality" (O'Guinn and Muñiz 2005) in the brand and community. Finally, we found ample room for personal transformation and consumer empowerment via the Jones Soda brand community.

The construct of brand community is well-defined and yet still currently under-researched and under-theorized. This study of Jones Soda allows us to demonstrate the power of inorganic communities to harness consumers' creative efforts for marketing

success. Beyond the focus group approach to product development and marketing, Jones Soda has brought consumers into the production of value and given them unprecedented input into all marketing related decisions.

“How to Get in With the in Crowd”

Catja Prykop, Credit Suisse

Nader T. Tavassoli, London Business School

Andreas Herrmann, University of St. Gallen

Our findings contribute to the literature on brand communities (e.g. McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig 2002, Muñiz and O’Guinn 2001) and consumption-related interactions in high-risk leisure consumer contexts such as skydiving, where interactions represent strong interpersonal bonds: “a shared of ritualistic experience that transcends ordinary camaraderie” (Celsi, Rose and Leigh 1993; p. 12). Findings from this literature are most descriptive of consumers with a high degree of identification with a social category. Building on research on the notion of “collective” social identity, we find that there are qualitative differences to previous research in contexts with strong interpersonal bonds, in that different levels of self-definition represent distinct forms of self-representation with different origins, sources of self-worth, and social motivations (Brewer and Gardner 1996). Relatedly, we find that the drivers of brand choice are moderated by the strength of consumers’ social identification with a scene.

The overwhelming focus of previous research has also been on the fabric and dynamics of the community and to some degree, in the case of brand communities that are centered on and supported by a single brand, their relationship to the focal brand. In contrast, our focus is on brand choice—among a competitive set of brands—for consumers affiliated with non-brand centered social categories. We base our theoretical framework on the sociological concept of scenes (Irwin 1973) where a shared—even mundane—fascination with an activity or topic provides a feeling of belonging. We tested our theoretical framework in a large-scale empirical study (N=1570) in two leisure scenes: the golfer scene and the snowboarder scene. We show that intra-personal (personal identity; Sirgy 1982) and interpersonal (social identity) aspects of the self jointly affect brand choice. We further demonstrate that (1) the effects of brand-self congruity and brand-scene congruity are mediated by functional-, emotional-, and social brand values, and (2) that these effects are moderated by consumers’ level of social identification with the scene.

We further tested a managerial implication from the results of a structural equation model in an experimental study on advertising effectiveness. We found that ads advocating products’ functional benefits provide a more successful positioning for individuals with low scene identification, whereas ads positioned around social benefits are preferred by individuals with high scene identification.

“Understanding Differences between Firm-Managed and Customer-Managed Brand Communities”

Stefânia Ordoús de Almeida, University of São Paulo

Utpal M. Dholakia, Rice University

Silvia Vianello, Università Ca’ Foscari di Venezia

Grappling with the waning effectiveness of advertising campaigns, the growing consumer resistance toward aggressive direct marketing programs, and increasingly empowered consumers, many marketers have become more and more interested in organizing, nurturing, and monitoring brand communities where their customers can interact with one another (Algesheimer, Dholakia, and Herrmann 2005; McAlexander, Schouten and Koenig 2002; Muñiz and O’Guinn 2001; Schouten and McAlexander 1995).

Despite having considerable practical significance, little research has examined differences between firm-managed and customer-managed brand communities. This issue is especially pertinent to many firms that have recently launched community sites only to find pre-existing thriving communities established and managed by their own customers. Some unanswered questions that we focus on are: Do customers favor a particular type of community and are they entrenched within it? Does company involvement reduce the enthusiasm of participating customers? Which communities have a greater number of social interactions and are more effective in disseminating knowledge? Do these communities favor different sorts of interactions? To examine these questions, we compared and contrasted brand communities supported by the firm and those organized by customers for two different branded products: NI’s LabVIEW software and the Microsoft XBOX game console.

Results of our Netnographic analysis (Kozinets 2002) revealed considerable overlap in customer memberships across the firm- and customer-managed communities. Many of the most active participants tended to post and respond to messages actively in both community venues. However, there was a clear demarcation in what these communities are used for. Firm-managed communities tended to be employed primarily for instrumental purposes by customers, such as seeking assistance with a specific problem, learning about upcoming product launches, events, etc. In contrast, customer-managed communities allow more for broader “off-topic” interactions not necessarily involving the firm’s products and brands. In these communities, we found the emergence of small friendship groups of a firm’s customers.

Furthermore, we also found firm-managed communities to be largely targeted toward specific, well-defined consumer segments by the firm. In contrast, customer-managed communities appeared less clearly targeted, and were likely to be formed by members of customer groups that the firm may have overlooked. As such, customer-managed communities may enable the discovery of new marketing opportunities for the firm. Based on these and other findings, we will discuss how firms can manage their own communities more effectively, and how they can play a meaningful role in customer-managed communities. In the ACR session, we will also discuss the theoretical issues emerging from our research, as well as highlight promising research opportunities.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY
Fighting Obesity in Away-from Home Consumption: Healthier Food, Better Nutritional Labels, or Menu Assortment?

Pierre Chandon, INSEAD, France
Brian Wansink, Cornell University, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

More than 47 percent of the money Americans spend on food is spent away from home, mostly in fast-food restaurants and vending machines. To the relief of nutritionists and public policy officials, fast-food restaurants have shifted their focus from super-sizing to offering healthier food and to making nutritional information more salient. For example, much of the success of Subway, the fastest-growing fast-food franchise, has been attributed to its “healthy” positioning (Barrett 2003). Similarly, McDonald’s will voluntarily add detailed nutritional information on hamburger packages. But why then are obesity rates showing no sign of abating?

The presentations in this special session examine whether objectively healthier food and better nutritional information may, ironically, contribute to obesity and whether a different approach, based on offering different portion sizes and bundles, may effectively lead people to choose smaller portions.

The first two presentations show that consumers may not be making healthier food choices when eating in healthier restaurants or when nutritional information is salient. Chandon and Wansink show that the restaurant brand (e.g., Subway vs. McDonald’s) and the presence of healthy items on the menu prime healthy or unhealthy anchors and bias consumers’ estimates of the number of calories contained in their fast-food meals. Calorie underestimation caused by healthy primes then lead people to indulge in high-calorie side orders or desserts. In the end, people may end up consuming bigger meals, yet believe that they consumed fewer calories at healthy restaurants than at unhealthy ones.

In the second presentation, Bloom and Bolton show that more accessible and easier-to-digest nutrition labels only improve food choice among ambivalent consumers. They find that the choices of consumers with either strongly positive or negative attitudes toward nutrition were not influenced by nutrition labels. These effects are robust, regardless of whether nutritional labels contain information on calorie and on the number of minutes on an exercise bike it would take to burn them off the calories or simple red flags, such as those adopted by leading food marketers.

What then can public policy and responsible marketers do to lead people towards healthier food choices? The third presentation suggests an innovative solution. Sharpe, Staelin, and Huber argue that simply adding healthier alternatives on the menu and providing better nutritional information may not be enough. They find that, because of extremeness aversion, simply offering one smaller portion size on the menu (e.g., a 12-oz drink) leads people to choose smaller drinks. In contrast, they find that the current established super-sizing practices lead people to choose larger portion sizes, even when the discount is minimal.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Do we Always Judge a Book by its Cover? The 'How' and 'When' of the Effect of Consumers' Stereotypes on Evaluations of Products and Services

Shashi Matta, Ohio State University, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

Research on stereotypes has an extensive history within psychology, and social cognition in particular. Stereotypes are beliefs about the characteristics, attributes and behaviors of members of certain groups (Hilton and von Hippel 1996). Consumer researchers have acknowledged the importance of stereotypes and have examined the role of consumers' stereotypes in evaluations of products, firms and services. Stereotypes that have been researched in consumer behavior include *gender* (e.g., Gilly 1988; Fisher and Dube 2005), *country-of-origin* (Maheswaran 1994; Gurhan-Canli and Maheswaran 2000), and *occupations* (Iacobucci and Ostrom 1993; Babin, Boles and Darden 1999).

Researchers have long been fascinated by why, how and when people use stereotypes. More interesting, perhaps, are the questions of 'how' and 'when' stereotypes affect judgments that people make. In this special session, we address these questions by examining the multifaceted effects of consumers' stereotypes, and how and when they affect consumers' judgments. The four papers investigate consumers' stereotypes of *gender* (Folkes and Matta), *race* (Faro and McGill; Morris), and *consumption* (Perkins, Pinter, Greenwald and Forehand) on judgments of *products* (Folkes and Matta; Perkins et al.), *services* (Faro and McGill; Folkes and Matta), and *advertising* (Morris). Each of these papers made a unique contribution to collectively enhance our understanding of the 'how' and 'when' of consumers' stereotypes.

In the first paper, Folkes and Matta show that stereotypes about the gender of an organization's leader influence consumers' inferences about the quality of the organization's product or service, and also about gender-typed attributes of the product or service. They vary the leader's gender in a male dominated profession, and the ambiguity of information about the leader's competence. Faro and McGill, in the second paper, continue this investigation of how stereotypes affect consumers' evaluations of services. They examine racial stereotypes, and show that the social context of the judgment (in the presence of others or alone) and consumers' self-monitoring moderate the effect of racial stereotypes on consumers' response to advice by a service provider. Respondents in their experiments were asked to make an investment decision based on the recommendation of a financial advisor who was either White or Black. Consumers' racial stereotypes also feature in the third paper, in which Morris examines the role of a lifestyle variable—urban identification—on consumers' evaluations of ads with White or Black actors. While Morris investigates urban identification, Perkins and colleagues, in the final paper, examine the role of another kind of identification—implicit partisanship (a trivial connection between a consumer and a consumption group)—on evaluation of products consistent with group stereotypes. The session is therefore structured with links that facilitate the flow of ideas from one paper to the next.

Overall, the session attempts to present a rich and varied perspective on how and when consumer's stereotypes affect judgments of products, services and marketing communication. Together, the four papers address both situation variables (e.g., information ambiguity, presence of others in judgment context, implicit partisanship) and individual difference variables (e.g., self-monitoring, urban identification) that affect the role stereotypes in

consumer judgments, and provide evidence for the processes by which these variables affect that relationship. We believe that this session guides us towards an understanding of the 'how' and 'when' in stereotypes research.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"When Women Lead, Do Consumers' Perceptions of Her Firm Follow?"

Valerie Folkes, University of Southern California
Shashi Matta, Ohio State University

Our research examines when consumers' gender stereotypes influence perceptions of an organization's products and services. In particular, we hypothesize that stereotypes about the gender of an organization's leader influence consumers' inferences about the quality of the organization's product or service, and about gender-typed attributes of a product or service.

Consumers receive information about a firm's leaders from a variety of sources, including news articles, publicity releases and advertisements. That information about the leader may influence consumers' inferences about the organization's products and services. A leader is perceived as a prototypical group member or one that represents the organization's ideal (van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg 2005). In fact, leaders' and members' characteristics are related, with top leaders' personalities and values being similar to their employees' (Giberson, Resick and Dickson 2005). People are likely to assume that leaders impose their values on the organization and that the organization selects leaders that reflect its values. Hence, consumers may generalize from their inferences about the characteristics of a firm's leader to characteristics of the service delivered by subordinates, as well as to attributes of products created by the firm.

If information about leaders does influence consumers' perceptions of products and services, then the leader's gender may also affect those evaluations. Some research suggests that evaluations will be more negative when the firm is led by a woman. People respond negatively to a female leader because the traits associated with leadership are those more frequently linked to traditionally masculine stereotypes than traditionally feminine stereotypes (Powell and Butterfield 1989). On the other hand, research by Matta and Folkes (2005, study 3) found that a woman leader in a male dominated occupation was evaluated as more competent than a male leader when both performed in an excellent manner.

Our studies attempt to resolve the contradictory findings of Matta and Folkes' study with previous research on negative evaluations of women leaders, as well as to investigate generalizations from the leader's characteristics to the service delivered by subordinates and to the firm's products. Few studies have examined the impact of a firm's leader on products and services, and those few studies show mixed results. For example, Freiden (1984) compared effects of various types of product endorsers (the firm's CEO, a typical consumer, a celebrity, an expert) portrayed in an ad for a fictitious product and found no endorser sex differences in spokesperson effectiveness.

We conducted two experiments that investigated consumers' inferences from high level leaders on perceptions of the type of

service delivered by the leader's subordinates. Both studies manipulated ambiguity of information about the leader's competence. Previous research led us to expect that perceivers would be more favorable toward a female in a stereotypically male role when she performs in an unambiguously competent manner than when competence is ambiguous (Heilman and Haynes 2005; Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs and Tamkins 2004). We reasoned that Matta and Folkes' (2005) findings reflected the unambiguously excellent performance of the woman. Matta and Folkes' findings should not extend to a leader if competence is ambiguous.

To enhance ecological validity, all studies presented participants with information about an actual organization and the organization's leader. Participants read information about the leader in a male dominated occupation who was described to half the participants using her actual name and to the other half using a masculine name. Results showed that characteristics of the male leader in a male dominated profession were similar to subordinates, suggesting generalization from leader to follower. When the male leader's performance was unambiguously competent, the service delivered by subordinates was rated more positively than when his performance was ambiguous. Further, inferences about his sex-typed characteristics (e.g., the extent to which he had agentic or communal traits) were similar to inferences about his firm's service providers' sex-typed characteristics.

Characteristics of the female leader were less likely to be generalized to her subordinates. As with the male leaders, less ambiguity about a woman leader's performance led to more positive evaluations of her compared to when her performance was more ambiguous. Unlike the male leaders, the unambiguously excellent woman was considered more competent than her subordinates, whereas the ambiguously performing leader was considered less competent than her subordinates. Further, respondents were more likely to perceptually isolate the ambiguously performing leader from others in her firm, and to assume that her sex-typed traits were not generalizable to her subordinates.

Study 2 investigated effects of ambiguity and the leader's gender on perceptions of subordinates as well as on product perceptions. Respondents had actual product experience and then evaluated the product. Respondents' evaluations of the organization's output reflected characteristics of the leader rather than characteristics of the subordinates. Hence, inferences that a woman leader had more feminine characteristics than did a male leader affected perceptions of product attributes, with respondents describing products as having more feminine characteristics when the leader was a woman than when a man. The results of these studies indicate that consumers' gender stereotypes about an organization's leader can influence evaluations of an organization's products and services.

"Racial Stereotypes in Consumer Judgment: The Effect of the Presence of Others"

Davis Faro, London Business School

Ann McGill, University of Chicago

Stereotypes have been shown to play an important role in consumer judgments (e.g. Maheswaran 1994; Gurhan-Calni & Maheswaran 2000). In the present research, we examine the role of racial stereotypes in the evaluation of services and, in particular, how the social context of the judgment—in the presence of others or alone—may affect the influence of stereotypes.

Intuition might suggest that racial stereotypes would play less of a role in the evaluation of services in a more public context because buyers would want to avoid any appearance of prejudice. This intuition is consistent with recent consumer research that has

highlighted how the presence of others may trigger processes of impression management (e.g., Ariely & Levav 2000; Fisher & Dube 2005; Ratner & Kahn 2002; Argo, Dahl & Manchanda 2005). In this view, consumers may downplay the role of race in their judgments or even provide "politically correct" judgments in which services provided by African-Americans are judged more favorably in public than in private. However, public contexts may cause other effects than those dictated by impression management concerns. Specifically, research on stereotypes has shown that control of stereotypical judgment requires cognitive resources that the presence of others may diminish (Gilbert & Hixon 1991). Therefore we might observe situations in which the presence of others would actually result in *more* stereotypical judgments (e.g. Lambert et al. 2003).

The present research examines these opposing predictions and relies on individual differences in self-monitoring to predict the direction of the effect that the presence of others would have on evaluations of services provided by minority groups (Snyder, 1974; Snyder & Smith, 1986). Self-monitoring shows particular promise in exploring opposing effects of social presence because it captures differences in sensitivity both to social cues to providing socially appropriate responses and to the distractions caused by the presence of others. Specifically, we predict that for high self-monitors, consistent with prior research on impression management, the presence of others will result in more favorable evaluations of services provided by an African-American (Fiske & Von Hendy 1992; Olivier, Snyder & Livingstone 2004). By contrast, low self-monitors tend to be more anxious in social circumstances and generally to look inward, rather than outward, for cues to behavior. This unease and inward focus might result in more stereotypical judgments in the presence of others, that is, less favorable evaluation of the service.

The first study examined these predictions in the context of an investment decision to be made based on a recommendation by an African-American (versus White) financial advisor. Participants were asked to allocate a sum of money to a stock recommended by the financial advisor and they made their judgments alone or in the presence of a white confederate. The confederate was merely-present in the room and was unable to see participants' responses (Zajonc, 1965). Results revealed the predicted three-way interaction of social presence, race, and self-monitoring. High self-monitors invested more for Black advisor in public versus alone and, further, invested more for the Black advisor than the White advisor in public. This pattern of results reversed for the low self-monitors. Investment levels were lower for the Black advisor in public versus alone, and, further, lower for the Black than for the White advisor in public.

The results of the first study are in line with the account that high self-monitors were better able to control an activated stereotype in public than low self-monitors. The second study was designed to explore an alternative process by which self-monitoring may influence judgments. Specifically, high self-monitors may be so attuned to the demands of the social environment that these individuals may not even activate the stereotype. To test this account, participants in the second study completed the same investment task but also took part in a word completion task that was aimed at measuring activation of racial stereotypes (Gilbert & Hixon 1991). Results indicated that high self-monitors were not less likely to activate the stereotype. Further, the pattern of results from the first study was replicated, but only for those people who activated the stereotype, consistent with the view that results are driven by differences in ability of high and low self-monitors to control the stereotype when evaluating the service.

Results of these two studies demonstrate the opposing effects that public presence can have on the prevalence of racial stereotypes in the evaluation of services. Findings show that public presence can result in more or less politically correct evaluations, depending on individual differences in the sensitivity to social desirability concerns (self-monitoring). We expect that this pattern of results would extend beyond the context of service evaluations, to contexts such as judgments of foreign products or advertising messages involving minority members. The studies presented here reflect the multifaceted influence that public presence can have on consumers' judgments.

“Beyond Demographics and Stereotypes: Effects of Urban Identification on Responses to Actor Race in Advertising”

Marlene Morris, University of Georgetown

Consumer behavior researchers have identified many criteria by which to segment consumers to explain and predict their behavior (Zaichowsky 1985; Bettman 1979). While marketers have historically viewed the marketplace in terms of demographics such as race, consumers are increasingly identifying themselves on lifestyle rather than demographic terms. Marketing research has also historically focused on segmentation based upon ethnicity to understand and predict consumer behavior, including specific measures of degree of ethnic identification, examining subcultures such as blacks (Whittler 1991, Williams & Qualls 1989, etc.), Hispanics (Webster 1994) and Jews (Hirschman 1981). In recent years, researchers have begun to follow marketers' shift from the use of demographic data as the primary basis for understanding and categorizing consumers and predicting their behavior, to segmentation variables with more explanatory power such as subculture and lifestyle. One particular lifestyle segment that crosses racial, ethnic, age and geographic boundaries in an unprecedented fashion is the urban subculture. Despite the great deal of attention that the urban segment has received from marketing and advertising practitioners in recent years, there is currently little understanding of its effects on consumer behavior and effectiveness of marketing communications. The urban segment generally takes multiculturalism for granted and sees things less in terms of black and white than cool or un-cool, making demographic and ethnicity-based segmentation less insightful for newer generations of consumers and behavioral research. Identification with this segment and its characteristic ethnic diversity also creates some confusion about which cultural cues are now seen as stereotypically representative of a particular ethnic group.

Marketers have only recently identified and acknowledged the urban population as a lucrative consumer lifestyle and sociopolitical segment in and of itself, as well as a powerful mechanism for reaching and influencing broader audiences of consumers. The pervasiveness of this segment along with over \$890 billion per year in buying power in the U.S. alone (Stavraka 2001) makes it a highly sought-after one for marketers. The current research seeks to examine the effects of urban identification on evaluations of advertising and shows that urban identification mitigates previous findings regarding similarity effects in advertisements.

Existing research in advertising has examined subjects' responses to ads featuring same- and other-race actors. While studies consistently show that minority (i.e. black) subjects respond more positively to ads featuring same-race actors and related race cues (Appiah 2001), results for the larger majority population are inconclusive, with researchers assuming that there is no significant effect of actor race or race cues on non-black populations. The current study examines the effects of urban identification on majority populations' responses to ads and finds that within a non-black

population, non-urban identifiers prefer ads featuring white actors; however, non-black urban identifiers prefer ads featuring black actors with preference measured in terms of ad liking, similarity of ad to self, identifying with the actor, perceiving a similar style, personality, culture and style of actor's dress and liking for the actor.

Study results call into question current advertising industry belief and practice, which focuses on demographics—specifically race—as the basis for market segmentation. It also challenges existing notions of stereotypes and effectiveness of in-group and out-group categorizations and cues by showing that particular psychographic and lifestyle variables—urban identification in this instance—mediate the effects of racial stereotypes on consumers' responses to advertising.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, Lend Me Your Attitudes...Implicit Attitude Formation As a Result of Group Membership and Consumption Stereotypes”

Andrew Perkins, Rice University

Brad Pinter, Penn State Altoona

Anthony G. Greenwald, University of Washington

Mark Forehand, University of Washington

Previous research has established that individuals' cognitions and attitudes may form as a result of membership in a group to which that the individual belongs. This *minimal group effect* (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy and Flament 1971) suggested that the mere assignment of an individual to a randomly selected group resulted in discrimination against other competing groups. Recent research suggest that *implicit partisanship* may be unconscious in nature, in that individuals automatically self-associate with groups, leading to feelings of in-group bias and out-group discrimination (Greenwald et al 2002, Pinter and Greenwald 2004). Pinter and Greenwald found this robust effect across numerous experimental settings suggesting that implicit partisanship is a category level effect, such that a meaningful group membership is created automatically, with the potential to influence behavior. The current research extends these findings by exploring the formation of attitudes toward target objects that have been randomly associated with a novel group and consumption stereotypes tied to that group.

Two experiments were conducted to explore the potential for attitude formation toward novel objects (experiment 1) and fictitious brand names (experiment 2). Participants were initially told that they would be participating in a campus-wide scavenger hunt, and would be randomly assigned to one of two groups, designated as either team Triangle or Circle. Following random assignment to one of the groups, participants were instructed to complete a simple categorization task that prompted them to first examine a list of ten names of the other students who were members of the two five-member competing groups. Within the group that the participant was assigned, one of the names was replaced with “yourself”, an indication that the participant was a member of that group. Following a thirty second exposure to the list of fictitious student names, participants then completed a trivial categorization task that compelled them to separate the two groups of names using two behavioral responses, in this case, pressing either the ‘d’ key or the ‘k’ key on a computer keyboard. Thus, a participant who was assigned to the Circle team might be required to press the ‘d’ key whenever the name of his team was presented on the screen (as well as the word “yourself), and press ‘k’ whenever the names of the other team members were presented on the screen. Following this task, participants were then instructed that they would be looking for the scavenger hunt targets: either analog or digital clocks described as present on campus (experiment 1) or fictitious automobile brands

said to be located around campus as part of a vehicle manufacturer's promotion. In order to learn which target category of objects was to be scavenged, participants completed another categorization task that required the same behavioral response (again, pressing either the 'd' or 'k' key) when presented with either the target object or names of their own team. The word "yourself" was omitted in this task, so that the participant never directly associated a self-representative word with the target objects. Following the manipulations, participants completed two Implicit Association Tests (IATs; Greenwald, McGhee and Schwartz 1998) that measured self association and attitude toward the target object or brand. The experiments differed only with regards to the target object.

The results suggested that subjects spontaneously generated positive implicit self-associations as well as positive implicit attitudes toward the target objects that were sorted together with their group during the experimental treatments. Specifically, a participant assigned to the *circle* group, who categorized their group members with the *Ace* brand model names, subsequently self-associated with and generated a positive implicit attitude toward the *Ace* brand, even though there was no direct linkage of self with the *Ace* brand during the experiment. The formation of these types of attitudes may be explained within a cognitive consistency framework (Greenwald et al. 2002). Greenwald and colleagues suggest that links in memory spontaneously form in order to balance identity triads in memory. Extending these findings, the current findings suggest that these triads may be more complex than the relationships between three objects in memory. In essence, the current project posits that a link should form in memory between the self and a target object as a result of that individual's group membership, and the subsequent association of that target object to the group, but not directly to the individual. These results suggest that consumers have an implicit bias toward products that are stereotypical for their in-groups, even when that stereotype is arbitrary and is not based on personal experience. Moreover, the findings suggest that consumption stereotypes (beliefs about the appropriateness of products and brands for a particular group) may drive preference without conscious deliberation. A third experiment is currently underway to assess whether attitudes formed in the way described above influence purchase intention and other explicitly stated behavioral outcomes.

ROUNDTABLE
Philosophy and Consumption
Janet Borgerson, University of Exeter, UK

Conversations continue around Philosophy and Consumption after last year's roundtable attracted 45 participants, encouraging consumer researchers to reflect on philosophical concepts, frameworks, or philosophical figures that have impacted, and continue to impact, the way each of us asks questions, conceptualizes problems, and carries out our arguments and analysis. This session spurs interaction between scholars with a variety of interests and research paradigms who are engaged—whether implicitly or explicitly—in philosophically informed consumer research.

The session's purpose is to continue conversations around recent efforts that draw upon philosophical and ethical concepts and theories in accomplishing consumer research. Examples include research on tragedy; consumer objects as resources for consumer identity work; constructions of “consumers that matter”; and consumer subjectivities constituted through interaction with brands and marketing representations. Just as crucial was the issue of inspiration: that is, certain ideas or the way things are said or connected together can inspire us to look at and engage with a question, or the world, differently. The goal is to gather together scholars who are engaged in philosophically informed consumer research, and to provide theoretical resources for interested researchers and consumers. The session's organizer holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy and writes on consumer identity constitution, consumer agency, and ethical concerns in marketing and consumer behavior.

Some of last year's group, and some new people as well, have been asked to provide insight into their own experience and contribute to this on-going conversation. Whereas last year every attendee (all 45!) introduced him or herself and said a bit about their interests, this year each of the invited ‘panel’ will prepare a five minute elaboration of a philosopher/thinker or a philosophical perspective, or a single concept or notion that has contributed, disrupted, or encouraged certain aspects of their own writing, questioning, and/or research. This brief presentation is not meant to provoke anxiety or suggest the need for deep and extensive knowledge about philosophers or history of ideas, etc. Rather, we each get to hear a little more about how others think, what creates a lasting, or only momentary, influence that makes a difference, as well as, opening up discussion around a diversity of interests and methodologies. Questions and discussion among all attending researchers will follow.

Clearly, the concerns of philosophy and the marketplace intersect. Moreover, turning to philosophy can help clarify assumptions, theory, and methods within consumer research. Philosophy questions, and thus adds rigor to, the coherence of arguments. At a pragmatic level, philosophical considerations and ethical investigations, and the ability to undertake both, allow for thoughtful, careful, and aware research, including an understanding of epistemological and ontological issues regarding, e.g. consumer identity, corporate social responsibility, and consumption generally.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Time and Decision: New Perspectives on Present-Biased Preferences

Selin A. Malkoc, University of Minnesota, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

Consumers are constantly faced with decisions about the timing of their consumption. Consumers evaluate investments and savings (costs incurred now for future gain), redemption of cash refunds and rebates (a wait period followed by earnings) and indulgent consumption (benefits experienced now but with a cost (e.g., to one's health) incurred later). Prior research has consistently shown that people have a preference toward the present, overweighting near outcomes compared to later outcomes. Furthermore, this impulsivity has been shown to decline with time (i.e., hyperbolic discounting or present bias; Thaler 1981). That is, when making a decision between smaller-sooner and larger-later rewards, individuals' implied rate of discounting (or preference for smaller-sooner outcomes) is higher over a short compared to a long time horizon. This pattern of behavior has been attributed to impulsivity (Loewenstein 1996), to differences in cognitive representations between near and future events (e.g., Zauberman and Lynch 2005) or to an individual difference in time orientation (e.g., Zimbardo and Boyd 1999).

The papers in this special session propose new perspectives for understanding present-biased preferences. These papers challenge current theorizing in this domain and provide boundary conditions for existing findings. In particular, they demonstrate that impatience (1) is better measured by a motivational present value approach, (2) is better understood if prior consumer decisions are taken into account and (3) might not always be as robust as previous research has suggested.

The first paper, by Ebert and Prelec, argues that conventional measures of intertemporal preference systematically underestimate consumers' present value of future outcomes. They develop a motivational measure that is based on the exerted effort to obtain outcomes at different times, and show that the traditional measures of time preference (e.g., WTA) systematically underestimates present value. The authors suggest that this may reflect how people assess rewards using a monetary scale and discuss the psychological differences in monetary and motivational measures.

The second paper, by Malkoc, Zauberman and Bettman, explores the role of previous tasks in consumer impatience. The authors demonstrate that prior decisions change processing concreteness (focus on the big picture versus details) and systematically affect present bias. Their results indicate that consumers show less present bias when in abstract mindsets, compared to when they think concretely (even when the prior task is unrelated)-introducing a new conceptualization and showing that present bias is moderated by the extent of context-dependent thinking.

The third paper, by Read and Frederick, examines the longitudinal aspect of present bias. The authors note the cross-sectional nature of the experiments that demonstrated present bias and examine such intertemporal preference reversals in three longitudinal studies. They find support for preference reversals in line with hyperbolic discounting *only* when the sooner outcome is immediate. These findings suggest that present-biased preferences support a quasi-hyperbolic form. In addition, these results provide boundary conditions for present bias, indicating the importance of temporal proximity to the outcome.

Collectively, the three papers in this special session provide new insights about consumer impatience and time discounting, by

offering new measurement, conceptualizations, and psychological drivers for present-biased preferences.

Following presentations, Drazen Prelec, the session discussant, provided an overview of how these papers inform and qualify the findings of previous research, as well as noting some of the ways in which the session offers diverging perspectives on intertemporal preferences.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"A New Method of Measuring Temporal Discounting: The Motivational Present Value of Future Rewards"

Jane Ebert, University of Minnesota

Drazen Prelec, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

A wide range of people's behaviors in the present are motivated by longer-term or future concerns: employees work for future bonuses or to invest for retirement; students study to obtain a degree; and people exercise for future health. Many researchers and policy-makers are interested in the rates at which people discount such future concerns, or the value they place on them relative to the present, with the underlying assumption that this *present value* provides a measure of the importance or motivational power of people's future concerns on their present behavior (e.g., Chapman et al. 2001; Kirby et al. 1999).

Measures of present value most commonly used ask people to explicitly state the present value of a future reward, such as "What is the equivalent value to you today of \$120 in one year?" Obtained discount rates using such measures vary considerably, but overall they tend to be positive and rather high (see Frederick et al. 2002 for a review). If our goal is to use discounting measures to understand or predict those behaviors that are motivated by future concerns, then a present value should, ideally, represent the equivalent motivational power in the present of an event in the future. So, for example, a future reward of \$25 that a person assigns a present value of \$20 should have the same motivational power for that person as a present reward of \$20. However, for several reasons we suspect that conventional explicit discounting measures may provide a poor measure of the present motivational value of future rewards, and, if anything, are likely to overestimate this present value and so *underestimate* the discount rate. So, even if people explicitly say that a future reward of \$25 has a present value of \$20, they may nonetheless behave, and even expect to behave, as if it has a present value of, say, \$10. I.e., the discount rates people will demonstrate in their behavior, and even in how they expect to behave, will be higher than those measured using conventional discounting measures. We attempt to demonstrate and examine this in the current research, through the development of a new measure of discounting that assesses the motivational present value of a future reward.

In our first study, we develop a method that 1) pits effort against a future reward to assess the motivational value of the future reward (specifically, we assess how long people exert effort working on a simple task in the present in order to gain a future reward), and 2) calibrates the effort expended for the future reward against the effort expended for different immediate rewards to assess the motivational present value of the future reward. We compare the present value we obtain using this motivational measure with that obtained for the same participants using a conventional discounting

measure, and find that the present motivational values we obtain are lower than the present “explicit” values obtained on the conventional discounting measure: i.e., the future has less motivational force than we might expect given conventional discounting measures. This suggests that the present value captured by the conventional discounting measure is not the present motivational value we might wish to assess.

Two important features of our comparison of the motivational and explicit present values are: first, the same future rewards are used for both measures precluding arguments that people simply value different future quantities differently, and second, the calibration of the effort people expend for future rewards against the effort they expend on the same task for immediate rewards precludes arguments that people simply value different present quantities, e.g., effort versus money, differently.

In the second of our studies, we replicate this finding for future rewards and demonstrate that people are similarly inconsistent in their present values for uncertain or probabilistic rewards, where again the conventionally obtained explicit present values are lower than the motivational present values. In two subsequent studies we strengthen the conclusion of the first two studies, that participants’ motivational present values are inconsistent with their explicit present values, where the motivational values are systematically lower. We also examine whether the presence of effort in our motivational measure may account for this result and we compare participants’ motivational present value with the present values obtained on several alternative discounting or present value measures. In study 3, we develop a within-subjects version of our task, which aids consistent responding across the motivational and conventional discounting measure and so provides a stricter test of our result. In addition, we show that the presence of effort in our motivational measure of present value is unlikely to be responsible for our finding that present motivational values for future rewards are lower than people’s present explicit values. In study 4, we replicate these findings and examine the differences in present value obtained between several alternative discounting measures that resemble our motivational and explicit measures in different respects.

By attempting to measure the motivational force of a future reward, this research has taken a novel approach to understanding the myopic behavior people show in their day-to-day lives. Previous work interested in the motivational power of rewards in choices that trade-off desires in the present and the future has generally focused on the motivational power of immediate rewards, e.g., work on visceral effects (Loewenstein 1996) or mental effort (Baumeister and Vohs 2003) on self-control. In contrast the current research focuses on the motivational power of future rewards.

“Impatience is In the Mindset: Carryover Effects of Processing Abstractness in Sequential Tasks”

*Selin Malkoc, University of Minnesota
Gal Zauberman, University of Pennsylvania
James Bettman, Duke University*

Extant research on intertemporal choice has demonstrated that people are not only highly impulsive, but also display present bias by using higher discounting for shorter delays (e.g., Thaler 1981). Although there is ample evidence documenting present bias, relatively little is known about its underlying mechanism. Explanations offered include both affective (Loewenstein 1996; Rachlin and Raineri 1992) and cognitive processes (Malkoc and Zauberman 2005; Zauberman and Lynch 2005). These accounts, however, have conceptualized intertemporal decisions independently of any tasks previously engaged in and have focused on responses triggered by the focal outcome, such as outcome-specific feelings (i.e., deprivati-

tion) or cognitions (i.e., representational proximity) as the driving force behind present bias.

In the current work, we suggest that the tasks people have previously engaged in have systematic effects on processing concreteness and that these changes in concreteness of processing might be sufficient to explain dynamic inconsistencies in preferences. Building upon ideas from the psychology of verbal processing (e.g., Paivio 1971) and processing orientation (e.g., Navon 1977), we argue that when in concrete processing mode, individuals are more myopic and context dependent, leading to present bias. When the processing mode is more abstract, however, preferences show more intertemporal consistency, attenuating present bias. Three studies manipulating processing specificity with prior tasks provide support for this prediction.

Based on research showing that abstract thinking is facilitated when evaluating non-comparable options (Johnson 1984; Malkoc et al., 2005), in Experiment 1 participants (N=102) were provided with two cameras presented on seven attributes (either alignable or non-alignable) and were asked to compare them. Next, they were told to imagine shipping the camera and were asked how much they would need to save to delay its receipt by 3 and 10 days. As expected, we found a 2-way interaction between time horizon and alignability ($F(1, 106)=5.653, p<.05$), demonstrating an attenuation in present bias when participants evaluated non-alignable options.

Experiment 2 (123 participants) manipulated abstraction with an unrelated elaboration task. Participants first wrote their thoughts about the Digital Millennium Copyright Act and were directed to think either about implications for a specific and concrete consumer (their roommate) or for the more abstract notion of consumers in general. Next, participants completed a separate cash refund study where they delayed the receipt date of a \$75 cash refund by 4 or 10 weeks. The analyses again found an interaction between abstractness of mindset and time horizon ($F(1, 120)=4.309, p<.05$), with less present bias shown when thinking about the broad implications compared to a specific exemplar.

In experiment 3 (231 participants), we manipulated processing concreteness with a supraliminal priming task to further test the boundaries of our effect. Participants first completed a word search puzzle that had either concrete or abstract words embedded in it. Presented as an unrelated task, participants next indicated their WTA to delay the redemption of a \$75 gift certificate by 3 and 12 months. Results replicated the two previous studies, with a significant 2-way interaction ($F(1, 229)=4.66, p<.05$) indicating diminished present bias when participants were primed with abstract words.

In sum, the current work demonstrates that intertemporal decisions are systematically influenced by the previous tasks people engage in. That is, prior decisions change the specificity (concreteness vs. abstractness) of processing and have systematic effects on present-biased preferences. Specifically, we show that when in abstract mind sets, people act less present-biased compared to when they think more concretely, suggesting that the extent of present bias depends on the abstractness of mindset, which can be influenced via prior experiences.

“Longitudinal Time Inconsistency”

*Daniel Read, University of Durham
Shane Frederick, Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

We investigated the hyperbolic discounting model of intertemporal choice, according to which the discount rate is a function of delay-to-outcome, with shorter delays being associated with a higher discount rate. Its major prediction is that people will predictably change their prior plans with the passage of time.

FIGURE 1

Hyperbolic discounting

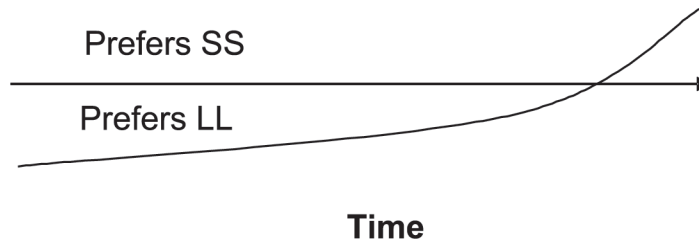


FIGURE 2

Quasi-Hyperbolic discounting



TABLE 1

Study	Time until SS	Shift ratio
1	> 24 hours	0.54
2	< 24 hours	1.25
3	< 1 hour	1.88

Specifically, if we hold the interval separating two outcomes constant, preference will often switch from a larger-later outcome (LL) to a smaller-sooner one (SS) as the two options move closer in time. The general idea is illustrated below. Figure 1 shows that as time passes, SS becomes increasingly attractive relative to LL. Preferences always move in the direction of SS, and sometimes they will ‘reverse,’ as in the illustration, when SS becomes superior to the formerly preferred LL.

Most experimental tests of this prediction have not investigated it in the dynamic form just described. Rather, they have relied on a potentially misleading cross-sectional design involving many choices over different pairs of dated outcomes, taken from the vantage point of a single date, rather than a longitudinal design involving many choices between a single pair of dated outcomes, made from the vantage point of different dates. We conducted three experiments using a longitudinal design. These experiments were done over email with an international sample, mostly from the United States.

Respondents made choices at multiple times between Amazon gift certificates to be received at specific future *dates* outcomes, one smaller-sooner (SS) and one larger-later (LL). The dependent measure was the choice between SS or LL, and whether preferences shifted as time to receipt diminished. The delay between the final choice and SS differed across experiments, from less than a day to less than an hour. This is important because the *quasi-hyperbolic* discounting model, predicts preference reversals will occur if the time to earliest SS is *very* short, as shown in Figure 2.

In our experiment, the measure of interest was the ratio of preference reversals in the LL?SS to those in the SS?LL direction—the shift ratio. Models of hyperbolic discounting predict this shift ratio will be greater than 1. In our studies, we observed the following as shown in Table 1.

In Experiment 1, when SS was delayed by about one day, we observed no net tendency for “hyperbolic” preference reversals. In fact, there was a weak but clear tendency for preferences to reverse in the *opposite* direction. In Experiment 2, when SS was delayed by

less than one day, there was a slight tendency for hyperbolic reversals. Only in Experiment 3, when the more immediate reward could be obtained in one hour, did evidence for hyperbolic reversals clearly emerge. Thus, these three studies provide support for the quasi-hyperbolic model.

In Experiment 3, we also asked people to explain their choices. Two reasons were frequently and clearly given for the *LL*?*SS* switches. Some offered remarkably explicit *psychophysical* explanations for hyperbolic discounting, pertaining to the perceived similarity of the two time points, as Rubinstein (2003) has postulated. Others referred to a desire to satisfy *immediate spending needs*. Usually, these needs were imminent, and often discovered over the course of the experiment—leading those who initially chose *LL* to switch to *SS*. Such explanations suggest an explanation for preference reversals and for various other phenomena in intertemporal choice. People are more likely to think of earlier needs than later ones. They are typically impatient because they are usually thinking of earlier needs. They become more patient with longer intervals because the delayed payoffs aren't pertinent to imminent needs. However, as time to rewards elapses, imminent needs again become salient, causing an impatient shift. We also believe that the differential salience of needs can explain the magnitude effect, the delay-speedup asymmetry, and other empirical regularities.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Changing Colors of My Thinking Hat: Influence of Situational and Task-Related Factors on Thinking Styles

Monica Wadhwa, Stanford University, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

Much research in consumer information processing and decision making has been devoted to differences in thinking styles. Consumer behavior theorists and psychologists from different persuasions have distinguished between various thinking styles such as experiential versus rational modes of thinking (Epstein 1983, 1985), system-1 versus system-2 thinking styles (Kahneman 2003, Kahneman and Frederick 2002, Stanovich and West 1998, 2000), analytic versus holistic thinking styles (Nisbett 2001) and broad versus narrow thinking styles (Martindale 1985, Mednick 1962). Differences in thinking styles have been mostly attributed to dispositional differences (Martindale 1985, Mednick 1962) and cultural factors (Chiu 1972, Nisbett 2003, Nisbett and Miyamoto 2005). In contrast, little effort has been devoted to other important facilitators of thinking styles, particularly situational and task-related characteristics, which often guide consumer behavior (Belk 1975). A broad purpose of this session, therefore, is to push forward the boundaries of research on thinking styles by exploring situational and task-related factors that impact consumer information processing and thinking styles.

The specific objectives of this session are a) to outline new measures of experiential versus rational thinking styles engendered by the nature of task and b) to examine how task-related factors (e.g., constraints) and consumer environment can impact thinking process, specifically creative thinking process. Keeping in mind the broad range of audience that ACR conference attracts, the three papers in this session represent a diversity of topics in the domain of thinking styles that are relevant for marketers and consumers, ranging from the “task-specific thinking styles” (Novak and Hoffman), to the role of constrained thinking process on creative enjoyment and motivation (Dahl and Moreau), to overt visual attention and creative thinking (Shiv and Wadhwa).

The session will begin with a focus on “task-specific thinking styles”. Thomas Novak and Donna Hoffman will present their work that focuses on tasks as elicitors of thinking styles. More specifically, Novak and Hoffman develop a two-dimensional scale to measure the task specific thinking style. Novak and Hoffman demonstrate the importance of task specific thinking style over and above the dispositional thinking style for task performance. Furthermore, they show that the congruence of the task and task specific thinking style improves task performance, while incongruence between the task and task specific thinking style worsens performance on the task.

The focus of this session will then shift to the role of constraints on creative thinking on the enjoyment of and motivation on creative experiences. Page Moreau will present her work with Darren Dahl that examines how constraints imposed on creative thinking influence consumers’ motivation and overall task enjoyment. More specifically, Dahl and Moreau demonstrate that consumers enjoy the creative experience more in the presence of constraints such as receiving step-by-step instructions. However, they demonstrate that constraints imposed on the target outcome lower the enjoyment of the creative experience for high-skill individuals.

Finally, Monica Wadhwa will present her work with Baba Shiv focusing on the role of overt attention on creative thinking

process. Shiv and Wadhwa demonstrate that the breadth of overt attention engendered in the process of scanning an external visual field impacts the breadth of covert attention (i.e., internal attention), which subsequently impacts creative thinking in a subsequent unrelated consumer creativity task. More specifically, the authors argue that scanning a broad versus a narrow visual field (e.g., watching a movie on a 40-inch versus a 17-inch screen) can broaden the scope of covert attention, which, in turn bolsters creativity on a subsequent consumer creativity task of coming up with creative gift ideas.

In an effort to increase audience participation, the session will have the services of Amitava Chattopadhyay as a discussant. Amitava has expertise in the areas of creativity, consumer decision making, branding and marketing communication. His work has appeared in several journals including the Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Marketing, Marketing Science and Management Science. Amitava, thus, has a unique perspective for discussing these papers and leading a discussion about an appropriate research agenda for continued work in this area.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

“New Measures of Task-Specific Experiential and Rational Cognition”

Thomas P. Novak and Donna L. Hoffman

Decades of theoretical and empirical research in social and cognitive psychology provide strong evidence that consumers process information in two distinct and qualitatively different ways: rational and experiential (Epstein 1994; Hogarth 2005; Kahneman and Frederick 2002, Kahneman 2003; Sloman 1996; Smith and DeCoster 2000; Stanovich and West 1998, 2000; and Strack and Deutsch 2004). A key commonality among modern dual process theories is the existence of two qualitatively different and interoperating systems, each best suited to its own purpose.

Despite this growing body of research, there has been surprisingly little research attention devoted to directly measuring how different tasks directly impact thinking style. Further, attempts to simultaneously measure the two dimensions of thinking style as either situation-specific or as an enduring state are even fewer and lack validation in a broad context.

To that end, we conducted three comprehensive studies. First, we developed and cross-validated new two-dimensional scales to measure what we term *task-specific thinking style* (TSTS) using a series of experimental tasks designed to induce primarily rational or experiential thinking. Our highly reliable TSTS measure was, as predicted, best fit by a two-dimensional factor structure. Rational TSTS was higher for rational tasks and experiential TSTS was higher for experiential tasks, providing empirical support for the idea that cognitive tasks can be arrayed along a continuum of cognition. Congruence of task and TSTS improved task performance, and incongruence worsened task performance; thus TSTS is an important process variable in understanding task performance. Both the task itself, as well as dispositional tendencies to adopt a particular thinking style, predicts TSTS. As expected, the TSTS adopted for a task is explained more by the task itself than by

dispositional differences in thinking style, supporting the use of experimental tasks to prime thinking styles and suggesting TSTS as a manipulation check for such tasks. Since dispositional tendencies predict TSTS, disposition influences the degree to which a priming task is likely to be effective, and thus disposition should be measured as a covariate when attempting to prime thinking style.

More importantly, we use TSTS to systematically test congruence effects between the demands of a task and the thinking style adopted when performing the task. We examine when congruence between thinking style and task increases actual and perceived task performance, decreases task difficulty, increases involvement, and improves mood—and if congruence effects are found for both rational and experiential tasks that require qualitatively different processing styles. Our findings contribute to the literature on congruence effects involving thinking styles, and argue for task specific thinking style being routinely measured as a process variable when considering performance on a broad range of consumer activities. For example, we find that for experiential tasks, a “low cognitive engagement” strategy results in relatively high performance, but at a personal cost to the respondent. This is a particularly interesting result since although low effort strategies hurt performance (accuracy) on rational tasks (e.g. Payne et al. 1993), but not on the experiential task—low effort strategies are psychologically detrimental as respondents employing a low effort strategy perceive the experiential task as more difficult and their mood and involvement suffers. This suggests that the effort-accuracy tradeoff may not apply to experiential tasks—thinking “too much” hurts performance, while thinking “too little” seems to help.

We also hypothesized that *dispositional thinking style*, an enduring predisposition toward predominantly rational or experiential thinking, plays a key role in determining the thinking style employed in a given task, beyond the demands of the task itself. Dispositional tendencies create heterogeneity in how different individuals approach the same task, contributing to congruence or incongruence of TSTS with the task. The results show that some of the variation in whether an experiential or rational thinking style is adopted for a task will result from dispositional tendencies. Thus, TSTS provides an important mediating link between a broad, dispositional cross-situational thinking style, and performance on tasks that are congruent or incongruent with a thinking style.

Our TSTS scales may also prove useful in reconciling apparent observed conflicts in thinking style. Some theories assume the two thinking styles work in a mutually exclusive manner (Brewer 1988; Fazio 1986). Others assume sequential processing, with the more rapid experiential thinking preceding rational thinking (Fiske and Neuberg 1988; Gilbert 1989; Wegener and Petty 1995). Our approach, following Epstein (1991) and other modern dual process theories, assumes the two operate both simultaneously and sequentially. While our experimental tasks indicated largely *oppositional* effects of the two styles, it is likely that other tasks might demonstrate *synergistic* effects, with both experiential and rational TSTS correlating positively with task performance (in this case, the “dual thinking styles” strategy we observed in some of our experiments would be optimal). For example, Donovan and Epstein (1997) demonstrated that priming intuitive knowledge can facilitate intellectual performance, and Norris and Epstein (2003a) demonstrated numerous situations in which both thinking styles predict in the same direction.

Our findings are also relevant for everyday activities consumers engage in. The thinking style differences we observed on laboratory performance tasks suggest we can and should expect to find differences in rational compared to experiential task-specific

thinking for work vs. play (Babin, Darden and Griffin 1994; Hammond, McWilliam and Diaz 1998; Wolfinger and Gilly 2001), directed vs. nondirected search (Bloch Sherrell and Ridgway 1986; Bloch, Ridgway and Sherrell 1989), choice among specific alternatives vs. navigational choice (Hoffman and Novak 1996; Deci and Ryan 1985), and planned purchases vs. impulse buys (Rook 1987).

Recently, cognitive neuropsychologists have utilized brain imaging tools such as fMRI to support the presence in the brain of dual thinking styles (Goel 2003; Goel and Dolan 2003) and biochemical theories of emotion speculate that “gut reactions,” for example, may literally reside in one’s stomach (Pert 1997). Our empirical results demonstrating the importance of task-specific thinking style over and above dispositional thinking style for task performance may provide further impetus to scientists seeking neurological and chemical pathways that correspond to human cognition and task performance.

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"Thinking Inside the Box: Why Consumers Enjoy Constrained Creative Experiences"

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Since paint-by-number kits surged in popularity in the 1950's, consumers have sought out products designed to assist them in being creative. "Self-expression for the time deprived" has created demand for products offered by firms ranging from specialty crafts (e.g., Martha Stewart) to home improvement (e.g., Lowe's). Among the many products offering constrained creative experiences are kits (e.g., model trains, needlepoint), how-to guides (e.g., cook books, home repair, landscaping), and inspirational sources (e.g., home improvement programs). We consider these products as offering "constrained" creative opportunities because the products themselves explicitly constrain elements of the process (via a set of

instructions) and/or the outcome (via a visual representation of the end product). The recent sales growth in these categories suggests that consumers value these constraints, and a central objective of this research is to understand why.

More specifically, the goals of this research are first, to understand consumers' motivations for engaging in creative tasks and second, to examine how constraints influence the quality of those experiences. A qualitative study is initially used to address these goals. Two experiments then build on the qualitative results, offering the first experimental evidence documenting the conditions under which consumers enjoy creative activities. The experiments also measure and test specific mediators to explain why consumers enjoy such tasks.

In the qualitative study, twelve respondents from eight different hobby areas (woodworking, scrap-booking, sewing, cooking, model building, card-making, quilting, jewelry-making) discussed their motivations for undertaking their hobbies. They also explained how products in their areas (e.g., kits, books, classes) influenced their experiences. Data analysis from these interviews revealed seven different basic motivations for undertaking the creative tasks, with the needs of competence and autonomy the most frequently discussed. The data also helped to identify the key pros and cons offered by creativity products. Interestingly, most of the products influenced the needs for competence (positively) and autonomy (negatively).

The findings from the qualitative study suggested the relevance for cognitive evaluation theory (CET) for further studies of consumers' creative experiences (Ryan and Deci 2000). The theory focuses specifically on two important determinants of self-motivation, the needs for autonomy and competence. Thus, we derive a series of hypotheses based on the theory to predict how the constraints imposed by creativity products (e.g., step-by-step instructions and target outcomes) will influence consumers' motivations during and enjoyment of creative experiences. In the experimental studies, participants engaged in hands-on creative tasks: cookie-making and decorating.

In the first experimental study, two factors were manipulated between-subjects: (1) instructions (step-by-step provided vs. not provided) and (2) target outcome (picture of the final product provided vs. no picture provided). Participants were 100 undergraduate students who were each shown to their own cookie-making station which contained a set of tools, pre-made dough, pre-made white icing, food coloring, and cookie decorations. At that point, both experimental manipulations occurred and all participants proceeded in making their cookies. After completing the cookie-making process, participants completed a survey instrument that contained the dependent variables of interest: competence, autonomy, and task enjoyment.

The results reveal an interaction between the two constraints (instructions and target outcome) on task enjoyment, such that participants reported the highest levels of task enjoyment when a full set of instructions was provided without a target outcome. To better understand this interaction, we performed mediation tests which revealed that perceived competence fully mediated and perceived autonomy partially mediated the effect. When instructions were provided without a target outcome, perceived competence was at its highest. Perceived autonomy was also high under these conditions, and the relatively high levels of both of these factors resulted in the greatest enjoyment. Those receiving no target outcome and a set of instructions had both the ability to successfully follow task guidance (competence) and the freedom to create an individualized design (autonomy).

The first experimental study assumed no level of prior experience in the study participants, and through randomization, miti-

gated any effects that such differences would have on motivation and enjoyment. However, prior skill levels are likely to have an important influence, not only on one's likelihood of purchasing a creative product, but also on the likelihood of enjoying the experience offered. Thus, the second experimental study examined the influence of skill level and one constraint (target outcome) on motivation and enjoyment. In this second study, all participants were provided with a full set of instructions. Target outcome was manipulated between-subjects, and prior baking skill was measured and subsequently dichotomized to create a high and a low skill group. The task and procedure was largely the same as that described in the first experimental study.

The results from this second study revealed that prior skill level may be a critical segmentation variable for manufacturers of creativity products. Those participants with low skill levels were able to achieve levels of perceived competence and task enjoyment comparable to those experienced by the high skill participants when a target outcome was dictated. Under these conditions, people of all skill levels had similar perceptions of task difficulty. For those with high skill levels, however, perceptions of competence and autonomy declined significantly when a target outcome was specified and consequently, task enjoyment declined as well.

While the study of creativity has received growing attention, Sternberg and Dess (2001) note that "we do not know enough about this important psychological process" (p. 332). Certainly this statement also applies to our understanding of consumers' experiences during and motivations underlying creative tasks. While restricted in its scope, our research is designed to initiate a more thorough examination of consumers' creative experiences.

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"The Eye's Mind and the Mind's Eye: Impact of Overt Visual Attention on Creative Thinking"

Baba Shiv and Monica Wadhwa

"Eyes cannot be held responsible when the mind does the seeing"...*Pubilius Syrus*

Scanning our visual environment is an activity, which human beings engage in most of our waking lives. As consumers, we constantly scan our market-environment for information. Furthermore, depending on the size of the visual field, scanning the market environment might involve either a broad or a narrow scope of overt attention. For instance, one could shop for a particular wine (say, Merlot) from an online wine market with all the wines cluttered in a narrow visual area, thereby requiring a narrow scope of overt attention. Or, one could shop for the same wine from an online market with all the wines widespread in a broad visual area, which would require a broad scope of overt-attention. Take another example, that of watching a movie on a weekend. One could watch a movie on a 17-inch TV screen, which would require focusing on a narrow visual area, or one could watch it on a 50-inch TV screen, which would entail focusing on a broad visual area. A question that arises is, would scanning a broad visual field versus a narrow visual field to search for a wine, or watching a movie on a 50-inch rather than on a 17-inch screen make one more creative in a subsequent task of coming up with creative gift ideas for a friend? We posed this

question in a short survey to twenty consumers. All the survey respondents replied to this question in the negative, suggesting that based on common intuition, scanning the environment in one task should not impact creativity on a subsequent unrelated task.

Contrary to the common intuition, however, we argue that the way we scan our consumer environment can impact our creativity on a subsequent unrelated task. Specifically, we propose that a broad scope of overt attention can broaden the scope of covert attention, which, in turn can bolster creativity on a subsequent task. Our predictions are consistent with literature on visual perception, which suggests that the mechanisms underlying perceptual and conceptual attention are high correlated (Grosbras and Paus 2002; Kosslyn 1980). Furthermore, research on creativity suggests that a broad versus a narrow scope of internal attention is likely to bolster creativity (Mednick 1962). Thus, drawing upon the two streams of research, creativity and visual perception, we hypothesize that a broad overt attention associated with scanning a broad visual field is likely to enhance the covert breadth of attention, which can be beneficially applied to a subsequent consumer creativity task.

The results from our three studies support our predictions. In study-1, we utilized a movie-consumption (movie clips from the movie *Top-Gun*) task. Specifically, we manipulated the overt scope of attention by manipulating the size of the screen on which participants watched the movie. In the broad overt-attention, respondents watched the movie on a 50-inch screen, while in the narrow overt-attention respondents watched the movie on a 17-inch screen. Consistent with our predictions, respondents in the broad overt-attention condition generated more creative ideas than those in the narrow overt-attention condition. More interestingly, those in the broad overt-attention condition drew gift ideas from a significantly broader range of product categories than those in narrow overt-attention.

We replicated our results of study-1 in study-2 using a different consumption scenario. In study-2, respondents engaged in an online wine search task, and thereafter participated in the creative gift ideas task. Respondents were asked to search for Merlot wine from an online wine-market containing ten different wines. We manipulated overt attention by manipulating the size of the wine market. In the broad overt-attention condition, the wines were scattered across the screen covering the entire 15-inch display, while in the narrow overt-attention condition, all the wines appeared in the center of the screen in a small circle. Thereafter, as in study-1, all respondents participated in the creative gift-idea task. As in study-1, those in the broad overt-attention condition generated more creative ideas and drew ideas from a significantly broader range of product categories than those in narrow overt-attention condition. These results suggest that overt-attention impacts covert-attention, thereby impacting creativity on a subsequent task.

Our exposition thus far suggests that the breadth of covert attention with its concomitant effects on creativity is influenced by the overt attention associated with the size of the external visual field. Specifically, we suggest that the broad scope of overt attention bolsters the breadth of covert attention, which can be beneficially applied to a subsequent consumer creativity task. If our exposition is valid, then narrowing covert attention by asking respondents to restrict eye-movement and focus on one object in the scene versus focusing on the entire scene during the external attention task should attenuate the visual field effects on creativity in the broad-overt attention condition. This logic formed the basis to provide stronger evidence for our conceptualization in experiment 3. In experiment-3, respondents engaged in a car race task. Respondents were shown cartoon-car race clips on either an 8-inch or a 30-inch screen. Half of the respondents were made to restrict eye-movement by asking them to focus on a specific car in the

center of the screen, while others were asked to pay attention to all the cars on the screen. Consistent with our predictions, we show that in the broad-overt attention condition, the effects of scope of overt-attention on subsequent creativity task were attenuated when respondents were asked to restrict eye-movement. However, restricting eye movement did not impact performance on the subsequent creativity task in the narrow overt-attention condition.

Our results from the three studies suggest that a broad overt attention associated with scanning a broad visual field as opposed to narrow overt attention associated with scanning a narrow visual field enhances the scope of covert attention, which can be beneficially applied to a subsequent consumer creativity task. Our results have important implications for marketers' merchandising strategies. In these studies, we manipulated broad versus narrow visual attention using three different strategies—a movie consumption task, an online wine market task and a car-race task. However, broad versus narrow visual attention can be activated using various in-store strategies such as store placement. Moreover, a lot of time retailers end up with an overstock of goods that they put on sale. It is likely that just manipulating the size of display could help consumers think of more creative uses for such items and therefore buy more of the assorted on-sale items.

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The Process by Which Brand Committed Consumers Evaluate Competitive Brands: The Case for Similarity and Dissimilarity Testing

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Most research on brand commitment has focused on how people defend their attitudes when faced with information that *undermines* their attitudinal position. However, the effects of attitudinal commitment may not be limited to mounting defenses only when an individual's attitude is challenged. As Chaiken, Liberman and Eagly (1989) observe, individuals not only resist information that is counter to their preferred positions, but may also actively undermine information that "supports non-preferred positions." The process by which committed consumers evaluate competitive brands even when those brands do not attack one's preferred brand is studied in this research. Specifically, the cognitive processes that are involved in generating the bias is examined.

When asked to make a judgment about an object, it is not made in isolation, but is made with reference to some other object or a standard. We first argue that high commitment consumers will choose the brand that they are committed to as the comparison standard while low commitment consumers are more likely to select an exemplar, or a prototype as the standard (See Raghunathan and Irwin 2001).

Next, since low commitment consumers are not 'attached' to any one brand they are likely to be more 'inclusive' in their focus while high commitment consumers are 'exclusive' in their intent since their focus is on preserving the existing brand attachment and have a reason to limit their consideration set. This inclusive versus exclusive focus of low versus high commitment consumers should translate to how they evaluate an advertised brand. Low commitment consumers, because of their interest in including other brands, will tend to look at the *similarities* between the advertised brand and their current set of preferred brands. On the other hand, high commitment consumers, because of their interest in excluding other brands, will focus on the *differences* between the advertised brand and their preferred brand. These differences in the type of processing that an advertised brand is subjected to will translate into differences in attitudes toward the brand for high versus low commitment consumers. The focus on similarities will make low commitment consumers assimilate the advertised brand toward their preferred brand (assuming the advertisement message is strong and persuasive). The focus on differences will make the high commitment consumers contrast the advertised brand away from their preferred brand (e.g., Mussweiler 2003). Three studies are reported that examine these predictions.

In the first study, the objective was to show that consumers who are more versus less committed to a brand will rate a new competitive brand differently due to differences in the level of similarity or dissimilarity they focus on. As expected, when provided an advertisement for a new brand, high commitment participants seemed to generate more dissimilar thoughts while low commitment consumers seemed to generate more similarity thoughts.

In the second study, a more specific test for similarity/dissimilarity testing was adopted. It was argued that if both high and low commitment consumers are instructed to focus on the similarities between their preferred brand and the advertised brand, the effect of the instructions on low commitment consumers should be marginal because they already focus on the similarities, but the

effect of the instructions on high commitment consumers should be greater because it changes the nature of their processing and makes them focus more on the similarities between the two brands. The focus on similarities should lead the high commitment consumers to report greater similarity between the advertised and their preferred brand than they would do in the absence of such instructions. Thus, compared to a control condition, high commitment consumers who are instructed to focus on the similarities between an advertised brand and their preferred brand would report greater similarity between the two brands and more positive attitudes toward the advertised brand, whereas there would be minimal effect of such instructions on low commitment consumers. The results of this study confirmed these expectations.

Finally, the third study was conducted to test the proposition that high commitment individuals invoke their preferred brand as the standard while low commitment individuals invoke either an exemplar or prototype as the standard for comparison. Using a priming manipulation and argumentation similar to that we employed in study 2 we find that high commitment individuals have a more positive evaluation of the advertised brand when asked to focus on the differences between an advertised brand and a less preferred brand (rather than their most preferred, and therefore committed brand) However, since low commitment individuals are more inclusive and use an exemplar or prototype brand for comparison purposes, having them focus on the differences between a less preferred brand and the advertised brand had a less effect on their brand evaluations.

These set of studies suggest that committed consumers are more likely to invoke their preferred brand and focus on how the advertised brand is different from it. This process, we find, results in committed individuals contrasting the advertised brand away from their preferred brand, and thus lower their evaluations. On the other hand, we find that less committed individuals' focus is on the similarities between the advertised brand and the brand they invoke. Due to the focus on similarities, less committed individuals are more likely to assimilate the advertised brand towards the brand that comes to their mind, and thus generate more positive evaluations.

While Ahluwalia (2000) found that high commitment consumers employ various biased processing mechanisms to counter information that attacks their attitudes, it appears that the biased processing mechanisms that are employed by high commitment consumers are different when faced with information about competitive brands. When faced with an advertisement for a competitive brand, high commitment consumers instinctively appear to adopt a 'rejection' mode of processing where they are seeking out ways to undermine the brand. This is accomplished primarily by contrasting the advertised brand away from one's preferred brand by focusing on how the new brand is different from their preferred brand.

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Agent Gender and Sex-Typed Social Influenceability in Online Communication

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Past research in gender and social influence has repeatedly found that men are generally more influential than women in most persuasion settings (Carli 2001). Men have power and status based on expertise and authority; the typical role of men is to lead, direct, and accomplish goals through job-related competence; thus, men are "agentic." Since persuasion is about changing attitudes and dominating over other's issue positions, persuasive attempts could basically be considered a masculine, rather than a feminine, task. Thus, it is not surprising that men exert more social influence when it comes to hard-core persuasion than women do. However, women might achieve social influence differently. The traditional social role of women is that of care-taker. Women are expected to be domestic, communal, and submissive. Having relatively lower social status and less power than men do, women are expected to be nice and benevolent, not necessarily display power, assertiveness, and dominance. Having genuine interest in others well being, benevolent and feminine individuals are trusted by others and their recommendations can be accepted equally well.

To date, gender research has found ample evidence that gender-stereotypical sex roles are prevalent in interpersonal relationships. In this study, I revisit gender influenceability in the e-commerce context where consumers interact with a computer agent while shopping. The context of human-computer interaction (HCI) provides a unique environment where social characteristics, such as personality, of a computer agent can be created or even manipulated (Moon and Nass 1996). For example, a computer agent can be given an artificial gender identity that emulates that of a human being. How would people treat a computer agent when the agent assumes a human-like gender identity?

In this study, a computer agent simulation is conducted where a computer agent with a contrived male or a female gender identity (the first experimental factor) interacts with consumers who are in the market for digital cameras. The "gendered" agent provides product information and shows four cameras with detailed attribute descriptions. During the consumer shopping process, the gendered agent uses two different levels of sales aggressiveness (the second experimental factor). I argue that an agent's counter product recommendation for a more expensive item could be interpreted as a display of confidence, aggressiveness and even self-interest, all of which are strong male stereotypes (Bem 1974). Based on sex-role stereotypes, a male agent's use of aggressive sales tactic may be viewed as more acceptable than a female agent's use of the same sales tactic. An overtly dominating and aggressive sales tactic used by a female agent may likely face consumer distrust because such behavior violates the traditional female sex-role.

The social influenceability of a computer agent in online communication is enhanced through consumers' perceptions of the agent's competence and benevolence. The more competent and the more benevolent the agent is perceived to be, the more likely consumers are to have intentions to trust the agent. Thus, I associate the influenceability of a (male or female) computer agent with subjects' trust in the agent. Next, I discuss the multi-dimensionality of consumer trust by examining cognitive, affective, and intentional aspects.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

In this paper, I examine agent influenceability in terms of consumer trust. The basic premise of this paper is that a communicator can achieve higher social influence when one is trusted than

not. Therefore, earning consumer trust means acquiring social influence. The importance of trust in interpersonal relationships as well as online-based relationships cannot be overstated in marketing. Golembiewski and McConkie (1975) note that "perhaps there is no single variable which so thoroughly influences interpersonal and group behaviour as does trust...". Trust is the fundamental driver of interpersonal relationships and social order (and disorder) and has been studied extensively. Trust facilitates one's decision-making when finding relationship and/or business partners. In the sales literature, the dependability of a retail salesperson is among the buyer's most critical concerns. Furthermore, trustworthiness is found to be of the greatest importance among the many characteristics of a salesperson (e.g., friendly relationship, personable style, patient buying assistance, and quick service) for the buyer to determine future business with the salesperson (Hawes, Rao, and Baker 1993).

Consumer trust is multidimensional-having cognitive, affective, and intentional aspects (Lee 2002). Cognitive trust is based on an agent's competence. Lewis and Weigert (1985) views trust as predictions and expectations that an agent will perform a job competently. The definition of trust by Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna (1985) suggests that trust is merely the degree of confidence one thinks about a relationship. Another definition by Zaltman and Moorman (1988) suggests that trust represents the extent to which the parties can predict one another's performance; having faith that the other party will perform in a responsive manner with expertise and knowledge.

Trust also has an affective component. Luhmann (1979) suggests that true trust begins where (cognitive) knowledge ends. Benevolence refers to genuine interests in the other party's welfare (Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna 1985), and a "genuine responsiveness" to the needs of the other party (Friedland 1990). In close interpersonal relationships, trust is often conceptualized in terms of attributions concerning the partner's benevolence (Deutsch 1962; Giffin 1967; Pearce 1974). Benevolent partners have genuine, friendly interests in the other party's welfare (Rempel and Holmes 1986), aside from their egocentric motives (Mayer, David, and Schoorman 1995). Thus, perceiving a partner's benevolence includes feeling close to and cared by a partner who is on the trustor's side, because the partner cares about the trustor's best interest, not his or her self-interest.

Finally, trust is intention. Giffin (1967) cites risk as an essential element of trust. When one trusts another, something is risked by the trustor. Zaltman and Moorman's (1988) definition of trust adds the "intentional" dimension to the meaning of "trusting." Often trust represents the trustor's willingness to depend on the trustee in a complex, uncertain, and risky situation. According to Rousseau et al. (1998), trust is better understood as the intention to rely on a partner—a psychological state to accept vulnerability based on positive feelings (affective basis) and expectations (cognitive basis) (Rousseau et al. 1998, p. 395). If one truly trusts an agent, one must be willing to rely on the agent in the decision-making process (Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpande 1992), and willingly be ready to place one's resources at the disposal of the agent (Coleman 1990; Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna 1985; Zand 1972). Accordingly, trusting intentions can be defined as the willingness to delegate decision power to the party to be trusted.

Given that consumer trust can have three aspects (competence, benevolence, and trusting intention), if a "gendered" agent demon-

strates a recognizable aggressiveness in his/her sales tactic, what role does the agent's sex play in subjects' evaluation of the competence and benevolence of the agent, and the intention to trust the agent?

HYPOTHESIS

Past research in gender influence has found that in general men are perceived to be more influential than women. Gender stereotyping includes greater scrutiny of women's assertive leadership behaviors and greater acceptance of men's display of competence and knowledge. Carli (2001) notes that "men have more right to act as authorities than women do, and that women must communicate communal motivation more than men. As a result, not only would people generally be more open to the influence of men than that of women, but women's influence would be more conditional than men's, dependent on the use of an influence style that corresponds prescriptively to the stereotypical female role" (p.726).

As noted earlier, empirical evidence shows that women are in general less influential than men are in persuasive communication setting. Such influenceability differential by agent gender depends on the context of interaction with various moderating influences in operation. People are more open to the influence of men than that of women, and more importantly, whatever influence women can achieve may be more conditional than men's. Gender-typing of the task is one example; women's influence is found only in feminine and domestic tasks (Carli 2001). The importance of masculine competence might become more pronounced in masculine areas such as technology and management than in feminine areas (Carli 2001). The Persuasion Knowledge Model (Friestad and Wright 1994) also suggests that consumers expect the content and type of message (e.g., information on masculine products) to be consistent with the characteristics of a communicator (e.g., male gender identity).

Since competence and power are masculine traits, unless women temper their expertise or agency with displays of communality, warmth, and niceness, prescriptive sex stereotypes can reduce competent women's likeability and influenceability (Rudman and Glick 2001). Such prescriptive sex stereotype can penalize women whose communication style appears to be too agentic and masculine (Rudman and Glick 2001). A male communicators' display self-confidence can be taken as competence; while similar presentation of masculine assertiveness by a female communicator can create a backlash effect in the form of losing audience trust (Rudman and Glick 2001).

Agent's sex and sales aggressiveness are the two focal manipulation factors in this experimental study. The experimental procedure and simulation protocols are as follows. Agent's sex was manipulated using gender-typical names (John or Jane) and faces (a male or a female cartoon face with the warm script). In order to vary the levels of aggressiveness in sales tactic, recommendation price and a display of agent's self-confidence were used. Under a more aggressive condition, the agent would counter the consumer's original choice of camera with another camera that was 10% more expensive and said "I am sure that this is a superior choice than your earlier choice of camera." In a less aggressive condition, the agent quoted a price that was 10% less expensive for the same camera and said "I think you *might* like this camera better than your earlier choice of camera." In both conditions, the cameras recommended by the agent were identical except for the price.

Making a recommendation that can invalidate a subject's own choice is a dominating behavior in itself and can trigger reactance to the invasive recommendation (Fitzsimmons and Lehmann 2004). When the sales recommendation involves a price upgrade, it can be

considered a display of confidence, independence, dominance, and even self-interest, all of which are strong male stereotypes (Bem 1974). Therefore, I hypothesize that when a female agent make a price upgrade recommendation, she will suffer from significant loss of consumer trust in terms of deterioration of perceived competence, benevolence, and trusting intention—due to the mismatch of her dominating/aggressive behavior with the submissive and compliant female stereotype. However, a male agent's identical behavior will less likely result in the loss of his trustworthiness as a result of the male stereotypes of self-assurance and dominance. Accordingly, my research hypothesis addresses these sensitivity differentials based on agent gender on all three dimensions of consumer trust, when the agent makes an aggressive price upgrade recommendation.

H1: As the agent adopts a higher, as opposed to a lower, level of aggressiveness in sales tactic:

- (a) the perceived competence of a female agent will diminish to a greater extent than the perceived competence of a male agent will;
- (b) the perceived benevolence of a female agent will diminish to a greater extent than the perceived benevolence of a male agent will; and
- (c) subjects' intention to trust a female agent will diminish to a greater extent than their intention to trust a male agent will.

In the next section, I explain the experimental procedure that tests the aforementioned research hypotheses using a computer agent simulation.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a 2 (agent gender: male and female) X 2 (aggressive price recommendation: 10% less expensive and 10% more expensive) between-subject design. Subjects were recruited from a population of young adults (undergraduate college students) in a large land-grant US University. Undergraduate students were deemed appropriate for this online consumer behavior experiment, because they generally spend considerable time on the Internet. A total of 95 students participated in the experiment. Students were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions.

Interface Protocol. The experiment required some computer-programming resources in order to enable different social characteristics of the computer agent, e.g., agent gender. Macromedia's Authorware 5.2 was utilized to create the prototype of the agent program. The base protocol of the shopping simulation included several sections including (1) a brief introduction of the agent (in the male agent condition, a male face with the name of John was projected on screen; in the female agent condition, a female face introduced her as Jane); (2) provision of information about important features of digital cameras (e.g., resolution, screen size, and zoom size) (3) Agent's request for subject input regarding the importance of each feature when purchasing a digital camera; (4) Agent's presentation of four cameras that could match the respondent's preferences revealed from the preference inquiry in section #3; (5) subject choice of one camera among the four cameras shown in section #4; and (6) Agent's recommendation of a different camera that had two levels of upgraded features and was 10% more (or less) expensive than the subject's earlier choice of camera in section #5.

Measures. Competence is the confidence in the agent's capability with respect to the role performance. The following measurement items were adopted and modified from what had been origi-

TABLE 1
Experiment Results by Condition

<i>Agent Gender</i>	<i>Sales Tactic</i>	<i>Competence</i>	<i>Benevolence</i>	<i>Trusting Intention</i>
Male	Non-Aggressive	14.29	15.03	9.18
Male	Aggressive	15.20	14.25	8.50
Female	Non-Aggressive	14.70	16.59	9.00
Female	Aggressive	13.47	14.28	7.61

nally proposed by Smith and Barclay (1997), Geller (1999), and Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpande (1992): (1) When it came to camera, [Agent name] knew enough to give me a good advice; (2) I trust [Agent name]'s expertise in cameras; (3) I had confidence in [Agent name]'s expertise in cameras; and (4) I was confident in [Agent name]'s knowledge about cameras.

The following measure for benevolence were modified from the previously published scales by Ganesan (1994), Hawes, Rao, and Baker (1993), and Price and Arnould (1999): (1) [Agent name] seemed to care about me; (2) [Agent name] made me feel good; (3) [Agent name] was like a friend during the shopping experience; I felt close to [Agent name] during the shopping; and (5) [Agent name] responded to my needs in a caring way (a new item created for this study).

Trusting intentions were measured using the following items modified from by Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpande's measures (1992): (1) I was willing to let [Agent name] make important choice decisions for me; (2) I was willing to trust [Agent name] to make camera purchases even when I was unable to monitor his/her activities; and (3) I would be comfortable giving [Agent name] responsibility to make camera purchase decisions for me. At the end of experiment, respondents were debriefed and thanked for their participation. Reliability for the three trust scales was acceptable (Competence Chronbach's $\alpha=0.77$; Benevolence Chronbach's $\alpha=0.90$; Trusting Intention= 0.74) and thus a summed score of each trust construct was used for subsequent statistical analyses.

Manipulation Check. All subjects answered correctly when asked about the gender of the agent they interacted with while shopping for cameras. Subjects were also asked to choose from the following whether the camera recommended by [Agent name: John or Jane] was (1) more expensive; (2) the same price; or (3) less expensive than their own choice. All subjects answered correctly. Respondents then evaluated the level of aggressiveness of agent's sales tactic using a 5-point scale ranging from "not at all aggressive" (=1) to "extremely aggressive" (=5). Respondents evaluated the agent recommending a 10% price upgrade with strong self-confidence to be more aggressive ($M=2.98$) than the agent recommending a 10% price discount ($M=2.58$, $t=2.06$, $p=0.04$). In order to check for potential confounding, the agent's attractiveness and likeability were measured using a seven-point semantic differential scale. The results of t-tests demonstrated that the male and female agents did not differ significantly in terms of attractiveness ($t=0.29$, $p=0.76$), likeability ($t=0.08$, $p=0.93$), attitude toward agent ($t=0.51$, $p=0.60$), perceived agent warmth ($t=-0.77$, $p=0.44$), or perceived agent coldness ($t=-0.32$, $p=0.74$). In addition, for the item of "I was confident about the agent's expertise," the male and female agents did not differ significantly ($t=1.41$, $p=0.16$), although the male agent received a slightly higher mark ($M_{\text{male}}=3.66$, $M_{\text{female}}=3.44$).

RESULTS

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted using the three summed scores of agent competence, agent benevolence, and trusting intention as dependent variables and two manipulation factors (agent gender and aggressive price recommendation). The mean figures are shown in Table 1. The multivariate test showed that the MANOVA model was overall significant (Wilks' Lambda= 0.02 , $p=0.00$; Hotelling's $T=36.81$, $p=0.00$). The multivariate main effect of agent gender on the three trust scales was only marginally significant (Wilks' Lambda= 0.92 , $p=0.000$; Hotelling's $T=0.08$, $p=0.06$), and the multivariate main effect of aggressive price recommendation was insignificant (Wilks' Lambda= 0.93 , $p=0.121$; Hotelling's $T=0.06$, $p=0.12$).

In order to test the research hypothesis, I examined the interaction effect between agent gender and aggressive price recommendation on each trust construct. Given the sex role stereotype, female agent's aggressive product recommendation (i.e., recommending a product that is more expensive than the anchor price) is incongruous with the typical female sex role, it was earlier hypothesized that subjects' trust perceptions about the female agent's competence, benevolence and trusting intention would erode to a greater extent than their perceptions about the male agent would.

The results of planned contrast tests showed that H1 was overall supported. For the female agent, the perceived competence diminished significantly ($F_{1, 46}=4.03$, $p=0.05$) when the agent adopted a more aggressive sales tactic ($M=13.47$) than when the agent adopted a less aggressive sales tactic ($M=14.70$). However, for the male agent, the difference in perception of the agent's competence by the higher recommendation price ($M=15.20$) compared to the lower recommendation price ($M=14.29$) was not significant ($F_{1, 45}=1.29$, $p=0.26$). Thus, H1a was supported. Interestingly, there was directional evidence, while insignificant, that the male agent could be perceived to be more competent when he recommended a higher-priced camera compared to when he recommended a lower-priced camera, which was opposite to what was observed with the female agent, because her attempt at up-selling did weaken subjects' perception about the female agent's competence. For the male agent, the perceived benevolence did not diminish significantly ($F_{1, 45}=0.30$, $p=0.58$) as a result of increasing sales aggressiveness ($M_{\text{high price}}=14.25$ vs. $M_{\text{low price}}=15.03$). However, the same attempt to switch subjects to a higher-priced item resulted in a significant weakening of the perceived benevolence of the female agent ($F_{1, 46}=5.28$, $p=0.02$, $M_{\text{low price}}=16.59$ vs. $M_{\text{high price}}=14.28$), thereby supporting H1b. The contrast test between the male and female agents again demonstrated female vulnerability in terms of trusting intention. A more aggressive sales tactic did not affect subjects' intention to trust the male agent ($F_{1, 45}=0.79$, $p=0.37$; $M_{\text{high price}}=8.50$ vs. $M_{\text{low price}}=9.18$), but it negatively affected subjects' intention to trust the female agent ($F_{1,$

$t_6=4.37, p=0.04; M_{\text{high price}}=7.61$ vs. $M_{\text{low price}}=9.00$). Thus, $H1c$ was also supported.

I also checked for potential influences of subject sex on three trust constructs and found no significant main effect of subject sex, nor was the interaction effect between subject sex and agent gender on competence, benevolence, and trusting intention found to be significant.

DISCUSSION

Among various communicator attributes that enhance influenceability, competence and benevolence are essential factors people use to assess the validity of information provided by the communicator. A competent agent can provide valid information because s/he knows what is right and wrong based on expertise and knowledge. A benevolent agent will provide the best information within his/her knowledge based on genuine willingness to help and serve customers. Biernat and Fuegen (2001) note that "the very essence of gender stereotype defines men to be instrumentally competent and agentic compared to women" (p.707).

The gender stereotypes also prescribe women to be less task-competent and more submissive than men because women are traditionally associated with the homemaker role (Fuegen et al. 2004). Leadership traits are also gendered (Kawakami, White, and Langer 2000). Since leaders are expected to be competent, task-oriented, masculine, and even "charismatic," a successful leadership role may conflict with the traditional female gender stereotype. Carli (2001) notes that since people are more open to the influence of men than that of women, whatever influence women can achieve is more volatile than men's. Kawakami, White and Langer (2000) describe a women's paradox. If women adopt a masculine leadership style, they will be disliked and if they adopt a nurturing female leadership style, they will be liked, but deemed incompetent. Thus, when women hold leadership positions, they are vulnerable to "prejudiced evaluations and lowered effectiveness" (Eagly et al 1995, p.126).

While the gender of a communicator could be a peripheral cue (background variable) rather than central (issue-relevant) information in the context of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM, Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann 1983), subjects often associate communicator gender with content expertise, such as men have more expertise than women, for example in technology arena. The Persuasion Knowledge Model (Friestad and Wright 1994) proposes that experts deliver strong messages and non-experts deliver weak messages. Thus, male salesmen are expected to make strong recommendations based on competence and confidence, whereas female sales associates are expected to deliver weaker (and benevolent) product recommendations. When these expectations are violated, consumers might engage in deep cognition to look for an answer. If the source (a female agent) has an apparent self-interest (e.g., seeking more profits) in her advocacy for higher priced products, "the inconsistency between message and source is interpreted as a manipulative mal-intent and evokes a negative response" (Artz and Tybout 1999, p.52). My experiment results suggest that male communicators' display self-confidence in technology can be taken as competence; a display of masculine assertiveness by female communicators can engender a backlash effect in the form of her losing consumer trust.

IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study shed light on salesmanship and leadership for both genders. For male salesperson, competence is the major influence factor and a male agent who is perceived to

possess sufficient expertise and competence can make a strong sales recommendation to upgrade consumers' product choice without losing his credibility. Introduction of higher-priced items by a male agent can be even viewed as a display of expertise and self-confidence in content knowledge especially in the sales of male-oriented products. On the other hand, women stereotypically are not expected to have much expertise in technology. Therefore, a female (and supposedly non-expert) agent's recommendation of higher-priced cameras could have triggered consumer doubt of her hidden motives, and as a result, consumers might have readjusted their evaluation of her based on this evidence of dishonesty and self-interest. A better sales technique for a female agent that could have been a recommendation of an alternative which provides a better value to a customer. A subtle delivery of non-aggressive product recommendations by a female agent could have been taken as a sign that she is honest and cares about the customer, thereby possibly enhancing her influenceability *via* a display of feminine benevolence.

Given the fact that during the past decade, the number of women occupying and seeking managerial and leadership positions have grown exponentially, my results have important implications for women in leadership positions. Women in leadership positions in male-dominated areas should not lose benevolence and genuineness while they seek higher social influenceability through masculine charisma. A woman leader in a managerial position who appears to be competent *and* benevolent at the same time, demonstrating an androgynous leadership style may likely achieve higher social influence than a female leader who is simply masculine and dominating (Bem 1974).

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this experiment was to examine the sex-typed influenceability of male and female agents when a computer agent utilizes two different product recommendation styles. In one condition the agent attempted to switch consumers to a more expensive alternative, and in the other condition, to a less expensive product. If the agent were an effective persuader, subjects would likely trust the agent even after the price upgrade attempts. On the other hand, if the agent were not an effective persuader, such attempt would be detrimental to the agent's credibility. How would the agent's gender interact with individuals' evaluation of the agent competence, agent benevolence, and their intentions to trust the agent?

This study revisited the issue of gender and social influence in the e-commerce context where consumers interacted with a computer agent program that had a contrived gender identity. The results of my study confirmed female vulnerability when she assumed an assertive salesman style that is inconsistent with typical female stereotype. It was found that the female agent suffered from a significant loss of influenceability when she adopted an aggressive recommendation style. Subjects thought that the more aggressive female agent was less competent, less benevolent, and thus they were less likely to trust her.

Based on the experimental findings that subjects' judgment of agent's trustworthiness was affected solely by the contrived gender identity, not by what the agent did or said, I argue that male and female agents could achieve social influence differently because an individual's initial assessment of the agent's trustworthiness is socially constructed, being affected by prevailing sex role stereotypes. Male salespersons could enhance their competence and product expertise to increase their influenceability. Female salespeople should communicate their genuine interest in the customer's welfare and their willingness to serve the customer. In male-

dominated product areas, a female agent might not want to make aggressive product recommendations hastily, because the gender stereotype could cause a backlash and harm her credibility.

The limitation of this experiment is that I used only one consumer electronics product that could be rather male-oriented. Eagly, Karau, Makhijani (1995) found, in their meta-analysis, that leadership effectiveness depended on the gender-typing of a task, i.e., men are more competent than women in male-oriented domains, and women are more effective than men in female-oriented arenas. Future research should examine how product gender-typing can interact with communicator gender identity in achieving high social influence. For example, if a female product (e.g., lipstick) is used, a female, as opposed to a male, agent has higher content expertise. In such a case, will a female agent still be penalized for an aggressive upgrade recommendation? How will a male agent be viewed if he makes aggressive recommendations for the products he does not have much expertise? Since the current experiment provides evidentiary data of online viewers' discriminatory practice toward female-gendered computer agents who behaved in a masculine style, future research needs to investigate whether online viewers would seek the same level of gender-norm compliance from male-gendered agents in online sales encounter.

In conclusion, by adopting a unique research context in which a computer agent interacts with human consumers, I found that computer agents in human-computer interaction (HCI) are not free from sex-role stereotypes, even if the gender identity of the computer agent is contrived. Female identity becomes a disadvantage when the job description requires an assertive salesman style that is inconsistent with typical female stereotype. Therefore, marketers are advised to select different sales technique if their online agents are "gendered."

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Let Your Workspace Speak for Itself: The Impact of Material Objects on Impression Formation and Service Quality Perception

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ABSTRACT

Inspired by studies exploring the role of material objects in impression formation, the impact of personal and professional objects on person perception and service quality evaluation were investigated in a healthcare setting. Results showed that material objects affect service quality perceptions through a cognitive route, incorporating office professionalism and perceived competence of the physician, and through an affect-driven route, incorporating attractiveness of the office, agreeableness of the physician and experienced affect. In healthcare services, this affect-driven route seems to be of particular importance.

INTRODUCTION

Among consumer researchers, environmental psychologists, and marketers it is well established that products and material objects present meanings beyond their appearance and function; people surround themselves with possessions that express and reinforce a personal identity (Belk 1988). Schlenker (1985) assumed that by creating and altering their environments, people may try to display a more glorified picture of themselves. Not only do we use objects as a means for self-expression, but other people use such information in everyday settings to form impressions of what occupants of specific environments, e.g., houses or offices, are like (Gosling *et al.* 2002).

In order to explain the mechanisms through which individuals impact their personal environments and the ways in which observers draw inferences about occupants of such environments, Brunswik (1956) proposed his 'lens model'. In his view, physical objects in the personal environment can serve as a lens through which observers perceive underlying constructs such as the occupant's interests, personality or values. A framed picture of a happy family in an office, for instance, can serve as a lens 'through' which an observer perceives the occupant as empathetic or warm. Similarly, an observer may infer from a baseball hat on a cabinet that the occupant is interested in sports. Naturally, observers will try to attend to those cues that are most accurate in conveying the true identity of the target person.

The degree to which people attend to environmental cues is likely to vary with the type of setting. Particularly in novel or ambiguous situations, i.e., situations in which standardized scripts or clear-cut information are lacking, people are likely to form impressions, judgments and perceptions based on objects present in the physical environment (Kay *et al.* 2004). In order to reduce uncertainty, resulting from the absence of clear-cut information, customers are likely to attend to aspects of the tangible environment (Verhoeven, Pieterse, and Pruyn 2006). In services marketing literature, uncertainty is often assumed to vary with information verifiability. In credence services, dominant attributes cannot be verified by the average consumer (even after purchase and consumption), because (s)he lacks the technical expertise or the means to make a reliable assessment, or because claim verification would

take an unrealistically long time (Darby and Karni 1973; Zeithaml 1981). It can be argued, therefore, that the effects of the physical environment on impression formation are more pronounced for services characterized by low information verifiability (i.e., credence services) than they are for services with high information verifiability (i.e., experience services).

Although the significance of environmental cues in commercial (Turley and Milliman 2000) and healthcare settings (Dijkstra, Pieterse, and Pruyn 2006) is well established, less is known about the effects of particular objects and the processes underlying this type of impression formation. Do objects in a doctor's office, for instance, primarily affect us on an affective level or do they first and foremost impact our cognitions? To provide an answer to these questions, we employed an experimental design, using simulations of service environments, to study the effects of two types of objects commonplace in offices: objects relevant to the profession of the occupant and objects expressive of personal tastes and interests. It is our contention that these types of objects are particularly influential with respect to ratings of doctors on perceived competence and perceived friendliness or empathy: attributes referred to as 'hard' and 'soft' respectively (Driver and Johnston 2001). Since these constructs are considered primary determinants of service quality perceptions (Driver and Johnston 2001), we will also assess the relative contributions of these attributes on perceived quality of care. Before elaborating on our design, however, we will discuss studies that have explored the role of specific types of objects in organizational contexts.

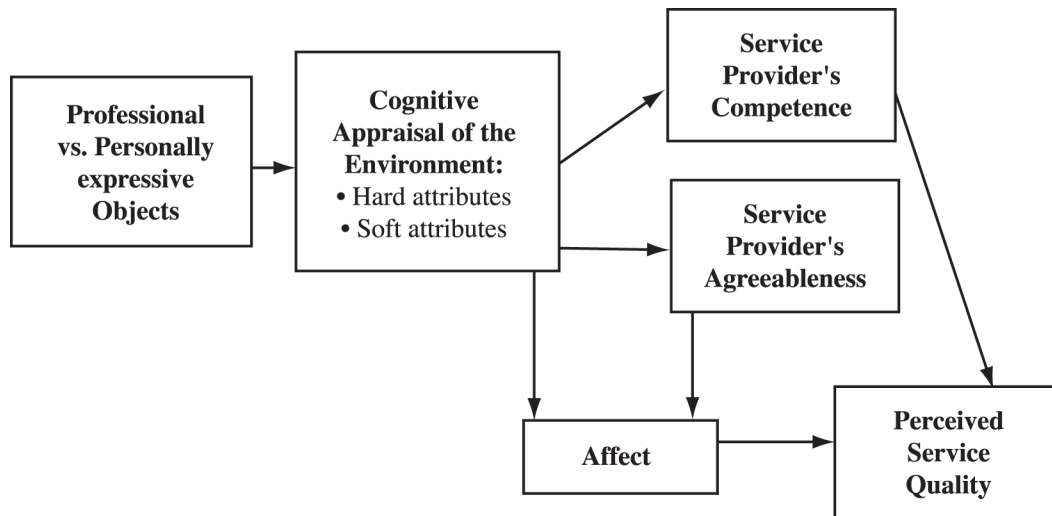
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Several studies have assessed the role of overall office design on perceived traits of office occupants (Cherulnik and Sounders 1984; Tedeschi and Melburg 1984). Cherulnik and Sounders (1984), for instance, showed that occupants of high-status offices are judged as more neat, critical, sincere, intelligent, proud, responsible, ambitious and less superstitious, gullible, lazy and noisy than occupants of low-status offices. Of particular interest to our present purpose are studies that have explored the role of particular objects using experimentally manipulated slides of offices (Campbell 1979; McElroy, Morrow and Wall 1983; Morrow and McElroy 1981). Morrow and McElroy (1981), for instance, showed that the presence of status symbols (e.g., diplomas) led to higher ratings on occupants' achievement orientation and rank. They further found that friendliness, extroversion and feelings of welcomeness in office settings in part relate to the arrangement of furniture, mirrored in an 'open' (desk against the wall) or 'closed' (desk between occupant and visitor) setup (Morrow and McElroy 1981).

Although in these studies the effects of specific kinds of objects or set-ups were studied, environmental cues are not perceived in isolation; rather, their combined effects give rise to a holistic image that shapes subsequent consumer experiences, comprising both affective and cognitive components (Bloch 1995). In this process, observers 'transfer' perceived characteristics of the physical environment to the occupant. Clearly, design aspects of offices can, in line with the needs of office occupants, convey different 'messages' (Ornstein 1989). People may in some situa-

¹The authors gratefully thank Johan Jonker, Albert Polman and Dr. Job van der Palen for their assistance in developing the panorama photos.

FIGURE 1
A conceptual model of cognitive and emotional effects of material objects



tions desire to be looked upon as high-status or powerful (hard attributes), but at other times as involved, caring or friendly (soft attributes). Arguably, office professionalism impacts perceptions of physicians in terms of hard attributes whereas office attractiveness shapes perceptions of physicians in terms of soft attributes. With respect to financial services, e.g., a bank, it may be crucial (from a managerial point of view) to foremost foster impressions of competence or professional success, whereas our choice for a general practitioner may sooner be based on perceptions of the personnel's friendliness or involvement.

This process of impression formation has been shown to play a particularly important role in Service Quality appraisal (Grove and Fisk 1989). As services are actions or performances rather than products, in the eyes of customers the employees delivering the service *are* the service (Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler 2006). As a result, the evaluation of the service hinges on the consumer's impression of the service provider. A similar line of reasoning holds that services are hard to evaluate due to the specific characteristics (i.e., intangibility, heterogeneity, simultaneous production and consumption and perishability), and that therefore customers form expectations about the quality of service based on their impressions of the organization and the employees (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry 1985). Several studies indicate that emotions arising from interactions with personnel and the environment (Mehrabian and Russell 1974) shape such expectations and are thus critical factors in the appraisal of service quality (Chebat, Davidow, and Codjovi 2005; Laroche *et al.* 2005). In line with these studies, we propose that affect positively influences perceived service quality. The foregoing discussion leads us to propose the conceptual model depicted in Figure 1.

METHOD

Pretest

To make an informed decision regarding the selection of stimulus materials for our study, a pretest was conducted among 54

students (13 males, 41 females; mean age 19.7) of the University of Twente. They were instructed to carefully watch 10 pictures of objects commonplace in a physician's office and imagine what a male physician with the displayed object in his room would be like. For each of the 10 pictures, they were asked to rate the personality of the physician on a 39-item personality scale. The questionnaire consisted of the 35 items in the Big Five personality questionnaire (Goldberg 1992) and some traits typically relevant for physicians: 'professional', 'expert', 'reliable' and 'involved'. For each of the 39 traits, participants indicated on a nine-point scale to what extent they considered these applicable to the physician. Each participant rated 10 pictures. In total, 20 pictures of objects were tested.

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the 39 personality traits. Based on the total explained variance and the interpretability of the factor structure, a five factor solution was adopted. An examination of the terms composing each factor led to naming them as follows: Competence (e.g., professional, responsible, intelligent; $\alpha=.95$), Agreeableness (e.g., warm, kind, involved; $\alpha=.91$), Extraversion (e.g., energetic, talkative, assertive; $\alpha=.90$), Emotional stability (e.g., calm, relaxed, at ease; $\alpha=.83$) and Creativity (e.g., imaginative, creative, curious; $\alpha=.73$). On the whole, this factor structure resembles the structure reported by Goldberg (1992). However, some traits of the original intelligence factor ('intelligent', 'analytical' and 'reflective') and some of the added items ('professional', 'expert' and 'reliable') loaded on the conscientiousness factor, broadening the meaning of the factor to 'competence'. For this study, only the first two factors, deemed most important, will be discussed and elaborated on.

Out of the 20 objects, the six objects that received the highest scores on competence were selected for the professional condition: scientific articles, a medical illustration, professional books, a framed master's certificate, a mockup of lungs and a mockup of respiratory organs. The six objects that scored highest on agreeableness were selected for the personally expressive condition: a miniature ship, African sculptures, toy cars, a speaker set, a soccer team shawl and a decorative hat. Interestingly, objects receiving

high scores on competence received low scores on agreeableness and vice versa: a physician displaying a professional object was judged as more competent ($t=16.38, p<.001$) and less agreeable ($t=6.09, p<.001$) than a physician displaying a personally expressive object.

In addition, participants were asked to rate four scenarios in order to check the verifiability manipulation (i.e., the degree to which a procedure can be evaluated after its completion). Based on these results, a 'credence' scenario (describing a procedure that cannot be evaluated after service delivery) and an 'experience' scenario (describing a procedure that can easily be evaluated) were selected. Participants indicated that, after the treatment, they were better able to evaluate the success of the 'scar treatment' (the experience scenario) than the success of the 'Hepatitis B treatment' (the credence scenario) ($t=11.57, p<.001$). Both scenarios are presented in the next section.

Design and Procedure

A two (professional vs. personally expressive objects) x two (experience vs. credence service) scenario design was employed for the purpose of this study. All 81 participants were individually invited into the research lab. The instructions and scenarios were displayed on a computer screen and read as follows:

Scar treatment (experience condition):

A scar on your cheek has been bothering you for quite a while. Now you really want to have it removed, so you decide to call for an appointment with a doctor. Not knowing what to expect, you search for information on the Internet. As it turns out, you will be able to evaluate the result of the surgery right after the procedure. At the time of the appointment you check in at the hospital. As the physician is not quite ready to see you yet, an assistant takes you into his office and asks you to wait. While waiting you take a good look at the physician's room.

Hepatitis B treatment (credence condition):

You've recently paid a visit to a blood bank for the very first time. They tested your blood on several diseases. As it turns out, you are suffering from Hepatitis B, an infection of the liver. You never noticed anything and you don't know what needs to be done. You decide to call for an appointment with a doctor. Not knowing what to expect, you search for information on the Internet. You learn that you won't be able to evaluate the result of the intervention after the procedure since you did not, and will not, have any noticeable symptoms. At the time of the appointment you check in at the hospital. As the physician is not quite ready to see you yet, an assistant takes you into his office and asks you to wait. While waiting you take a good look at the physician's room.

Prompted by the instructions, participants next explored a QuickTime 360 degree panorama photo of a room containing either the professional objects or the personally expressive objects (see Figure 2). Using the mouse, participants were able to control speed and angle of presentation. After 70 seconds, the view switched to a 6-second movie presentation of a doctor stepping into the office apologizing for the wait. Subsequently participants were asked to fill out the questionnaire.

Measures

To assess the impact of the experimental manipulation on participants' impressions of the physician, participants were asked to rate his personality on a computer-administered 39-item personality questionnaire (identical to the one used in the pretest). In line

with the results from the pretest, exploratory factor analyses revealed the same factorial structure. Cronbach's alphas for the five factors ranged from .71 for Creativity to .94 for Competence.

The cognitive evaluation of the service environment was measured using a 13-item environmental appraisal scale, including the 10-item environmental appraisal scale (Bitner 1990) and the items 'appearing friendly', 'comfortable', and 'clean'. Two factors emerged from an exploratory factor analysis conducted on these items: Professional (e.g. efficient, organized, professional; $\alpha=.82$) and Attractive (e.g. pleasant, attractive, comfortable; $\alpha=.92$). The emotional response was assessed with a 6-item pleasure scale (Mehrabian and Russell 1974). This scale proved to be one-dimensional and reliable ($\alpha=.93$). An adjusted SERVQUAL questionnaire (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1988) was used to determine the evaluation of the service ($\alpha=.93$).

RESULTS

Analysis of variance showed that participants in the professional condition rated the office as more professional ($M_{\text{professional}}=5.18$) in comparison to participants in the personally expressive condition ($M_{\text{personally expressive}}=4.67, F(1, 79)=4.09, p<.05, \eta^2=.049$). However, the office manipulation did not have a direct effect on perceived physician's competence ($F(1, 79)=.23, \text{NS}$) or agreeableness ($F(1, 79)=.55, \text{NS}$). The office containing professional objects was judged as less attractive ($M_{\text{professional}}=2.76$) than the office containing personally expressive objects ($M_{\text{personally expressive}}=4.67, F(1, 79)=7.41, p<.01, \eta^2=.086$). Consistent with the latter finding, participants in the professional condition reported to have less positive emotions ($F(1, 79)=5.97, p<.04, \eta^2=.070$), and a lower perceived service quality ($F(1, 79)=7.26, p<.01; \eta^2=.084$) than participants in the personally expressive condition. Contrary to our expectations, none of these effects were qualified by the experience-credence manipulation.

To better understand the relationship between these variables, Structural Equation Modeling was used to test the theoretical model. The direct and indirect effects were estimated by means of path-analysis using Amos. The model shown in Figure 3 has a very good fit ($\chi(10)=14.45, p=.15, \text{CMIN}/df=1.45, \text{GFI}=.96, \text{TLI}=.96, \text{CFI}=.98, \text{RMSEA}=.075$). All relationships are significant at $p<.05$.

Not surprisingly, a positive relationship ($\beta=.35$) exists between the objects in the office and perceived professionalism of the office, indicating that the office containing professional objects is perceived as more professional than the office containing personally expressive objects. The negative relationship between the objects in the office and perceived attractiveness ($\beta=-.29$) implies that the office in the personally expressive condition is perceived as more attractive than the office in the professional condition. However, the object manipulation accounts for only 9% of the variance in office attractiveness.

A direct relationship emerges between the two dimensions of service environment appraisal, suggesting that office attractiveness is a significant predictor of office professionalism ($\beta=.45$). Office professionalism in turn strongly affects the degree to which the physician is perceived as competent ($\beta=.64$), whereas office attractiveness strongly affects the perceived agreeableness of the physician ($\beta=.48$). In line with our predictions, these results indicate that observers indeed project specific attributes of the environment onto the physician. It should be noted that, as was the case with the environmental attributes, the physician's personality traits are not unrelated: perceived agreeableness affects perceived competence ($\beta=.25$).

The emotional experience is greatly affected by both the perceived attractiveness of the office ($\beta=.70$) and to a much lesser degree by the perceived agreeableness of the physician ($\beta=.25$).

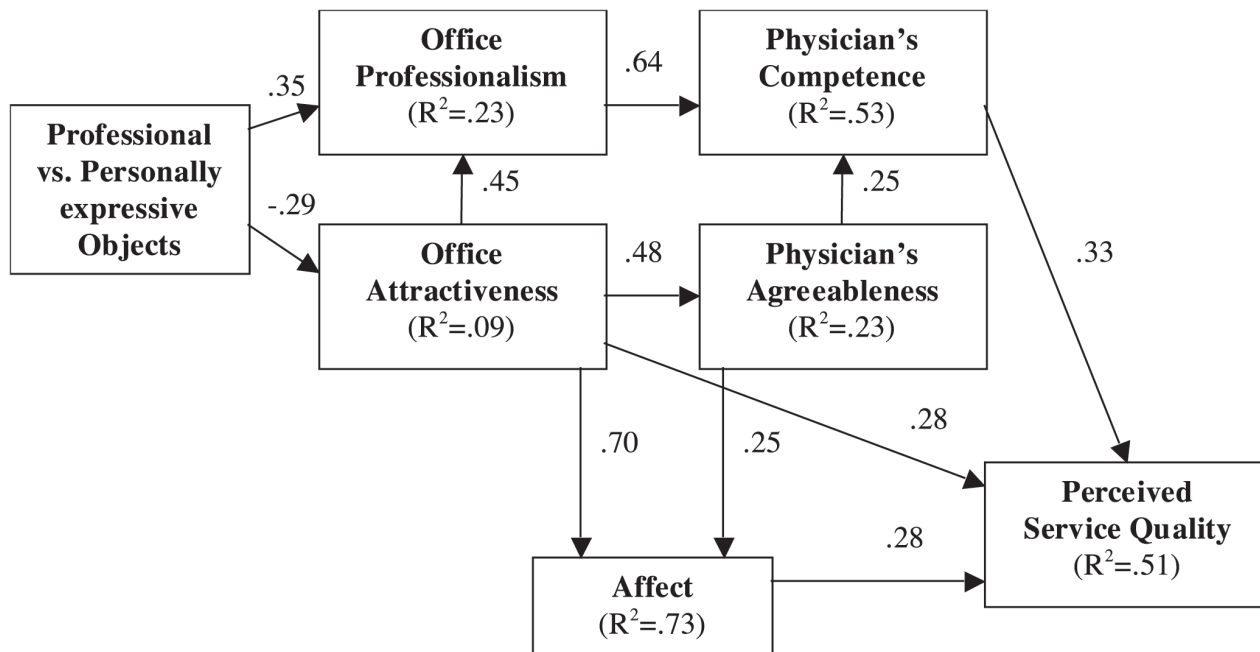
FIGURE 2

Panorama snapshots of the office in the personally expressive (top) the professional (bottom) condition. Note that the actual stimulus materials were interactive 360 degree panorama photos rather than these stills.



FIGURE 3

Estimated path model (standardized regression coefficients, explained variance in brackets)



These two variables account for 73% of the variance in emotion. The significant relationship between perceived physician's competence and perceived service quality ($\beta=.33$) confirms our hypothesis that consumers evaluate service quality based on their impression of the service provider. The attractiveness of the service environment also directly affects service quality evaluation ($\beta=.28$).

As expected, experienced emotion is a significant predictor of service quality ($\beta=.28$).

DISCUSSION

The results of this study confirm our hypotheses about particular types of objects in a healthcare setting, thereby further advanc-

ing our understanding of the ways in which environmental factors impact consumer experience. Although research assessing effects of interior design on consumers' responses are not new, many studies suffer from a lack of experimental control, making it hard to demonstrate relations between specific types of environmental stimuli and consumer experience.

The presented model suggests two different response 'routes' in consumers' evaluations of service encounters: a cognitive 'hard' route through which the physician's competence is assessed, and a more affect-laden 'soft' route centered on perceived friendliness or agreeableness (c.f., Driver and Johnston, 2001). Perceived competence was shown to be primarily affected by professionalism of the office, and thus dependent on the presence of profession-related objects. Perceived friendliness, on the other hand, was shown to be primarily affected by the attractiveness of the office. Thus, offices containing objects expressive of personal tastes and interests were perceived as more attractive and elicited a more positive emotional response in comparison to offices containing profession-related objects. Interestingly, these findings are in line with findings reported by Pruyn and Smidts (Pruyn and Smidts 1998) indicating that perceived attractiveness of waiting rooms in healthcare settings primarily impacts consumers' emotional response. These combined findings corroborate our assumptions that perceived attractiveness can be considered a soft attribute whereas perceived professionalism constitutes a hard attribute.

Perceived competence of the physician turns out to be an important predictor of perceived service quality. Attractiveness of the environment and perceived agreeableness of the service provider influence perceived service quality indirectly through experienced affect. The importance of such soft attributes is further underscored by the positive relation between office attractiveness and office professionalism, indicating that soft attributes also impact hard attributes. In literature, the relative importance of hard and soft attributes with respect to service quality appraisal is expected to vary with the type of service (Cronin and Taylor 1994; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1994). As one would expect, in high anxiety and high contact services, soft attributes play a greater role in service quality appraisal than hard attributes. For this reason, participants generate more favorable expectations with respect to service quality in the personally expressive condition than in the professional condition.

Contrary to our expectations, the effects of objects were not moderated by information verifiability. Although information verifiability was successfully manipulated, the scenarios may have failed to generate differences in perceived uncertainty. After all, it is this experienced uncertainty (arising from low information variability) that is expected to moderate the effects of the environment on service provider- and service quality evaluation. Another explanation relates to the fact that most consumers are unfamiliar with (technical) procedures in healthcare services, the outcome of which will always be somewhat uncertain. As such, healthcare services in general carry predominantly credence characteristics. Although it was clear in the experience scenario that the outcome could be evaluated after the treatment, no information regarding the outcome of the scar treatment was given, and the two service encounters might not have been distinctive enough along the verifiability continuum.

The ecological validity of our study was increased by simulating the office using QuickTime 360 degree panoramas rather than 'standard' photos and by introducing the target of impression formation (i.e., the physician) by means of a short movie presentation. In doing so we hoped to portray a realistic service encounter. In bringing physician and environment together (as is the case in

'real life'), an interesting avenue for future research opens up. That is, in addition to investigating the impact of the physical environment on person perception, it would also be of interest to study the impact of person characteristics on environmental appraisal and consequent service quality appraisal. Variations in person characteristics such as age or self-assuredness may prompt consumers to attend to different aspects of the environment or lead them to evaluate environmental factors differently in terms of cue validity (Brunswick, 1956). The impact of profession-related objects (communicating competence), for instance, may vary depending on the degree to which the physician is perceived as confident or insecure; status symbols may trigger an image of high standing for an elderly man radiating confidence, whereas adverse effects may be anticipated if the office is occupied by a young inexperienced person.

Finally, our results are of interest in the light of recent findings in priming research. As Kay et al. (2004) have shown, objects can subconsciously influence people's behavior and evaluations. Future research will have to address the question to what extent and under what conditions (sub-)conscious processes underlie the effects of objects in servicescapes. With respect to healthcare settings, for instance, one could argue that soft (i.e., affect-related) attributes are activated without consumers being aware of the relevant influence, whereas awareness is needed for observers to draw conclusions about hard attributes. But regardless of how, and under what conditions, objects impact consumer experience, present research demonstrates the importance of attending to physical objects in service settings and the messages they convey.

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A Two-Step Model of Service Dissatisfaction: Theory and Evidence

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The literature on consumer (dis)satisfaction has largely focused on its antecedents, notably, expectations, disconfirmation of expectations, performance, attributions, and equity. Few empirical studies have addressed the consequences of (dis)satisfaction, let alone the consequences of service (dis)satisfaction. In addition, individual-difference variables rarely appear in previous (dis)satisfaction models.

This paper presents a two-step model (see figure 1) that highlights the moderating influences of two individual-difference variables, both on service dissatisfaction and on the ensuing complaining behaviors. It also reports a study that examined several hypotheses based on the proposed model.

Research Hypotheses

Previous research (e.g., Smith, Bolton, and Wagner 1999) has distinguished between process and outcome failures in service encounters. From the perspective of the consumer, the former involves the loss of *social* resources (e.g., status, esteem), whereas the latter involves the loss of *nonsocial* resources (e.g., money, time). We propose that the two types of service failure would trigger different patterns of consumer behavior, subject to individual differences in concern for face (CFF) and belief in fate (BIF).

Concern for face is defined as the extent to which an individual shows regard for and interest in the protection and enhancement of face (i.e., *public* self-image) in social interactions. Since services are performed for people by people, service failures are inherently face-threatening (Brown and Levinson 1987). Given the fundamental difference between a process failure and an outcome failure, however, face issues should be more salient in the former than in the latter. We thus predict an aggravating effect of CFF on service dissatisfaction, and that this effect would be stronger for a process failure than for an outcome failure.

Belief in fate is defined as the extent to which an individual believes in fate/luck as an impersonal force shaping events and outcomes. When service failures occur, the notion that "it is meant to be" or "I am just unlucky" would help alleviate discontent. However, fatalistic notions are seldom invoked when an obvious interpretation is available (Pepitone and Saffiotti 1997). Relative to an outcome failure, a process failure involves an unambiguous causal agent, namely, the service provider. Hence, we predict a mitigating effect of BIF on service dissatisfaction, and that this effect would be stronger for an outcome failure than for a process failure.

According to Singh's (1988) taxonomy of consumer complaint behavior (CCB), dissatisfied consumers may engage in public actions (e.g., complaining to management) or private actions (e.g., negative WOM). Both CFF and BIF are expected to affect CCB over and above their influences on dissatisfaction.

Given the same level of service dissatisfaction, consumers higher (vs. lower) in CFF may be more motivated to restore "self-face" by complaining to management. Alternatively, however, they may be more restrained because of their concern for "other-face." As far as private actions are concerned, consumers higher (vs. lower) in CFF are likely more motivated to spread negative WOM because it may signal to others their exquisite taste, thereby enhancing face.

The effects of BIF on CCB are predicted to be uniformly mitigatory. Consumers higher (vs. lower) in BIF should be less likely to complain to management or engage in negative WOM, by virtue of the perceived futility of attempts to change the status quo.

The research hypotheses are summarized as follows:

- H1: When a service failure occurs, consumers who are higher (vs. lower) in CFF will be more dissatisfied.
- H2: The aggravating effect of CFF on service dissatisfaction will be stronger for a process failure than for an outcome failure.
- H3: When a service failure occurs, consumers who are higher (vs. lower) in BIF will be less dissatisfied.
- H4: The mitigating effect of BIF on service dissatisfaction will be stronger for an outcome failure than for a process failure.
- H5a: Given the same level of dissatisfaction, consumers who are higher (vs. lower) in CFF will be more likely to complain to management.
- H5b: Given the same level of dissatisfaction, consumers who are higher (vs. lower) in CFF will be less likely to complain to management.
- H6: Given the same level of dissatisfaction, consumers who are higher (vs. lower) in CFF will be more likely to engage in negative WOM.
- H7: Given the same level of dissatisfaction, consumers who are higher (vs. lower) in BIF will be less likely to complain to management.
- H8: Given the same level of dissatisfaction, consumers who are higher (vs. lower) in BIF will be less likely to engage in negative WOM.

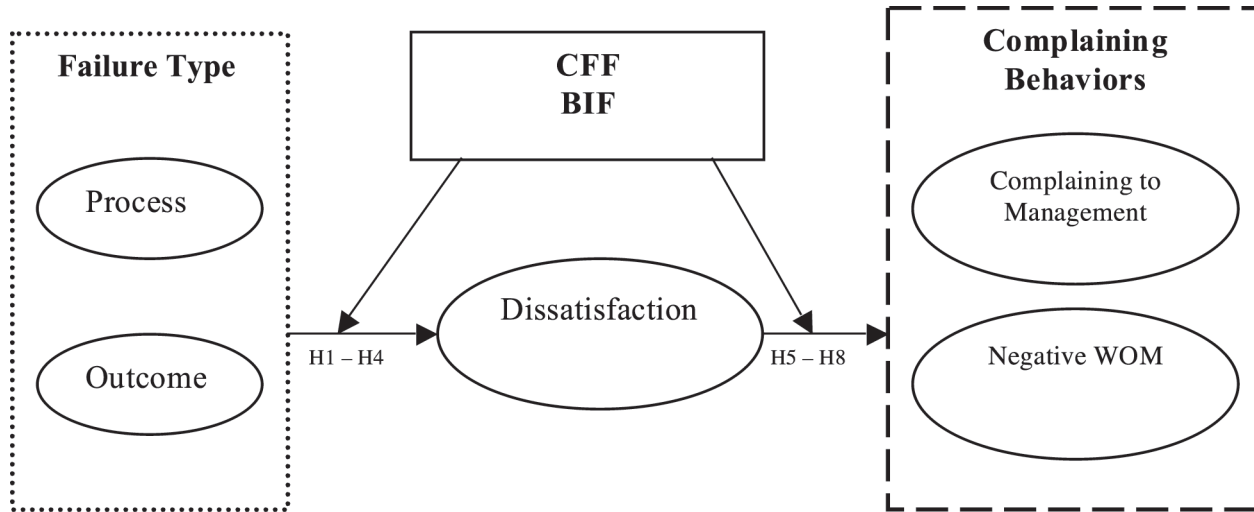
Method and Results

The hypotheses were tested with a scenario-based experiment. Participants were 108 business executives from a part-time MBA program at a large, international university. They were randomly assigned to either a process failure or an outcome failure condition in a hotel scenario, and their CFF and BIF scores were measured after they gave their dissatisfaction ratings. The hotel scenarios and the measurement scales were adapted from previous research.

Confirming hypotheses 1 and 2, we found a CFF main effect and a CFF x failure type interaction. Participants higher in CFF were more dissatisfied, and this effect was more pronounced in the process failure condition. Nonetheless, the data supported hypothesis 4 but not hypothesis 3. There was no BIF main effect, despite a BIF x failure type interaction. Specifically, participants higher in BIF were less dissatisfied only in the outcome failure condition.

With the level of dissatisfaction controlled for, CFF had a negative (i.e., mitigating) effect on the intention to complain to

FIGURE 1
A TWO-STEP MODEL OF SERVICE DISSATISFACTION



management but a positive (i.e., aggravating) effect on negative WOM intention. This pattern supported hypotheses 5b and 6. On the other hand, BIF had a marginally negative effect on the intention to complain to management, lending some support to hypothesis 7. This variable also showed an attenuating effect on negative WOM intention, thus confirming hypothesis 8.

Conclusion

This paper extends consumer (dis)satisfaction research by showing that CFF and BIF impact the (dis)satisfaction process at two junctures. They first interact with failure type to influence service dissatisfaction, and then affect the ensuing CCB. The two-step model has important theoretical and managerial implications, and points to many avenues for future research.

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Consumers' Arrogance: Construct Conceptualization and Preliminary Validation Evidence

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

People engage in self-promotion to impress others. Self-promotion can help achieve one's goals when received positively but can lead to perceptions of arrogance when received negatively (Hareli and Weiner 2000). Consumer arrogance (CA) is more specific than general arrogance and is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct reflecting individuals' tendency to communicate achievements via possessions and the abilities related to their acquirement. This definition recognizes that possessions can convey arrogance when used to symbolize success and achievements (O'Cass and McEwen 2004).

Research in psychology viewed arrogance as a dimension of narcissism (Emmons 1984) and conceptualized it as reflecting one's belief of being a special person, who should only be associated with likewise individuals (Boyd and Helms 2005). Other lines of research focused on what makes individuals seem arrogant to others and showed that people seem arrogant when they communicate their quality publicly (Ben-Ze'ev 1993; Hareli, Weiner, and Yee 2006). Likewise, such a perception is enhanced when individuals communicate that their achievements were attained thanks to their desirable qualities. Although high achievers are admired, such communications are received negatively as arrogant people are disliked (Hareli and Weiner 2000; Wosinska et al. 1996).

We use the theoretical lens of possessions as an extension of the self to conceptualize CA as a trait. Possessions are a safe means to convey one's image to express identity publicly (Tian et al. 2001). They symbolically signal accomplishments, making them a form of communication of owners' superiority (Hirschman and LaBarbera 1990). Thus, we conceptualize CA as a communicated exhibition of superiority through products and consumption. Individuals use verbal and non-verbal self-presentational CA strategies to impress others—the wider their range and the higher their frequency the higher their perceived CA (Baumeister 1982).

Verbally, individuals can exhibit superiority by stating their accomplishments or showing-off their possessions (Gauld and Shotter 1977). Hence, high-CA individuals should present their purchases as superior to others' (*purchase superiority*) and show them off (*showing-off through purchases*). Third, high-CA individuals will perceive themselves as experts, opinion leaders, or market mavens (Feick and Price 1987). Thus, verbal CA includes perceived and expressed "*I know best*" mentality compared to others.

Non-verbally, consumers can use branded products (*brand-name self-assertion*), valued because of their inherent status (Dawson and Cavell 1987), to communicate superiority (O'Cass and McEwen 2004). Additionally, *exhibitionism-based purchasing* signifies individuals' increasing conspicuous consumption (Powderly and MacNutly 1990; Riesman 1950; Vigneron & Johnson 1999).

Having conceptualized CA as a five-dimensional trait, we embarked on a study to develop a CA scale. An open-ended elicitation procedure was used first to generate an initial item pool which will be consistent with the public's view of CA. Students (n=67) were queried about their perception of the expression of arrogance through buying, consuming, or using products. Then, in the second phase, an experienced editor reviewed all responses. She eliminated ambiguous/repeated statements. Three scholars reviewed

the remaining 76 statements independently to identify dimensions and assign statements. This stage required agreement by all three. The dimensions were labeled brand-name self-assertion, exhibitionism-based purchases, "*I know best*" mentality, showing-off through purchases, purchase superiority, and unnecessary purchases. Except for unnecessary purchases, all CA dimensions were pre-conceptualized. However, since unnecessary purchases emerged, we incorporated it post-hoc and the final list included 46 items.

The purification stage was designed to meet the challenge of item parsimony and maintenance of the structure of CA. Data were collected from 130 students on the CA items and the CSII, status consumption, and price-prestige relationship scales. Reliability analyses and uni-dimensionality tests of CA dimensions reduced the list to 29 items corresponding to our five-dimensional structure with one new dimension. This phase also tested the CA scale for nomological validity and found that it was related positively to CSII, status consumption, and price-prestige sensitivity.

Since the motivation for CA is to elevate the possessor's social status, future research should examine high-CA individuals' tendency to consume products that can communicate superiority and achievements to others preferably using representative samples. Future research should also test the discriminant and nomological validity of CA through constructs such as vanity and materialism, preferably cross-culturally since CA is an individual trait, exhibiting it might be considered less desirable in collectivist cultures.

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Sustained Consumer Fascination

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ABSTRACT

While product involvement is a central concept used to define intense product-consumer interactions, recent researchers are contributing new constructs to better understand highly engaged brand relationships. In this study, the concept of *sustained consumer fascination* is introduced to help understand the intense and enduring relationships that arise among consumers and consumption activities. Based on online gardening diaries and in-depth interviews with avid gardeners, we propose that the concept of sustained consumer fascination is composed of surprise, creative engagement, restorative escape, and insight.

The Brand Dislike Construct: Scale Development and Application to Actual Brands

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Brand dislike occurs when consumers express explicit negative judgments toward a brand that can be either formed during the evaluation task or retrieved from a negative attitude stored in memory. There are several factors that lead to the emergence of brand dislike and even theoretical explanations are sparse and fragmented: the first section of the paper reviews the main research approaches that have addressed this topic, trying to integrate them in a single framework.

Specifically, three distinct stream of research will be reviewed and organized: customer/brand relationship (Fournier, 1998; Fajer, Schouten, 1995), the metaphoric, symbolic and relational properties of negative opinions and judgements (Wilk, 1997; Bourdieu, 1987; Douglas, 1996; Douglas and Isherwood, 1996) and finally, political consumption and consumer resistance (among others, Ozanne and Murray, 1995; Firat and Venkatesh, 1995 and Holt, 2002).

With this framework in mind, we have started the development of a research project to understand the brand dislike construct and to create the basis for measuring it. In detail, our research objectives in this paper are:

- A preliminary explorative qualitative analysis directed at understanding the concept of brand dislike from the consumer's perspective (Dalli et al., 2006);
- the development and validation of a brand dislike scale integrating the dimensions emerging from the literature review and the results of the qualitative analysis;
- the application of the validated scale to actual brands to test the relevance of the dislike factors identified in the previous phase.

The main result that emerged from the qualitative analysis is a complex but coherent picture that is broken down into three levels (product, user and corporate) and several factors, each of which can be strictly related to the literature outlined in the paper. In this sense, the research purpose of giving a descriptive picture of the consumers' perspective about disliked brands has been achieved.

The generation of a scale for measuring brand dislike has been the second step of this research project. Following the scale development procedure guidelines that Churchill (1979) and DeVellis (1991) proposed, we obtained a psychometrically sound and operationally valid measure for the brand dislike construct based on fifteen items.

Eight out of fifteen items clearly relate to the corporate level, broken down into three different factors: "manipulation and deceit", "carelessness toward the environment" and "outdated communication"; five additional items relate to the user level broken down into two different factors: "poor distinction capability" and "excess of distinction" and, finally, one item relate to the product level and, specifically, to "poor product performance".

Finally, to test the relevance of the dislike factors, the previously validated brand dislike scale has been applied to actual brands. This application provides some interesting results. Five factors come out from the analysis. Eight items out of fifteen clearly relate to the corporate level, broken down into three different

factors: as we found in the previous phase of analysis, these three factors are "manipulation and deceit", "carelessness toward the environment" and "outdated communication". Five additional items relate to the user level and, differently from the previous phase of analysis, we found only one factor collecting all the items related to the user level. Finally, as we found in the scale validation analysis, two items relate to the product level and, particularly, to "poor product performance".

Therefore, the factors identified seem quite stable and able to almost completely cover the theoretical model on which the empirical analysis is grounded.

The main contribution of the paper is in the direction of the development of a specific measurement tool for negative brand attitudes, provided that no special methods like this do exist, and that it's a long time that attitude literature is claiming for the development of specific instruments to measure negative attitudes.

In addition, this new scale adds to the extant literature by establishing a basis for further theoretical advances on the relationship between brand dislike and buying behavior; the focus in this case should be on the nature and strength of this relationship, given the different impact of the six identified and verified factors on overall brand dislike. In fact, according to whether or not the consumer dislikes the brand because of one or another of the identified factors, the implications in behavioral terms are not necessarily the same and of the same intensity.

Finally, the application of the scale to actual brands has led to interesting results and seems promising not only from a theoretical point of view but also from a managerial one. The 15 item scale can serve as a useful diagnostic tool; it allows to identify the factors on which consumers build negative evaluations and to set up the necessary countermeasures.

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Toward a Theory on the Content and Structure of Money Attitudes

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Rising consumer debt, compulsive buying, credit card abuse, and bankruptcy have focused attention on money attitudes, which are beliefs people hold about money and exchange situations. In this paper, we address the important need for systematic work toward a comprehensive theory on the content and structure of money attitudes. Building on work by Yamauchi and Templer (1982), we propose a theory on the contents and structure of money attitudes, develop a new measurement scale, and rigorously test its psychometric properties.

We define money attitudes as interpersonal, attitudinal [affective, behavioral, cognitive] beliefs that express [individual, collective, mixed] values concerned with money [independence...quality] and are evaluated in importance [very important to very unimportant] in order to guide behavior within the context of money and money situations. Our definition relies on the assumption that money is by its nature a medium that is intended to facilitate interpersonal exchange. Money situations, like all interpersonal situations, involve complex fields in which past and present interpersonal influences are embedded in an equally influential socio-cultural matrix (Wiggins and Trobst 1997). We posit that money attitudes are attitudinal beliefs that are operant in money contexts and express individual, collective, and mixed values.

Yamauchi and Templer (1982) proposed five money attitudes: power-prestige, retention-time, distrust, anxiety, and quality. In our work, we note the value-expressive role of attitudes and their less central position in the human belief system, in which hierarchically-held values and attitudes are managed for consistency. We draw on Schwartz (1992) widely-accepted values theory to propose the motivational contents of money attitudes, noting our expectation that money attitudes will serve the same the same universal requirements of existence identified by Schwartz: needs of individuals as biological organisms, requisites of coordinated social conduct, and requirements for the smooth functioning and survival of groups. Our conceptual approach allows us to distinguish nine money attitudes that are derived by refining and extending Yamauchi and Templer's (1982) money attitudes.

We postulate that money attitudes will have a circumplex structure. The circumplex is the product of a motivational continuum at a more basic level, even though we discriminate among individual money attitudes in our theory. Consequently, following the logic employed by Schwartz (1994), we partition the circumplex into individual money attitudes that represent conceptually-insightful choices about boundaries between fuzzy sets. An examination of the content of our money attitudes suggests two underlying and possibly orthogonal bipolar dimensions underlie their structure. One bipolar dimension pits self-assurance (independence) against insecurity (anxiety, distrust, power). The other bipolar dimension opposes conservation (conservatism, ubuntu) and consumption (time-simplicity, stimulation, quality).

We construct a 49-item scale, the *Money Portraits Survey* (MPS), to assess the structure and contents of the theory, following the textual portraits approach of Schwartz' *Portraits Value Questionnaire* (Schwartz et al. 2001). The approach asks respondents to compare textual portraits of people, who implicitly place priority on a particular money attitude. The direction of comparison is important, because it increases the likelihood that the respondent's similarity judgment will focus on the implied values.

In study 1, which was a pretest, the MPS and PVQ were administered to 117 MBA students. Coefficient alpha internal

reliabilities of the subscales were in the range .63-.87, with only two scales below .70. Following the procedure of Schwartz (Schwartz et al. 2001), we assess whether items intended to measure money attitudes are located in contiguous regions in the space (i.e., content) and whether the regions are located relative to one another as expected (i.e., structure). Thus, we adopt a confirmatory, configurational verification approach using similarity structure analysis (SSA), a nonmetric multidimensional scaling technique that is especially appropriate when testing hypotheses that array the constructs of interest on a continuum in space (Davison 1983; Dillon and Goldstein 1984). The money attitudes emerged in the hypothesized order. Forty-one items were located in the hypothesized regions while only seven items were located in regions adjacent to the hypothesized region. Just one item emerged in an unexpected region not adjacent to its hypothesized region. Money attitudes had expected relations with the PVQ values. After careful inspection, we selected 33 items for inclusion in two field assessments of the new scale.

In Study 2, we administered the MPS to 200 people using mall intercepts outside cinemas in major metropolitan areas. The money attitudes emerged in the hypothesized order, except that one emerged on the periphery of another (which is consistent with the theory). Thirty-one items emerged in hypothesized regions and only two items were located in adjacent regions. The fit of the SSA model was good (i.e., the model fit index, stress=.16, c.f. Johnson and Wichern 2002). When data parcels were created by averaging the scores of items intended to measure each money attitude and the model was assessed, the fit was excellent (stress=.04).

In Study 3, a professional marketing research company administered the MPS to 415 bookstore customers. SSA results was similar to Study 2 and fit to the hypothesized structure was acceptable (stress=.18). The hypothesized structure emerged, although two money attitudes reversed order, which is consistent with the theory. All items are located in hypothesized regions except two items located in regions adjacent to their hypothesized location. An SSA of the data parcels suggests an excellent fit (stress=.05).

The larger sample size in Study 3 allowed us to assess the fit of these data to a more rigorous circumplex structure using Browne's covariance structure modeling approach (Browne 1992). The approach is analogous to the confirmatory factor analysis and provides information about model fit to a circumplex structure using some of the same indices. The results present an acceptable fit ($\chi^2(17)=79.06$, RMSEA=.097, RMSEA 95% confidence interval (.074-.115) (c.f. Browne and Cudeck 1992). The hypothesized structure is confirmed by the 95% confidence intervals of the polar angles.

The new MPS emerges as a reliable and valid tool to measure money attitudes that is easy to administer and analyze. Future work should focus on the antecedents and consequences of money attitudes.

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank Nu Metro and Exclusive Books for their financial support of the cinema and bookstore studies, respectively, and Peter Schemilt, Kim Hawke, and Stuart Tudor-Owen for administering the fieldwork.

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Does a Medium Context Have a Priming or an Interference Effect? It Depends on How You Look At It

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Previous literature has found that a medium context can have an effect on the responses to an embedded ad (e.g., Moorman et al. 2005). Some authors find a congruency effect between context and embedded ad (priming effect, e.g. Yi 1990a) and others find no effect or even opposing effects and this latter is attributed to the interference and/or contrast theory (Bryant and Zillman 1994). In case readers follow the page lay-out, the medium context is processed first and subsequently the embedded ad. However, most often no formal check for this is done, i.e. how people really read the magazine or newspaper pages is not traced. Hence, several questions can be raised: did people read the context first and subsequently the ad, did the ad attract so much attention that the ad was read first and subsequently the context, did people switch from medium context to ad and vice versa a number of times, and do these different reading sequences have an impact on whether congruency or contrast effects occur? If these reading sequences do matter, they could perhaps explain why previous results in mainly print setting were not robust with respect to the congruency and contrast effects that were found. Indeed, whether priming (a context serves as a primer, resulting in more positive ad responses) or interference (the target ad 'melts down' in the medium context, resulting in less positive ad responses) occurs may depend on the context-ad sequence (Furnham, Bergland, and Gunter 2002).

In this paper, by means of three studies, the priming as well as interference effects are studied. By means of eye-tracking we specifically focus on the attention path that respondents have when there is simultaneous exposure (i.e., context and ad are shown at the same time). The studies were operationalized in a medium in which different presentation orders of the stimuli (ad and medium context) are realistic, namely the web. More precisely, a computer ad was combined with a congruent computer web page or an incongruent car web page. Impact was measured by attitude towards the ad (four items) and click intention.

In the first study, we found that in a pure priming setting (a prime, followed by the web ad) the expected congruency effect was present for both attitude towards the ad and click intention. When the web ad and prime (web page) were shown simultaneously after the prime, this congruency effect vanished and for click intention, it even turned into a contrast effect. This finding warrants further research into the effect of context after an ad as well as the effect of being simultaneously exposed to web ad and web page. Therefore, a second study was done. It was shown that when the web page appeared after the ad ('pop before') a contrast effect was found, in a condition of continuous simultaneous exposure of web ad and web page (banner-like condition), no effect was found, and in a condition of a web page, followed by a web page with web ad, followed by web page, a congruency effect was found (which can be called a 'backward priming the prime' effect) for both attitude towards the ad and click intention. Eye-tracking information showed that in the third condition, respondents only switched a minimal number of times between web site and web ad (i.e., twice: from web page to ad and back to web page). This condition does not differ much from the second condition in study 1 (web page only, followed by web ad and web page). The differences between these two conditions were the

extra web page after the web ad and web page, and the fact that in the 'web page-web page with web ad' condition almost half of the respondents switched more than two times between web site and web ad. In the third study it was indeed shown that the number of switches is a moderating factor. In this study, respondents were only exposed to the 'continuous simultaneous exposure to web ad and web page' condition. Our results indicated that when the number of switches was low, congruency effects were found, while as the number of switches increased, this congruency effect diminished and even reversed into a contrast effect. A possible explanation for this finding is that the number of switches between ad and medium context can be seen as a reverse indicator of attentive processing. Hence, the way people look at the medium context and the ad (even when simultaneously exposed) may impact the type of 'medium context-ad' effect that will occur.

These findings are relevant because the type of medium context effect may depend on the way people watch medium context and ad. For example, our results suggest that banner ads may not be the most appropriate advertising strategy as it depends on the number of switches between medium context and ad (which is difficult to know a priori), whether a congruent or a contrasting medium context is recommended. A thematically congruent context is recommended in case of a pop-under or a pop-up (which people look at and subsequently close).

With respect to the discussion on the viewing behaviour influencing the type of medium context effect that occurs, further research could try to focus on the suggested 'backward priming the prime' principle in order to study the possible effect of the time that the last prime is seen. Such a study may be operationalized in a real-life study, where exposure times to medium context and ad are not forced. Hence, a clickable version of the experiment is recommended to find robustness for our results, although possible confounding effects must be taken care of. Further research could also examine the moderating role of context liking and context-evoked arousal, in websites as well as in other media (e.g., television).

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When Advertising Integration with Media Content Fails and Succeeds

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ABSTRACT

Consumers are exposed on a daily basis to more and more advertising. A key strategy that some advertisers have embraced in the face of this increasing level of media clutter is to integrate their advertising with media content. In Study 1, we show that if the viewer is highly engaged by the content and transported into the world of the program, then an integrated ad can be more intrusive to consumers' transportation experience. In such cases, advertising effectiveness is reduced when consumers are more transported into the media content. However, Study 2 shows that if the advertising does not intrude on the transportation experience, an integrated ad could benefit from having similar themes as the media contents. Therefore, a high level of media transportation leads to increased advertising effectiveness.

Convergence of Interests—Cultivating Consumer Trust Through Corporate Social Initiatives

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This paper examines the social and business benefits of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative and explicates the link between the social and business benefits. Social benefits refer to the impact of a CSR initiative on society, most notably on the intended beneficiaries of the initiative. The business benefits include both transactional outcomes such as purchase, and relational outcomes such as consumer advocacy behaviors toward the company/brand (e.g., word-of-mouth). We posit that trust, the key determinant of relational commitment (Garbarino and Johnson 1999; Ganesan 1994), is the mediating variable linking the social and business benefits.

We define trust as the perceived credibility and benevolence of a company (cf. Doney and Cannon 1997; Ganesan 1994). By making a difference to the social cause (i.e., generating social benefits), a CSR initiative could build consumer trust as it signals that the company is serious about bettering social welfare (the benevolence dimension of trust) and is competent in effecting positive social change (the credibility dimension of trust). Greater trust then leads to consumer loyalty and greater support for the company, as indicated by product purchase and consumer advocacy behaviors.

Persuasion knowledge model (Friestad and Wright 1994) suggests that consumers will naturally make attributions about the motives underlying a CSR initiative. Drawing upon literature on interpersonal trust (McAllister 1995; Rempel, Holmes and Zanna 1985), we posit that only intrinsic motives (i.e., a genuine concern for social welfare) are diagnostic of the company's trustworthiness and therefore are likely to mediate the relationship between perceived social benefits and trust. Extrinsic motives (i.e., a desire to increase sales, to improve reputation, etc.) are unlikely to play a role in cultivating trust.

We use a quasi-experiment involving a real-world CSR initiative to test our hypotheses. Our empirical context is the Crest Healthy Smiles 2010 program, which is sponsored by Crest to address disparity in oral health by providing education, tools and access to dental care services to children in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods across the country. A key component of this initiative is the "Cavity Free Zones program", in which Crest partnered with a national non-profit organization, Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA), to teach dental health as well as provide dental care tools to underprivileged children. Our treatment group consists of Hispanic parents whose children have participated in the "Cavity Free Zones program", and therefore have benefited from the initiative. The control group consists of Hispanic families who have not participated in the program, but have similar demographic characteristics and are selected from the same neighborhoods (i.e., as indicated by zip codes) as the treatment group. Difficulties in contacting members of the treatment group via BGCA organization resulted in a lower than desired sample size, a total of 53 complete surveys, as compared to 305 respondents in the control group. In the survey, we used several methods to reduce demand effects and the social desirability bias, such as putting questions about the Crest Health Smiles program at the very end, and when asking questions about Crest, we ask the same questions about Colgate so as to conceal our research purpose. Prior to conducting the survey, we did several focus groups with both the treatment group and the

control group to get a richer understanding of the social initiative and to yield measurement items for our constructs.

Findings from the quasi-experiment provide support for most of our hypotheses. ANOVA analysis with group as the independent variable shows that, relative to the control group, the respondents in the treatment group reported that their children have greater motivation to engage in dental care behavior, and indeed are likely to floss and visit dentists more frequently. Such difference in health motivation and health behavior is indicative of the social benefits the Crest Health Smiles program has generated. Regarding the business benefits, we find that, relative to the control group, the respondents in the treatment group display greater trust in the sponsoring brand Crest, are more likely to purchase Crest products, and express greater intention to engage in relational behaviors toward Crest. Further, mediational analysis indicates that, as we expected, trust mediates the relationship between participation in the initiative and brand behaviors. To examine the dynamics of trust, we analyzed the data of the treatment group only. Consistent with our expectation, perceived social benefits of the CSR initiative are positively related to trust in the sponsoring brand Crest. In addition, intrinsic attributions mediate the link between perceived social benefits and brand trust, whereas extrinsic attributions are not related to either perceived social benefits or brand trust.

This research provides important insights into the phenomena of corporate social initiatives. It highlights the role of social benefits as a key antecedent to business benefits of a CSR initiative, showing social and business interests can be complementary. It provides a process explanation of how CSR initiatives generate business benefits: CSR initiatives yield business benefits via cultivating consumer trust, increasing consumer purchase and advocacy behaviors and thus improving the long-term business prospects of the sponsoring company/brand.

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The Effects of Different Category Context on Target Brand Evaluations

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Contrary to previous studies of contextual priming effects, which focus on the effects of priming same category exemplars or traits, the current study examines how the evaluation of a target brand is affected when the context is a brand from a category other than the one in which the target holds membership.

Only a few studies have investigated the effects of priming other category products on target evaluation. The predominant finding is an assimilation effect (e.g. Stapel et al. 1998; Raghunathan and Irwin 2001). However, Meyers-Levy and Sternthal (1993) found a contrast effect when resource allocation was substantial. These observations raise the question of when a contextual prime from a different category will prompt assimilation and when it will stimulate contrast.

In understanding how other category products affect the evaluation of a target product, we posit that consumers evaluate a target product in a two-stage process: interpretation and judgment. At the interpretation stage, consumers first attempt to form a cognitive representation of ambiguous target information. If the information associated with another category product is accessible at this time, consumers are more likely to interpret the ambiguous target information as consistent with the context. This process will result in an assimilation effect. Assimilation is not the only possible effect of context that might occur during encoding. Making the context highly accessible may prompt consumers to recognize that the context influenced their representation of the target, and thus prompt them to correct for this bias. The process of correcting for the effect of context may result in a contrast effect if individuals overcorrect for the bias.

The judgment process is defined as locating the value of a stimulus along a specified dimension. To locate the value of the target interpreted at interpretation stage, it has to be compared to some referent or standard. If context information is used as a comparison standard at the judgment stage, the evaluation of the target is likely to be contrasted away from the context because the target and context are members of different categories.

Three experiments provide empirical support for the hypothesis. Experiment 1 investigates the moderating role of expertise on the impact of a contextual prime from a different category on target evaluations. We anticipated that experts would use a contextual prime when interpreting the target stimulus and exhibit an assimilation effect. Novices were expected use a contextual prime as a comparison standard that is manifested in a contrast effect. The results were consistent with this hypothesis. Novices exhibited a contrast effect whereas experts exhibited an assimilation effect when a different category context was primed.

In Experiments 2, the effects of increasing the accessibilities of the benefits associated with the prime on target evaluations were investigated. The notion is that increasing the accessibilities of the benefits will have different effects on novices and experts. We expected novices to include the benefits activated by the context prime when the benefits are highly accessible. On the other hand, experts were expected to correct their initial judgments because highly accessible benefits are likely to alert them of a biasing influence of the prime. The accessibility of benefits associated with the prime was manipulated by asking participants to write an appropriate word that best described the brand that was presented

in the context. The results in the low accessibility condition replicated our previous findings. Consistent with our previous findings, experts exhibited assimilation and novices exhibited contrast. Different outcomes emerged when the benefits implied by prime were made accessible. Here, novices exhibited assimilation. They responded in the same manner as experts did in the control condition. On the other hand, increased accessibility of information related to the prime alerted experts to correct their initial judgments. In the process they overcorrected and thus exhibited a correction contrast.

Experiment 3 shows that even when the contextual prime is made highly accessible, reducing the resources available for the processing task results in a comparison contrast for novices and an assimilation effect for experts. To examine this possibility, respondents were asked to engage in a secondary task while evaluating the target product.

These findings have important implications for contextual priming literature. They suggest that contexts from other categories can affect a target evaluation and that the specific context effect found is influenced by the respondent's knowledge of the target category and the accessibility of the contextual prime. The data also provide a means of distinguishing comparison and correction contrast by manipulating availability of cognitive resources. In so doing, the research questions whether factors such as the type of contextual prime (exemplar vs. trait) and the extremity of the prime are uniquely related to specific contrast effects, as has been suggested in the literature (Moskowitz and Skurnik 1999).

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY
Casino Gambling: Meanings, Motives and Marketers
June Cotte, University of Western Ontario, Canada

SESSION OVERVIEW

Generally speaking, the longer a gambler plays in a casino, the more likely that gambler will lose. What motivates consumers to gamble in casinos? How and why do gamblers play the games that they do? What is likely to trigger their urge to gamble? What role does the casino marketer play in gambling consumption? What aspects of the casino servicescape contribute to problem-gambling behavior?

These are important questions, given the massive increase in commercial gambling in North America. In 2003, there were 443 commercial casinos in the United States (not including racetrack casinos, or 'racinos'). From 1993 to 2003, U.S. consumer spending in commercial casinos rose from \$11 billion to \$27 billion. This means that in the U.S., consumers spend more in casinos than they spend on movies or amusement parks (American Gaming Association 2004). In terms of visits to casinos, about 53 million Americans visited a commercial casino in 2004, and the average number of trips to a casino, for those who have been, is almost 6 trips per year (American Gaming Association 2004). This means that Americans now make more visits to casinos than they do to major league baseball games. Although actual numbers in Canada are smaller (there are 60 government run casinos in Canada), the proportional increase in casino gambling is about the same. This seems particularly striking, as casino gambling basically began in Canada about 1993, yet casino revenues climbed to CDN\$4 billion by 2003 (Statistics Canada 2004).

There is a long history of research into gambling, across many disciplines. Historically, researchers focused on the pernicious effects of gambling, particular on the lower classes (see, for example, Veblen, 1899). Studying the underlying motives for gambling has also been popular across many social science disciplines: sociology (Bloch 1951; Fisher 1993; Frey 1984; Goffman 1967; Martinez 1983; Zola 1963), psychoanalytic theory (Bergler 1957; Fuller 1974), psychology (Custer 1982; Kusyszyn 1984; Montgomery and Kreitzer 1968; Moody 1992; Skinner 1953; Walker 1992), and the interdisciplinary study of play and leisure (Brenner and Brenner 1990; Caillois 1979; Csikszentmihalyi 1990; Herman 1967, 1976; Huizinga 1955; Smith and Abt 1984). As Cotte (1997) points out, the variously studied motives for gambling can be categorized into three general groups: economic (e.g., gambling as rational utility-seeking), symbolic (e.g., gambling as risk-taking, gambling as symbolic control, gambling as love), and hedonic (e.g., self-esteem enhancement, pure pleasure-seeking and play). What is still missing, however, is study on gambling as consumption (one exception is Loroz 2004). That is, gambling is more than a leisure behavior. It is a consumption site, albeit a unique one, and a place to explore consumer identity negotiation and the role of the market system (and marketers) in consumer behavior, at both more meso and individual levels. In short, casino gambling offers a fruitful opportunity to study consumer culture and its societal implications, making a contribution to consumer culture theory (CCT) (Arnould and Thompson 2005).

This session brings together three sets of researchers who have investigated the topic of casino gambling from a variety of very different perspectives, and with diverse methods. The first presenters take a public policy perspective, demonstrating the impact of casino design on resultant gambling behavior. From a different methodological perspective than traditional CCT projects, these

researchers are nonetheless focused on how consumers interpret the casino servicescape, and the possibly pathological outcome of a failure to deal well with the marketer-designed aspects of the casino environment. The second group of researchers takes a more managerial perspective, examining the meanings of casino gambling loyalty programs to consumers. The final presentation does not directly address societal implications, or managerial implications, but is focused on uncovering the identity projects gambling consumers are engaged in as they integrate regular gambling into their day-to-day lives.

In the first presentation, Finlay et al. examine the effects of varying environmental elements in casino design on the resultant emotional experiences of both problem and non-problem gamblers. The effects of casino lighting and color scheme were tested in two very different styles of casino theme: the *playground* design and the *gaming* design. They discuss the important implications for both casino design and treatment programs for problem gamblers. Their study adds to our understanding of the impact of the casino servicescape on dark-side consumption behavior.

From a more managerial perspective, Hendler and Braun-LaTour study whether casino loyalty programs create emotional commitment to a casino resort, or simply generate a feeling of entitlement to discounts and benefits. Casino slot clubs are the entities in the casinos that operationalize the collection of customer data and the delivery of loyalty program benefits. Seeking to better understand the impact of slot clubs on casino loyalty, these researchers investigate the deep meanings and emotions associated with such clubs. Their work is at the intersection of marketer-intended meanings, and the understood and enacted meaning of the consumer (Cotte and Ligas 1998). Within a theoretical framework of loyalty behavior, their work could help casinos—and perhaps other industries—to foster commitment to a brand or product, and perhaps avoid costly efforts that do not translate into attitudinal and behavioral loyalty.

Finally, Braun-Latour and Cotte present ZMET-style data on regular, local, casino gamblers in Las Vegas, Nevada. They examine three types of gamblers (slots vs. table gamblers vs. internet gamblers). They suggest that regular casino gamblers are a unique consumption subculture. With the increasing access and prevalence of casino gambling, both on-line and live, a better understanding of this subculture is important. Consumer research can benefit from a focus in this area because the nature of the marketer/casino and consumer exchange relationship is adversarial. Consumers know that casinos seek to gain their money, and consumers seek to beat the marketer; they consume to win. Consumption here is not as straightforward as exchanging money for experience (as in movie-going). The actual co-creation of the experience involves an explicit recognition that each party seeks to gain at the expense of the other. So studying the creation of consumer identity in this consumption domain can unearth unusual insights not possible in other sites.

The session also includes a discussion leader (David Sprott) with expertise in public policy and gambling. His comments concerning the potential societal implications of casino gambling should add a provocative conclusion to an engaging discussion. The proposed session should be quite attractive to at least four groups of ACR researchers: (1) those interested in transformative consumer research, particularly concerning "dark-side" behaviors, (2) those

researchers who work in the area of consumer motivation and goals, (3) researchers interesting in aspects of service provider loyalty, and (4) CCT researchers interested in a multi-method, multi-perspective approach to this unique consumption practice. We anticipate a very fruitful interchange of ideas among the various authors who will be presenting the three papers, the discussion leader, and with the audience members as well.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“The Effect of Visual Stimuli in Casinos on Emotional Responses and Problem Gambling Behavior”

Karen Finlay, University of Guelph

Vinay Kanetkar, University of Guelph

Jane Londerville, University of Guelph

Harvey H. C. Marmurek, University of Guelph

We present the results of an experiment examining whether manipulations of environmental variables within gaming venues elicit emotions that influence problem gambling behaviour. We introduced the manipulations within two contrasting macro casino designs. The Kranes (1995) “playground” design is intended to be inviting and energizing, properties induced by thematic combinations of sunlight, warm colors, accessible green space and moving water. The Friedman (2000) “gaming” design places the gambling machines as the dominant decorative feature in a casino, relegating décor to highlight and enhance the equipment layout.

Within each macro casino design, it is possible to vary specific environmental elements that impact on emotional reactions to the gambling setting. In this study, we varied lighting (flashing versus static) and color scheme (bright versus monotone) that were expected to impact perceived levels of arousal. The index of gambling behavior was the stated intention to gamble beyond planned levels of time and money. It was hypothesized that flashing lights and the use of bright colors would increase arousal and the propensity to gamble irresponsibly in both the playground and gaming designs.

We ran two studies. In the lighting study, each participant viewed two videos of a gambling casino. One video represented a playground design and the other a gaming design (order was counterbalanced across participants). For half of the participants, both videos had static lighting; for the others, both videos had flashing lights. In the color study, each participant also viewed two videos of a gambling casino (playground; gaming). For half of the participants, both videos had bright coloring; for the others, both videos had monotone coloring. Thus, for each study, the design was a 2 x 2 mixed factorial where the between-subjects factor was the treatment (lighting or coloring) and the within-subjects factor was the design (playground and gaming).

Eight videos of a variety of casino settings were edited to 3-minute scenarios representing the following conditions: playground flashing; playground static; gaming flashing; gaming static; playground bright; playground monotone; gaming bright; gaming monotone. The participants were 188 gamblers who received \$30. Testing took place in small groups (3-10) in a mini theatre-style setting. Participants were asked to imagine how they would feel in the casino setting they were about to see.

Following each of two videos they viewed, participants completed 7-point scales measuring arousal and intention to gamble irresponsibly. Intention to gamble irresponsibly was gauged using a five-item, 7-point scale anchored by “totally disagree” and “totally agree.” Statements included, “I would have trouble quitting without placing one more bet at this place,” and “I would gamble/play more money than I intended at this place.” Arousal was measured with a 6-item scale (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974).

Respondents were asked to mark the spot on a -3 to +3 scale closer to the adjective anchor that better described their feelings about the casino simulation they had just viewed. Adjective descriptors for arousal included “calm” versus “excited” and “unaroused” versus “aroused.”

The intention to gamble excessively was stronger for the playground design ($M=3.88$) than for the gaming design ($M=3.28$), $F(1,90)=14.13, p=.00$. Gambling intention was marginally higher for flashing lights ($M=3.61$) than for static lighting ($M=3.28$), $F(1,90)=2.87, p=.09$. The interaction between design and lighting treatment was not significant. Arousal was significantly higher for playground than for gaming designs, $F(1,94)=17.05, p=.00$, and for flashing lights than for static lighting, $F(1,94)=6.75, p=.01$. The interaction of design and lighting approached significance, $F(1,94)=3.62, p=.06$. Flashing lights led to a greater increase in arousal for the gaming design (flashing $M=4.90$; static $M=4.16$) than for the playground design (flashing $M=5.19$; static $M=4.93$).

The interaction of macro design and color significantly affected excessive gambling intent, $F(1,89)=7.08, p=.01$. Whereas coloring had no effect on gambling intentions in the playground design (monotone $M=3.60$; bright $M=3.75$), the intention to gamble excessively was significantly higher for monotone ($M=3.49$) than for bright ($M=2.82$) colors in the gaming design.

Our research indicates that the incremental information afforded by flashing lights and bright colors impact emotions and gambling behavior. In both the playground and gaming designs, heightened arousal induced by flashing lights appears to exaggerate poor decisions made by gamblers who may be chasing losses by betting more than planned, spending more money than planned or by engaging in unplanned additional games.

Although coloring did not affect arousal, bright colors reduced negative gambling intentions in a gaming casino. This unexpected outcome may be related to the typical coloring within a casino. For the playground design, a variety of color formats may be typical. For the gaming design, bright coloring may be more common. Monotone coloring in the gaming casino may be incongruent leading to distraction and loss of control. Further research is required to test that hypothesis. At the conference, we will discuss the implications of these effects for public policy.

“An Assessment of the Value of Slot Clubs as Drivers of Casino Loyalty”

Flavia Hendler, University of Nevada–Las Vegas

Kathryn A. Braun-LaTour, University of Nevada–Las Vegas

Previous research has indicated that loyalty programs may not generate attitudinal loyalty or repeat purchases. In fact, some loyalty programs offer financial benefits and complimentary offers that basically translate into price discounts. Within particular markets, firms may be obliged to match benefits offered by its competitors in a form of price war, turning those programs into costly liabilities that do not necessarily strengthen their relationship with customers. A question that arises is whether loyalty programs, as they are currently structured, create emotional commitment to a brand or simply generate a feeling of entitlement to discounts and benefits. Another important question is what, in fact, creates loyalty.

The goal of our research is to better understand the impact of slot clubs on casino loyalty, where loyalty is defined as “a level of commitment to an organization or product that exclude competitors from the consideration set.” Casino slot clubs are the entities in the casinos that operationalize the collection of customer data and the delivery of loyalty program benefits. We investigate the deep meanings and emotions associated with such clubs using qualita-

tively-derived perceptual maps of mental models of slot clubs and casinos and their underlying constructs. Our findings enrich our understanding of the loyalty construct and reveal personal meanings associated with slot clubs and casino mega-resorts.

Traditional research methods are unable to fully evaluate the efficacy of loyalty programs. For example, when faced with a questionnaire, consumers may indicate that some benefits are important simply because they are widely offered within an industry, even if they do not necessarily impact the purchase decision. A methodology that explores emotions and unconscious motives will provide a better picture of the underlying dimensions of loyalty towards a casino brand and a loyalty program. Therefore, we used a qualitative methodology, namely the ZMET technique. By using images, metaphor elicitation, and laddering probes, this research focuses on the deep and multi-faceted meanings of a slot club from a consumer standpoint.

We will present data on Las Vegas slot customers, including local (Las Vegas residents) and non-local customers of a casino resort. High-rollers usually receive highly personalized treatment, while gamblers with low levels of play do not receive significant benefits. For this reason, this research focuses mainly on mid-range customers. Using Backman and Crompton's (1991) categorization to classify customers according to their level of loyalty, only truly loyal customers (displaying attitudinal and behavioral loyalty) are included in the sample.

The study of the deep emotional meanings of loyalty in casinos is particularly interesting because intuitively the purchase motives in gaming are highly emotional and perhaps even irrational. At the same time, casino customers may be highly value-driven, taking full advantage of the benefits provided in the clubs. In addition, each Las Vegas mega-resort is unique in terms of theme, location on the strip, and target market. In this sense, the casino product is not a commodity, and every property has potentially a different appeal to each customer. Furthermore, casinos track highly detailed information on customers. Particularly on slot machines, even penny transactions are recorded-as long as customers use their loyalty cards. Having this information allows casinos to customize offers and benefits to players according to the amount wagered and behavioral data (preferences, frequency of visit, etc.). However, the club loyalty benefits are generally quite similar among different establishments, resulting in the loyalty club becoming simply a form of discounting. For all the reasons above, the Las Vegas slot clubs are a good terrain to explore the deeper meanings of loyalty and reward programs more generally. Thus, this study should help casinos—and perhaps other industries—to foster commitment to a brand or product, and perhaps avoid costly efforts that do not translate in attitudinal and behavioral loyalty.

“Not Leaving Las Vegas: Identity Projects of Local Vegas Gamblers”

*Kathryn A. Braun-LaTour, University of Nevada–Las Vegas
June Cotte, University of Western Ontario*

Traditionally the gambling literature has treated slot machine and table gamers similarly, and on-line gambling has not been investigated at present. Observation shows that these three types of gamblers exert very different behaviors; the slot player tends to be more introspective, focusing on their machine and winnings, whereas the table gamer has to be more social, interacting with the dealer as well as other players. On-line gamblers need not leave their homes, although they enter a simulated casino environment.

But how does one get into the mind of a gambler? Observation does not reveal gamblers' inner motivations. Focus groups and surveys, while they may try to understand the gambler's behavior,

are subject to all sorts of biases which are likely to skew the results. For instance, a gambler may not consciously know or be able to articulate why they gamble or, in many cases, they may not want to admit why they gamble. For these reasons we allow participants to express themselves through images, the language of the brain, which helps reveal their underlying emotions and motivations. Using as a template the methodology developed by Gerald Zaltman (ZMET), we ask participants about their thoughts and feelings about gambling, using participant-supplied pictures as visual cues. Using techniques adapted from psychotherapy, cognitive neuroscience, psychology, and sociology, interviewers take participants through a series of exercises designed to reveal the fundamental feelings and beliefs that drive their actions.

We completed thirty one-on-one interviews that, on average, lasted about 75 minutes. We asked ten regular slot machine gamblers, ten on-line gamblers, and ten table gamers to bring in pictures of what gambling meant to them. The resulting interviews were driven by the pictures, as well as by some structured (primarily projective and sensory-related) questions we developed beforehand. The resulting data was about 900 pages of transcribed interview text and 150 scanned images. We coded the data, both verbal and visual, for important ideas and themes, and constructed maps connecting these ideas to form a comprehensive understanding of gambling and its role in gamblers' self-identity.

We uncover some intriguing findings about gamblers' interpretive strategies as they confront the marketplace culture of casino gambling, both live and on-line. In particular, we answer Arnold and Thompson's (2005) call for more examination of the use of localized cultural capital (gambling expertise) in defining self, and in-group/out-group status. Our results are organized as juxtaposed themes, including: social vs. anti-social; “brain-flushing” escape vs. active mental engagement; things that matter vs. things that don't; genuine vs. contrived environments; chasing highs vs. avoiding lows; tourists vs. “real” gamblers; winners vs. losers. Our presentation will use the images as well as the text to communicate the nuances and implications of our research.

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Instant Choices versus Slow-Developing Preferences: How Preferences Form and Change over Time

Wendy Liu, University of California Los Angeles, USA

SESSION OVERVIEW

By now it is accepted in consumer research that preferences are not innate, but instead are constructed in specific contexts (Bettman, Luce and Payne 1998). This view is amply evidenced in research demonstrating the instantaneous processes of preference construction, such as how people use information contained in a decision context to make choices. What is less understood, however, are preference construction processes that take place over time. That is, instead of making instant choices, people often develop preferences over time. How are preferences developed over time, and what are the characteristics of such processes? This session presents four papers that consider the dynamic course of preferences. Two of the papers—Amir and Levav, and Hoeffler et al.—focus on preference learning and change during the process of making multiple, successive choices and evaluations. The other two papers—Dijksterhuis, and Liu—discuss preference development during extended decision-making occasions.

Amir and Levav study how people develop preferences from making choices. They distinguish between learning of tradeoffs between conflicting attributes and learning a preference within a given context. They find that when people are forced to tradeoff attributes, they are more likely to develop preferences that are stable across contexts. In contrast, when people choose within contexts that avoid tradeoffs, they form a preference for that context only and show less preference stability across different contexts. The latter point suggests that sometimes repeated choices of the same option do not mean that a subjective attribute value has been learned, but that the decision-maker has simply learned that he or she prefers an option within a certain context. Hoeffler et al. investigate the impact of experience with options on preference learning by juxtaposing intensiveness (number of repetitions) and extensiveness (variety of options) in experience with options, and show that extensiveness leads to greater learning and better developed preferences for the products.

The next two projects turn to preference development in extended decision-making episodes. Liu examines the changes in preferences that occur when the consideration of the options is interrupted. Specifically, an interrupting interval causes changes in the processing of the options such that greater attention is given to the desirability rather than feasibility of the options, resulting in preferences drifting towards attractive but less feasible options such as high-risk high-return, and high-quality high-price options. Dijksterhuis on the other hand notes that over time, people may have the opportunity to process options offline, i.e., through non-conscious processes. The author contrasts conscious contemplation and non-conscious processing, and demonstrate periods of non-conscious processing can result in preferences for objectively superior options, and greater satisfaction over time.

The four projects together seek to present new perspectives on consumer preferences by focusing on the dynamic dimension of preference formation and change.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

“Choice Construction versus Preference Construction: The Instability of Preferences Learned in Context”

On Amir, University of California San Diego

Jonathan Levav, Columbia University

A relatively common interpretation of preference stability is that it reflects a condition in which the decision-maker has learned the value he or she places on each attribute. A consumer with stable preferences is, by this view, less likely to fall “prey” to the influence of contextual variables on choice. In this paper we argue that preference stability does not necessarily reflect a process of learning tradeoffs or some understanding of one’s subjective value for attributes. Instead, we suggest that when preferences are learned in context, e.g., when repeated choices are made from a set that includes an asymmetrically dominated (decoy) option, people simply learn their preference for generic properties of a choice set, rather than their preferences about the attributes themselves. We call this *choice construction*. In contrast, if a person is asked to make repeated choices between two options, he or she will be forced to make a tradeoff between one attribute and the other. This process will induce *preference construction*, and should yield preferences that are stable across contexts.

Our experiments included two phases for all participants. In the first phase, the “tradeoff learning task,” participants made six successive choices between equally priced options that varied only on two attributes; every choice required a tradeoff between these attributes. Each successive set of options became increasingly stronger along one attribute rather than the other, thus requiring increasingly difficult tradeoffs.

Experiment 1’s tradeoff learning task was structured in one of three ways. In the control (Binary Choice) condition participants made repeated choices between two options. In the Attraction condition participants made repeated choices between the same two options plus a third, asymmetrically dominated decoy option. In the Compromise condition the third option included an attribute level combination that placed it exactly between the attribute level combinations of the binary set. The objective of the Attraction and Compromise conditions was to create a choice situation in which participants would be more likely to use contextual cues to make their decision, rather than having to learn their subjective attribute importance weights.

The learning task was followed by a filler task and then a “target choice phase.” The target choice in all experiments presented participants with three options in an attraction effect setup. The choice set included options representing a trade-off more extreme than the last decision of the learning phase. In order to test for preference stability, the decoy was set to be asymmetrically dominated by the option at the opposite extreme from the participant’s last selection in the learning phase (i.e., their sixth decision). We assumed that this last selection reflected a strong preference for one attribute over the other. Our key dependent variable was whether participants were “tempted” by the decoy, and thus “switched” away from their previously preferred attribute combination. We expected that participants in the Attraction and Compromise conditions would switch more than their control condition counterparts

because the trinary choice sets would enable them to develop a preference for contextual cues rather than engage in the difficult act of trading-off one attribute for another. We also asked participants to indicate how strongly they preferred their chosen (target) option on a one to nine scale. We expected strength of preference to be greater for participants in the control condition because their preferences should be relatively more stable than experimental condition participants.

Our predicted data pattern emerged as expected. The proportion of participants who were “lured” by the decoy in the final, target choice was significantly lower in the control condition (31.2% switched) than either the Attraction (47.3%) or Compromise (59.3%) conditions. Additionally, mean preference strength was greater for non-switchers than switchers. This pattern becomes more extreme when we differentiate those participants who fell prey to the context from those who did not.

In our second experiment we confirm our interpretation that participants in our binary conditions learned trade-off values but that trinary condition participants did not. In this experiment we replicate the Binary Choice and Attraction condition procedures from Experiment 1, but also add a pair of similar conditions where we manipulate the difficulty of learning trade-offs in the experiment’s learning phase by presenting participants ranges of attribute values, rather than a precise number (e.g., “restaurant food quality: 3-3.5 stars”). We find that in both range conditions—Binary and Attraction—participants are more likely to be tempted by the decoy in the target choice. That is, when attributes are described in ranges, the Binary condition participants behave like those in the trinary condition. We argue that this is because the range manipulation made attribute trade-off learning more difficult, which ultimately led to less stable preferences.

In our third experiment we demonstrate that when participants are prodded to pay special attention to the tradeoffs inherent in their choices, they produce more stable preferences even when the choices are made in (a trinary choice) context. We replicate our procedure and basic result from the Binary and Attraction conditions of experiments 1 and 2, but find relatively high and equal preference stability irrespective of the presence of a contextual cue in the choice set when we give the simple instruction to pay special attention to the tradeoffs among the attributes. Thus, in study 1 we present the finding that preferences are less stable when learning in context. In study 2 we are able to exacerbate this difference, and in study 3 we are able to attenuate the difference. Throughout we replicate the basic difference between choice and preference construction that we find initially in study 1.

In summary, we present evidence distinguishing preference construction from choice construction. This perspective offers a new approach to understanding the persistence of context effects. Finally, we propose a more nuanced way to think about what choices imply about underlying preferences.

“Preference Exploration and Learning: The Role of Intensiveness and Extensiveness of Experience”

*Steve Hoeffler, University of North Carolina
Dan Ariely, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Pat West, Ohio State University
Rod Duclos, University of North Carolina*

“Not alone age matures one, but breadth of experience and depth of reflection.” —Ross (1948, p. 214)

People’s preferences change dramatically over time. In most cases, the changes are too slow to draw attention, but when people look back at their past preferences, they sometimes find it shocking

to realize how much they have changed. These changes occur in most consumption domains. In addition, they include aspects for which people both increased and decreased their liking over time. A few examples of such changes are realizing that grilled cheese sandwiches are no longer the culinary ideal, developing a taste for beer, and looking forward to visiting a modern art museum. Yet knowing that preferences change is different from understanding how and why they change.

Prior research has focused on two broad classes of factors that exert influence on preference learning. One class of factors (e.g., biology and exposure) has a direct influence, whereby preferences respond to lower-order forces such as biological adaptation and sensory feedback. The second class of factors (e.g., informational goals and social learning) has an indirect influence, whereby preferences are subject to higher-order forces such as cognitive representations of (un)desirable end states. Both classes are important because they relate to the way a person learns about and constructs preferences. Despite the wide range of literature covered, however, we found a dearth of research on the role of breadth of experience in the preference formation process. Thus, we attempt to remedy this shortcoming by refining/partitioning the “experience” construct by introducing two new subconstructs: intensiveness and extensiveness of experience.

We succinctly define intensiveness of experience as the amount or frequency with which a person has been exposed to a product category. Alternatively, we define extensiveness of experience as the breadth or the variety of exposure a person has accumulated in a product environment throughout his or her consumption history. Intensiveness and extensiveness of experience are likely to be positively correlated in the real world, yet they need not accrue simultaneously. As suggested previously, it is possible to develop one aspect of experience (e.g., intensiveness) without necessarily enriching the other (e.g., extensiveness).

In light of this argument, we contend that a person’s preference formation will be influenced by the nature of prior experience. More specifically, the primary goal of this research (studies 1-2) is to examine whether preference learning (as indicated by the ability to identify, predict, and appreciate higher-quality products) is afforded more readily by intensiveness or extensiveness of experience. Our secondary goal is to identify some of the factors and mechanisms impacting extensiveness of experience and preference exploration (studies 3-5).

In study 1, to examine the relationship between experience and preference learning, we surveyed the intensiveness (e.g., number of years drinking beer, and number of beers consumed in a typical week) and extensiveness (e.g., number of brands regularly consumed, number of beer types experienced, and number of brands experienced) of experience of our research participants. Following this initial questionnaire, we tested participants’ knowledge of the category in a series of semantic tasks. From the performance exhibited on these tasks, we inferred the amount of preference learning accrued over time. We find that, while intensiveness of experience could not predict preference learning, extensiveness of experience did. Participants with higher breadth were better able to discriminate quality, knew a greater number of countries legitimately famous for producing high-quality beer, and were better able to estimate the alcohol content of beers.

In study 2, we used similar questions to estimate intensiveness and extensiveness of experience, but adopted a new set of dependent variables. In addition to the semantic measures of preference learning, we used sensory measures (e.g., blind test tastes). Again, we find that high-extensiveness participants were better able to identify and appreciate high-quality products and accurately predict their preferences than low-extensiveness participants. Inten-

siveness of experience, on the other hand, did not confer any benefit. To the extent that preferences are the product of both sensory and semantic knowledge, we infer that extensiveness of experience enhances both understanding of the product category and preference learning.

After identifying the advantages associated with extensiveness of experience, we next examine three mechanisms impacting the decision to experiment with novel alternatives in the real world. We use the term “preference exploration” to describe the very selection of novel options and the corresponding increase in people’s extensiveness of experience. So what are the factors that affect preference exploration?

The first factor we identify is the availability of a quality signal favoring novel options. In study 3, participants who were led to believe that novel juices (e.g., tamarind, guanabana, maracuja, and guava) were more popular in a foreign country were more likely to select those juices for trial. The second factor is the similarity of an advocate of a novel option. In study 4, when a similar model (i.e., a person of same age and gender) promoted the selection of a novel option, participants were more likely to demonstrate a willingness to try the item. The third factor is the favorability of a novel experience. In study 5, participants who had a negative initial experience with a novel juice were more likely to stay with familiar options in subsequent trials.

Far from construing intensiveness and extensiveness of experience as ends of one continuum, we present these constructs as two correlated, but potentially separable, dimensions along which individual experiences vary. Furthermore, we believe that both constructs can sometimes interact to influence the preference formation process. Finally, inspired by recent research in neuroscience (Munakata and O’Reilly 2003), we conjecture that, to the extent that preferences are the product of both semantic and sensory knowledge, intensiveness can play a preference-solidifying role by strengthening the linkages between the knowledge acquired through sensory exploration and that acquired through semantic exploration.

“The Effect of Decision Interruption and Suspension on Preferences”

Wendy Liu, *University of California Los Angeles*

Previous research in judgment and decision making has mainly focused on decisions made in one continuous manner—the person is presented with a choice, thinks through it, and selects the course of action. However, in real life, decisions are often interrupted or suspended. For example, a multitasking manager may be juggling several issues on the same work day. Thus when he/she faces a decision problem, he/she may need to attend to other businesses before returning to make the decision. Similarly, a consumer may be considering a purchase, but may sit on the decision for some time while pursuing other things in life.

Do interruptions and suspensions in decision making change people’s preferences? In this research, I focus on the change in information processing due to an interruption or suspension. Specifically, I propose two modes of attribute processing, namely, *compulsory processing* versus *voluntary processing*, and argue that when a decision is considered for the first time, the attributes of options are processed under compulsory mode such that they receive attention proportional to their perceived relevance to the decision. However, an interruption stops this processing, and when the decision resumes, the processing of the problem switches from compulsory mode to voluntary mode—upon a “revisit” to the problem, people (unintentionally) become more focused on aspects of the problem they are more naturally drawn to. In particular, I propose that compared to compulsory processing in which an option’s desirability (benefits, rewards) and feasibility (costs, con-

straints) are equally relevant, people voluntarily give greater attention to the desirability of options, and less attention to the feasibility of options, resulting in systematic shifts in preferences. I examine this possibility in two decision contexts, namely, risky choice, and price-quality tradeoffs, and show that an interruption or suspension makes people more risk-seeking, and more likely to choose high-price high-quality options.

Study 1 examines the effect of decision suspension on risky choice. Participants were given 6 decisions involving one option with a larger but less probable gain and another with a smaller but more probable (sometimes sure) gain. Consistent with prior research, winning is desirable, while the probability of winning indicates its feasibility (Sagristano, Trope and Liberman 2002). For each decision, half the participants were told that they should first learn about the choice, but not make a decision; instead they would turn to a different task. The interrupting filler task asked the participants to count backwards (e.g., “count backwards by 4 from 92 to 8”), typing down each step to make sure they followed instructions. Upon completion of the filler task, they were shown the risky choice again and asked to make a decision. The other half completed the filler task prior to the risky choice (thus equating any potential “priming” effect of fillers), and then made the choice at once without suspending it. In all 6 decisions, those who suspended their decisions were more likely to choose the risky option; the increases range from 7% to 14%, pooled average=10%, $p < .005$. Further analysis shows that the total amount of time spent on the decisions did not differ between conditions, and did not account for the effect.

Study 2 extends the result of study 1 on risky choice to unexpected interruptions. Specifically, this computerized study controls the process of reading about the options and deciding, by introducing information about the options gradually. After the last option’s information was presented, the no-interruption subjects spent an average of 8 seconds to come up with a decision. The interruption subjects were interrupted unexpectedly 3 seconds after the last information was presented (and hence have not made up their mind) and were asked to perform a filler task. Again, when they resumed, they were more likely to choose the riskier option (increase=23%, $p < .005$).

Study 3 conceptually extends the effect of interruption to another domain, namely, price-quality tradeoff. Because high quality is desirable while price serves as a feasibility constraint, interruption shifted preferences towards the high-quality high-price option over the low-quality low-price option (increase=8%, $p < .05$). Further analysis suggests consistent with the underlying mechanism of voluntary attention to desirability, the effect is stronger for hedonic products (11% increase) than for utilitarian products (4% increase), the later being instrumental to other goals but lack desirability in and of themselves.

In summary, this research examines the effect of decision interruption and suspension on preferences, and demonstrates a shift towards desirable but less feasible options due to a switch from compulsory to voluntary mode of information processing. This research has significant implications for marketers and consumers.

“New Insights on the Benefits of Unconscious Thought”

Ap Dijksterhuis, *University of Amsterdam*

Common knowledge dictates that conscious deliberation is the best strategy for making choices. Thorough contemplation, it is usually argued, leads to choices that are objectively better. We show that choosers can also engage in unconscious thought: After people have gathered information about various choice alternatives, they leave the development of a preference for one of the alternatives to the unconscious. In lay terms, people can “sleep on it”. We present

research showing that unconscious thought is often superior to conscious thought. In addition, we present research that sheds more light on how unconscious thought works, and we present some preliminary evidence about the moderating role of expertise in the fruitfulness of unconscious thought.

We base our recent research on the recently posited Unconscious Thought Theory (UTT; Dijksterhuis & Nordgren, in press). This theory postulates various characteristics about conscious thought and about unconscious thought. We argued that conscious thought is essentially very precise, but also suffers from low capacity. Unconscious thought, on the other hand, is less precise but also has no (or at least less) capacity issues. This led us to formulate and test the “deliberation-without-attention” hypothesis about the relation between mode of thought (conscious versus unconscious thought), complexity of choice and quality of choice. We hypothesize that simple decisions are made better after conscious thought, whereas complex decisions are made better after unconscious thought. We indeed found evidence for this, both in the laboratory as well as among actual shoppers (Dijksterhuis, Bos, Nordgren, & van Baaren, 2006).

In our laboratory studies, we presented our participants with information about four choice alternatives (e.g., four different cars) differing in overall attractiveness. These cars were either described by few aspects (4) or by a lot of aspects (12). After participants had read the information, they were either given time to consciously think about the four cars, or they were distracted so they could only engage in unconscious thought. We repeatedly showed that conscious thinkers more often chose the best car than unconscious thinkers when the choice context was simple (i.e., 4 aspects per car), but that unconscious thinkers made a better choice than conscious thinkers under conditions of complex decisions (12 aspects per car). We also have evidence that unconscious thought leads to more post-choice satisfaction among actual shoppers who bought complex products (e.g., furniture) but that conscious thought leads to more satisfaction for simple products (e.g., small appliances).

Recent research also shows that unconscious thought is goal-directed. We only engage in it when we are motivated to do so. In various experiments, we gave people a information about various alternatives, before dividing people into two conditions. In one condition, we distracted people for a few minutes but told them beforehand that they later had to choose between the alternatives. In another condition, we merely distracted people and told them they could forget about the choice alternatives. Only in the first condition we found effects of unconscious thought. That is, only people who knew they would have to make a choice later on made good decisions.

In all experiments that we had done until recently, participants were given all information relevant for making a choice. But what if people do not have this information? Is unconscious thought still helpful? In order to examine this, we looked at the role of expertise. In an 8-week period, participants were asked to predict scores in the Dutch soccer league every week (games are played each weekend). Participants either predicted without hardly any thought at all, or after conscious thought, or after unconscious thought. Participants were furthermore divided into two groups on the basis of their knowledge of soccer: Experts and non-experts. Again, unconscious thinkers made the most accurate predictions, but this was only true for experts. They could recruit relevant knowledge during unconscious thought to arrive at sound predictions. However, as the non-experts showed, unconscious thought is not helpful without having relevant information.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Access versus Ownership in Consumer Research

Ashlee Humphreys, Northwestern University, USA

Markus Geisler, York University, Canada

SESSION OVERVIEW

This session sought to explore the distinction between access and ownership in consumption practices. We brought together three presentations that examined a paradigm shift from ownership to access organized consumer discourses, practices and theory. Within a paradigm of ownership, consumption objects are clearly defined, and the role of the consumer is circumscribed as simultaneous owner and user. Within a paradigm of access, however, property boundaries become blurred, and consumers play a more ambiguous role in constituting the consumption object by using objects that are not owned. As marketing paradigms evolve from a product-based orientation to a service-based orientation, these tensions between ownership and access have become more prominent in the marketplace (Vargo and Lusch 2005). Examining the relationships between access and ownership allows us to (1) explore the relationship between material and immaterial dimensions of consumption, (2) add to our understanding of how cultural values and interpretations are formulated and shared, and (3) document how consumers and producers collectively negotiate social and legal norms of access and ownership.

The applicability of this theoretical distinction was explored in three papers. Markus Giesler and Ashlee Humphreys examined the two conflicting paradigms in two consumption contexts: retail bookselling and music downloading. These two cases allow us the opportunity to theorize the dynamics between ownership and access, and its results at two levels of consumer-producer conflict, one cooperative and the other agonistic.

Clinton Lanier, Hope Schau, and Albert Muniz discussed the distinction's place in the consumer co-creation process in the case of three fan fictions (*Harry Potter*, *Xena: Warrior Princess*, and *Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers*). Although producers legally maintain the rights to the material aspects of mass culture, consumers co-create and disseminate the immaterial meanings and interpretations of popular culture. Who owns the "meaning" of these co-created texts is hotly contested between fans and producers. Traditional notions of ownership break down as we move from considering value as residing in the product to residing in the experience surrounding the product. The only way for producers to maintain ownership of the experience of the product is to restrict access to the product itself.

Eric Arnould, Carolyn Curasi, and Linda Price explored the interplay between access and ownership in a context in which access is historically privileged over ownership, and likewise takes precedence over ownership in several meaningful ways. In the context of Nebraska Century farms and ranches, access precedes ownership and flows uncontested into ownership. However, ownership must be earned via demonstration of guardianship skills. Ownership is a responsibility that entails considerable lifestyle trade-offs. A priority for agents occupying the guardianship role is securing access to the farm for existing and future generations of potential owners. Loss of the farm, which curtails future access, is a great ill, all guardians seek to avoid. Century farm families employ a variety of strategies to pass their farms forward into the future. A variety of economic and policy factors threaten the access/guardianship model of the Century farm.

Russell Belk then tied together the presented empirical work and drew conclusions using a framework of sharing and owning and contrasted them to previous work on material possessions. All three

presentations use the access/ownership distinction to theorize social relations between consumers and producers and between consumers themselves. By convening this session we tried to advance the understanding of these two modes of consumption and their interrelation in the marketplace.

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

"Tensions between Access and Ownership in the Media Marketplace"

Markus Giesler, York University

Ashlee Humphreys, Northwestern University

When and why will a social actor use a framework of access over one of ownership? To answer this question, we examine ownership/access dynamics in the context of media consumption and production. Media products present us with a valuable opportunity to study the conflict between access, a viewpoint generally taken by the consumers of media that entails the sharing of goods and services, and ownership, the viewpoint more commonly taken by producers of media that entails placing restrictions on the circulation of goods and services. This paper seeks to organize and explain the tensions that arise between media producers and consumers based on divergent perspectives of the marketplace in two consumption domains, books and music.

Two ethnographic field studies of book and music consumption were undertaken including depth interviews, archival data, and extended experiential participation in a cultural context (Pettigrew 1990; Arnould and Wallendorf 1994; Stewart 1998). In the case of the bookselling industry, the transition from ownership to access, while on-going, has been relatively smooth and takes place through a process of continual gifting between company and consumer. In the case of the music industry, the transition from ownership has been contentious, heavily debated in popular and industry circles, and has taken the form of a social drama (Turner 1969).

In the case of bookselling, consumers have the option to read or 'access' titles in the store rather than to buy them outright. They view this access as a free service offered by the bookstore and use the service to read things they would not otherwise buy. Book producers, on the other hand, are structurally oriented toward selling media in material form. While they may offer free access to materials, they do so in order to entice consumers to buy and 'own' the book. The tension between access and ownership plays out as consumers try to maximize 'access' while producers try to place barriers on access in order to promote ownership.

In the case of music, downloaders, who are access-oriented, and music producers, who are ownership-oriented, are drawn into dramatic presentation efforts to legitimate their own cultural standpoint (Goffman 1959; Turner 1969). Members of each dramatic stakeholder group exert a moral demand upon their rivals and cultural bystanders to accept the cultural standpoint encoded in their dramatic performances as the most desirable, proper, or appropriate. Through their dramatic performances, consumers and producers invest themselves and others into a particular music marketplace ideology, legitimate their divergent cultural standpoint on music access and ownership, and reinforce their own sources of cultural identity and power.

In summary, this presentation contributes to our understanding of the access-ownership distinction in marketing in three

important ways. First, we profile media access and ownership as two fundamentally different perspectives in the marketplace. Second, we develop how these fundamental but abstract perspectives serve as a springboard for the construction of divergent dramatic narratives, roles, and behaviors. Finally, we show how marketplace stakeholders seek to manipulate the relationship between access and ownership to guide media consumption in particular directions. In summary, the two cases allow us to examine the multiple ways in which the tension between access and ownership can be negotiated, with more or less conflict between producers and consumers.

“Write and Wrong: Ownership, Access and Value In Consumer Co-Created Online Fan Fiction”

Clinton D. Lanier, Jr. University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Hope Jensen Schau, The University of Arizona

Albert M. Muñoz, Jr., DePaul University

This presentation specifically addresses issues of ownership and access in relation to fan community appropriation and alteration of media-based products through the writing of fan fiction (Bond and Michelson 2003; Caudill 2003). As marketing continues to evolve from a goods-centric to a service- and experience-centric dominant logic (Pralhad and Ramaswamy 2004, Vargo and Lusch 2004), the role of consumer involvement in the value and meaning creation process takes on greater importance. This active participation by the consumer exposes many of the limitations of our traditional understanding of property rights in marketing. It also raises many questions and concerns about the nature of products, consumer engagement, and the boundaries of consumer participation as they relate to access and ownership.

Copyrights protect intellectual property and lead to a legally legitimate and authenticated genealogy, but what happens when the protected property is subject to “textual poaching,” or the process in which people write around and through the “meta-text” of the protected property to meet their unique desires (Jenkins 1992)? The most common form of textual poaching by consumers is the writing of fan fiction. Because fans write stories that are based both on the primary text and the consumers’ imagination, we consider the writing of fan fiction as a form of active co-creation analogous to Vargo and Lusch’s (2004) new paradigm of marketing where consumers create both value and meaning, and are considered inextricable from the firm’s offering. Combining aspects of both the producers and consumers, the writing of fan fiction is considered a co-creation phenomenon in which consumers use the focal texts of mass culture as “cultural resources” to co-create the cultural meanings of popular culture (Fiske 1989). We interrogate the implicit assumption in this consumer orientation towards mass and popular culture, asserting that popular culture cannot be unilaterally produced or owned. We posit that media producers manufacture mass commodities (e.g., television programs, movies, music, fiction) and consumers turn them into popular culture through a co-creative process of access, interpretation, and identity negotiation (individual and collective).

In order to explore issues of ownership and access associated with the phenomenon of fan co-creation of media-based products, we examine three organically formed fan communities (Harry Potter, *Xena: Warrior Princess*, and Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers) and their interaction with three different types of media “texts” (i.e., novels, television shows, and music). We monitor ten online forums that contain fan fiction in a manner analogous to naturalistic observation: four devoted to Harry Potter fan fiction, four centered on *Xena: Warrior Princess*, and two related (directly and indirectly) to Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers. We analyze the content of the fan fiction on each site, the manner in which it is disseminated,

and discussions surrounding its interpretation and meanings to the fan communities and their various factions.

Through examination of these three fan communities, we find that fans engage in co-creation of meaning and value through the writing of fan fiction that involves the focal texts of the community. We find that this access-oriented form of co-creation is a transformative process that converts the commodities of mass culture into meta-texts of popular culture. That is, although producers legally maintain the rights to the “material” aspects of mass culture, consumers co-create and disseminate the “immaterial” meanings and interpretations of popular culture. Who owns the “meaning” of these co-created texts is hotly contested between fans and producers. We also find that the success of fan co-creation is based on the richness of the focal text, what is left unwritten in the focal text, and the degree to which the focal text can be appropriated and reconstructed by the consumer. Harry Potter, *Xena* and Tom Petty fan fiction writers all adore the focal texts, are intrigued by what is not contained in these texts, and engage in poaching and refashioning these texts to create broader meanings that meet their individual needs and the needs of the fan community.

We also find that the writing of fan fiction allows consumers to mitigate the cultural tensions between mass culture and popular culture. Although the products of mass culture are often described as the primary hegemonic tool of capitalist society to oppress and pacify the masses (Adorno and Horkheimer 1979), this co-creative process allows consumers to alleviate their feelings of being exploited and alienated by actively engaging these “texts” to produce the meanings of popular culture. Interestingly, although consumers are able to carve out a separate cultural space (i.e., popular culture) in which to create their own symbolic meanings and build their own communities, they replace one form of tension (mass culture vs. popular culture) for another (the tensions that exist between equally adoring fans with disparate reads of the focal storyline). In a sense, after transcending the issue of ownership, consumers wage their own internal battles concerning access and the degree of transformation of the focal text. We posit that the latter tension is preferable to consumers because it is a byproduct of the co-creation process and part of the tensions that consumers actively employ between individual and collective identities (Arnould and Price 2000; Schau and Muniz 2002).

In addition, these communities also face anxieties as some producers try to wrest control of the focal text away from highly involved fan consumers. Some producers of mediated-texts (e.g., Anne Rice) attempt to strictly control both the material and immaterial aspects of the focal text. This typically does not stop the fan community from co-creating their own texts and meanings, but usually forces them underground. Other producers attempt to put boundaries on how far the characters, meanings, etc. of their texts can be extended (e.g., many producers forbid the creation of sexually explicit stories based on their characters). A few producers actually invite consumers to suggest ways to extend the meaning of the focal text in upcoming productions. Since there are obvious advantages to producers from encouraging consumers to co-create with their products (e.g., the transformation of products from mass to popular culture), the issue of how much access and control to provide to consumers will need to be carefully considered.

We contribute to the existing literature by arguing that traditional notions of ownership break down as we move from considering value as residing in the product to residing in the experience and meaning surrounding the product. The only way for producers to maintain ownership of the “immaterial” aspects of the product is to restrict access to the product itself. Obviously, this defeats the purpose of any market offering and is almost impossible to control.

Likewise, although Holt (2004) asserts that it is the cohesive myth that binds people to a community, we find that it is precisely what is left unwritten in the focal text that inspires fans to actively engage in co-creation and form fan communities. Lastly, although the co-creation literature views this process as between producers and consumers (or consumption communities), it does not really address how co-creation goes on between consumers. Members of these fan communities not only engage the focal text (i.e., meaning creation and interpretation), but also co-create texts with other consumers (i.e., meaning development). This process generates the “meta-text,” which in turn provides consumers with more “cultural resources” to continue their creative endeavors.

“Guardianship and Access on Nebraska Century Farms”

Eric Arnould, University of Arizona

Carolyn Curasi, Georgia State University

Linda Price, University of Arizona

Nebraska “Century Farm” families have owned a farm or ranch for at least one hundred years. Perhaps paradoxically, our research with these families extends our understanding of a paradigm of object relationships highlighting access, where property is in some sense shared, and the agents involved have complex roles in constituting consumption objects imbued with relational symbolism within kinship groups (Curasi, Price and Arnould 2004; McGraw, Tetlock and Kristel 2003). Our research exposes cultural tensions agents experience between guardianship of something inalienable and loss through alienation, as well as the way these tensions shape their “curatorial” consumption (McCracken 1988). Access to and transfer of Century farms illustrate the interplay between alienability and inalienability across generations of farm families. Our paper exposes a variety of tactics for establishing and maintaining guardianship of the farm as site of production and consumption.

The Aksarben Foundation recognizes over 5000 Century Farms in Nebraska. Given the history of settlement, this often means a single family has held title to these farms since the original homesteading in the 1870s and 1880s, which was itself an access gaining process. In other words, Century farms have been transferred between four and six generations of farm family members. We conducted long interviews with over 30 families and participant observation with two of them to investigate contemporary management practices, curatorial consumption and family farm culture.

For individual agents, access to the farm precedes ownership and typically is mediated by kinship, that is, nuclear or extended family membership. It is enacted over time through expressions of interest that senior guardians recognize in more junior kinsfolk, and through their investment of productive labor in farming operations. Access may lead to increasing levels of agent’s engagement or desire for ownership/guardianship. Engagement is effortful. It is expressed through obtaining educational qualifications. It is further expressed through farmers’ commitment to what they term stewardship, care of the land and steps taken to improve it, such as sustainable management practices with a view to preserving access for future generations. In some cases, rescuing a failing family member’s farm operation may entitle one to greater say in the eventual disposition of the heritage farm removed from risk. Heirs are not simply designated, but become heirs through long-term demonstration of effort, worth, and ability.

Guardianship entails lifestyle commitments involving trade-offs between investments in the farm and additional land (rent and purchase) and consumption attractions available to city dwellers such as vacations, nice clothing, and the like (Machum 2005). Those who enjoy current guardianship/ownership make choices to

have access to the farm and the way of life it entails instead of something else (due to time, money, etc). A jack of all trades’ ethos with regard to production, and an attitude disparaging of farmers who engage in conspicuous consumption of new agricultural equipment or materialistic lifestyles was common among Century farms owners/guardians.

In this context, access has preeminence over ownership. As a necessary precursor to guardianship/ownership, access flows naturally into guardianship. Absentee owners, i.e., those without day-to-day access, even cash renters are suspect, even resented. This may be because absenteeism and alienated relationships to the land threaten the access-guardianship pathway. Access to the farm induces positive identity claims and symbolism that are shared with younger family members. Through the length of time they’re on their land, many Century farm families feel they have earned a type of distinction that resonates with the concept of ‘patina’ associated with inherited family possessions before the industrial revolution. Many informants seem to feel that Century Farm families have earned a level of distinction (good character, dependability, strong work ethic, faith, etc.) due in part to the longevity of their guardianship, and that these distinctions are lost when access is lost, but may be regained if access is renewed.

Guardians go to some lengths to preserve access for themselves and future generations (Coyné 2005). Developing niche markets and blending farm and off-farm income sources are tactics some employ (Edgcomb and Thetford 2004). A legacy of cautious innovation is common among these families. Nevertheless, market pressures lead some families to expand the scale of farmland and farm operations at the expense of other harder-pressed farm families. Guardians that are unable to actively farm the land due to financial reversals or advancing age may rent their farm to others family members preferentially but not necessarily, but resist the temptation to sell it out of the family. In these cases, they trade off their own access to the land against the responsibility to act as guardians for future generations. They express the hope that some family member will be able and willing to take over access and guardianship of the farm. Guardians also gift access of the farm to family members who have migrated to town or to other states, and encourage members of the migrants’ families to return for the agricultural summer season or important family holidays. In this way, ownership is symbolically shared and future guardians are sometimes even recruited. Those who see an off-farm future ahead express regret and misgivings.

Century farm families engage in creative strategies to retain family farms within the family and across generations. Farm transfer practices are quite complex from family to family. Engagement is expressed in an array of everyday practices such as ongoing labor commitments in the absence of ownership guaranties. This behavior is characteristic of younger family members who may hope to assume guardianship of the farm at some future point. Living trusts, intergenerational gifting, intergenerational installment purchase, investments of labor and even capital investments by younger family members in the farm to which they do not have title, are among the tactics employed to transfer guardianship between generations of farm families. Older guardians may signal progressive transfers and their change in status by moving from the main house to a secondary home either built on the property or at its margin, or in some cases in nearby small towns. Overall, progressive intergenerational transfer of limited rights characterizes these practices.

We found many cases where the burden of guardianship (Curasi, Price and Arnould 2004) had become great; farming is just “no fun” anymore, and selling out appears to be the only option.

Still, many informants indicate that an important goal is to pass the farm forward into the future, and they desire at all costs to avoid being the one who "lost the farm." These behaviors resonate with those of the guardians of inalienable wealth in other contexts (Curasi, Price and Arnould 2004). In other words, curatorial behavior is a key factor distinguishing the behavioral models of family and corporate farming in the minds of our informants.

Today, working century farm families operate within a complex and highly competitive market economy that imposes a host of threats to the guardianship/ownership model (Hassebrook 1999; Salamon and Toratore 1994). But family farms persist, and Nebraska Century farmers recognize significant distinctions between the logic of family farm operations and those of corporate farms.

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SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY
‘Fakin’ It’’: Why Do Consumers Buy Counterfeit Goods?
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SESSION OVERVIEW

Objective. Despite a booming multi-billion dollar global market for counterfeit goods, academic research on the consumption of such goods remains sparse. Who are the consumers of counterfeit goods? Why do they engage in such illegal consumption behaviors, even when they can afford the genuine goods? And how do others view those who engage in such questionable but, at the same time, often *de rigueur* actions? These are the questions that motivate this session, the objective of which is to further our understanding of this increasingly important but largely overlooked domain of consumption behavior.

Content. This session comprises four papers that together shed light on the individual and product-specific determinants, the motivational underpinnings, and the social and product-specific consequences of counterfeit good consumption. The papers are in advanced stages of completion, each containing empirical findings from one or more studies. The session’s scope is both broad and deep: the papers draw on a diversity of theoretical and empirical perspectives to contribute towards an incipient but persuasive, coherent understanding of how the social environment interacts with individual motivations to influence the consumption of counterfeit goods.

The first two papers examine the nature and extent of social sanction for counterfeit consumption behavior. The Geiger-Oneto paper draws on social identity theory to implicate the counterfeit buyer’s social distance as a determinant of others’ reactions of such a person. While counterfeit buyers are in general evaluated less favorably than buyers of genuine brands, the former are evaluated more favorably when they are members of an in-group than of an out-group. The Chang, Keinan and Lehman paper examines the moderating role of product type on such social perceptions by undertaking a product-specific (i.e., hedonic versus utilitarian) investigation of people’s opinions of counterfeit good buyers on dimensions of morality, likeability and attractiveness as a social other (e.g., friend, fellow shopper, etc.). Interestingly, while buyers of counterfeit utilitarian goods (e.g., software) are viewed as less moral, fair and considerate compared to buyers of the genuine versions, buyers of counterfeit hedonic goods (e.g., fashion) are viewed as more moral, fair and considerate compared to buyers of the real goods.

The final two papers complement the first set by investigating the socially-driven motivations guiding consumers’ pre- and post-counterfeit good purchase psychologies. The McCabe & Rosenbaum paper draws on sociological research on delinquent behavior to examine how consumers rationalize this illegal consumption behavior. Their findings suggests that consumers of counterfeit luxury branded goods not only employ multiple rationalizations to justify their purchases but also do not, paradoxically, desire the real brands any less. The Wilcox, Kim and Sen paper draws on theories of self-monitoring and accompanying attitude functions (social-adjustive vs. value-expressive) to demonstrate a consumer by product interaction in the motivations underlying purchases of counterfeit luxury brands: the purchase decision of low versus high self-monitors is differentially influenced by the extent to which the counterfeit product is identifiable as a desired luxury brand.

Structure. Each presentation will be 20 minutes long. As with most fruitful sessions on emerging topics, this session is likely to generate more questions than answers and the final 10 minutes of

the session will be devoted to a discussion of worthy research directions in this domain of consumer behavior.

Audience. The potential audience for this session is quite broad. It will appeal to researchers interested in illegal/aberrant consumption behaviors as well as, more broadly, to those interested in consumer decision making, motivation, and social norms and influences. Equally importantly, the session will be of interest to practitioners and regulators seeking to formulate effective anti-counterfeiting or piracy policies/strategies grounded in consumer insights.

Contributions. The contributions of this session are four-fold. First, it enhances our substantive understanding of the motivational and social underpinnings of an increasingly important domain of consumption behavior. Second, it draws on relevant theories of motivation, perception, preference and groups to advance our theoretical understanding of counterfeit good consumption. Third, this session combines the internal control of experimental work with the external validity of field surveys and ethnography to yield a methodologically robust set of insights into the consumption of counterfeit goods. Finally, this session brings together a diverse set of researchers whose research efforts in the area of counterfeit good consumption complement each other in the articulation of a fruitful research agenda on this important but under-examined consumer behavior topic.

Cueing Common Ecological Behaviors to Increase Environmental Attitudes and Behavior

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The appeal for social marketing research to serve consumers' and society's long term well-being and address sustainable consumption issues has been put forward since the early 70's (Andreasen 1995; Kotler and Zaltman 1971). The promotion of sustainable consumption behavior has shown to be an arduous task for governments and organization acting as behavioral managers, despite an increased interest of the general public in sustainable development. An often cited reason for this phenomenon is that people associate sustainable behavior with behavioral costs like money, time, effort and inconvenience (Pieters et al. 1998; Thøgersen 1994). In the present paper we focus on ecological behavior in specific and propose a technique, which aims to improve consumers' attitude towards specific environmental acts, and to increase their adoption of environmental behaviors.

Bem's self-perception theory (1972) proposed that attitudes may be inferred from previous behavior, especially when attitudes are to be constructed on the spot, or when existing attitudes are ambiguous or weak (Holland, Verplanken, and Van Knippenberg 2002). When deriving one's attitude towards pro-environmental behaviors, an individual can base his or her judgment on the availability of instances of previously performed environmental behaviors in memory (e.g., Tversky & Kahneman's availability heuristic (1973)). Increasing this perceived availability may thus render people's attitudes more favorable.

We propose that cueing people with commonly performed environmental behaviors may therefore render their attitude towards ecological behavior more positive. First, showing that they actually do perform environmental acts quite frequently in their daily lives increases the perceived availability of these behaviors. Second, cueing may render behaviors more relevant as a source of information to infer one's attitudes from. As a matter of fact, people may not perceive certain environmental acts as being informative when deriving their attitudes. This is the case when the behavior is seen as a social norm or when they attribute it to other motives than their green ethics, like financial reasons. This conjecture was supported by a first pre-study ($N=32$). From a 'logic of conversation'-perspective, cueing these behaviors as environmental acts will render them relevant as information to derive attitudes from (Grice 1975; Schwarz 1994).

A second pre-study ($N=42$) confirmed the assumption that the perceived ease with which participants could generate instances of previous environmental acts is correlated with their attitude towards environmental acts. In Study 1 ($N=160$) we examined the effect of cueing commonly performed environmental behaviors on attitudes. We constructed three sets of behaviors. One set contained *environmental behaviors which people usually perform*. These were the eight most often mentioned behaviors of this type, by participants in the second pre-study. Similarly, the second set was constructed to contain eight *environmental behaviors which people usually do not perform*. A control set contained eight behaviors, unrelated to ecology. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups, each of which received one of the three sets of behaviors. They were asked to indicate how frequently they engage in each of them. This way we created an *ecologically cued group*, a *non-ecologically cued group* and a *control group*. The results indicated that the ecologically cued group indeed showed more

favorable attitudes towards environmental behavior, perceived themselves more as ecological consumers and indicated a higher feeling or moral obligation to protect the environment than participants in either of the other two groups. Between the non-ecologically cued group and control group, no significant effects were obtained on any of the measures.

In Study 2 ($N=66$) we verified whether this increase in favorability of people's attitudes also renders their consumption decisions more ecologically sound. The manipulation used was identical to the one of Study 1. After the cueing manipulation, participants had to make several ecology-related decisions. First, they were asked to imagine being in a shopping environment and had to make purchase decisions. They were presented with ten product pairs: five filler pairs and five critical pairs. In each critical pair, one product was a more environmentally friendly but more expensive alternative of the other. We counted the number of environmentally friendly choices, which was higher for the ecologically cued group. A second task measured environmental conduct in a more subtle way. Participants were asked making notes for a task supposedly investigating the type of information consumers deem most important when reading product claims. We actually measured the efficiency with which participants used scratch paper. Again the ecologically cued group showed to behave in a more environmentally friendly way by using the available scratch paper more efficiently, and writing smaller than both other groups. Finally, to measure behavior in a more involving task, we offered participants to take a notepad home. They had to choose between a notepad containing the less appealing brownish recycled paper and a notepad with normal white paper. A higher percentage of participants in the ecologically cued group (81 %) and a smaller percentage of participants in the non-ecologically cued group (23 %), chose the recycled paper, compared to the control condition (52 %). On both other behavioral measures, these last two groups did not differ.

Our data suggest that drawing attention to the ecological acts people already engage in, improves people's attitudes towards ecological behaviors, with an analog effect on their behavior.

These results allow us to propose some guidelines for designing effective social marketing efforts for other sustainable behaviors as well.

Traditional campaigns are known to elicit aversive feelings towards the request, by creating guilt and using a paternalistic approach. Our technique approaches people in a more positive way, which is more likely to be accepted by the public. Second, traditional campaigns usually provide an external motivation for behavioral change, asking people to make a personal sacrifice for the benefit of society in general. However, external motivation usually results in reduced performance and reduced persistence of a behavior (Ryan and Deci 2000). To the extent that our cueing approach causes a *greener* perception of self, this might lead to internally motivated behavior, resulting in better performance and persistence of the promoted behavior.

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Progressing a Taxonomy of Possible Reflexivities: Guidelines for Reflexive Practice in Consumer Research

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Reflexivity has been identified in consumer research (Wallendorf and Brucks, 1993, Hirschman 1993, Thompson 2002) and in the wider social sciences (e.g. Wasserfall, 1993, Mauthner and Doucet, 1998, 2003) as a way to address power and control in the research encounter, to attend to the researcher/researched dynamic and to give insightful commentaries into the research process itself. The 'reflexive turn' (Weick 1999) has emerged in the social sciences largely as a response to the notion that data collection and analysis is a neutral activity, a technology of knowledge making in which the researcher can take a disinterested, objective position in relation to their research. Reflexivity instead is used to highlight the personal, interpersonal, emotional, institutional, disciplinary and pragmatic influences on the research, as well as the methodological, epistemological and ontological assumptions built in to specific approaches (Mauthner and Doucet 2003). As such, reflexivity has been seen a route to more accountable and responsible research, and as a stimulus to better accounts of the social and cultural world.

Researcher reflexivity has been conceptualised in consumer research discourse as a sub type of introspection. It is argued that there is much to recommend reflexivity as a practice in consumer research as it will 'improve our understanding of the actual research process' and act as such to develop consumer research theory (Wallendorf and Brucks 1993:355). Additionally it has been seen as a way to address the power issues in consumer research and specifically the instrumentality of the researcher/respondent relationship. For example, Hirschman (1993:551) advocates a more reflexive approach to research, and argues against the use of detached and 'objective' methods in consumer research. She exhorts consumer researchers to 'choose to abandon any method or practice that is premised on power inequalities between researcher and subject' she argues that research should be designed which recognises respondents as 'equal sentient beings'.

Although it is clear that consumer researchers have found the idea of reflexivity attractive and recognised its potentials, there is a need to develop the discourses already apparent in consumer research and formalise the conceptualisation and operation of this research approach. Currently, despite significant discourse around the issue in the wider social sciences there seems to be a lack of discourse around reflexivity in consumer behaviour research and although reflexive practice is evident in some work, the research processes around reflexive research are not articulated clearly, and a plethora of different approaches are evident. The aim of this paper is to stimulate essential new discourse around the practice of reflexivity. In order to do this it is necessary to formalise and structure reflexive practices as a foundation and basis for discussion. This work examines the many different reflexivities which might be enacted within consumer research and their concomitant implications and foundations. To accomplish this it provides a taxonomy of 'possible reflexivities' to structure the debate around this element of consumer research and to guide the potentially reflexive consumer researcher. The possible reflexivities which emerge from this study are envisaged as 'Objectivist Reflexivity', 'Experiential Reflexivity', 'Perspectival Reflexivity' and 'Multiplex Reflexivity'. The possibilities we have identified are distinguished by the dimensions of ontology and power in the research

encounter; this position, we believe, reflects closely key issues in contemporary consumer research. In terms of ontology, we reflected upon reflexivity as it has been seen as a route to better knowledge and enhanced theory building through reflection on the process of research. This to us suggested questions and challenges arising pertaining to the 'reality' of the research process, not just in terms of what 'really' happened, but the models of reality implied in different reflexive approaches. Different types of reflexivity, like different research approaches, carry their own ontological assumptions about the nature of subjects (researcher and researched) and what knowledge is and how it is constructed. These assumptions are clearly crucial to the conceptualisation of multiple reflexivities and render attempts to achieve closure around the notion of reflexivity as a singular concept highly problematic. Attending to ontology as one of the axes in our taxonomy allowed us to structure our theorising to account for this multiplicity of reflexivities and the constitutive and generated realities they imply. In terms of power, this pertains to reflexivity as a route to addressing the power imbalances and issues inherent in any research encounter, whether that be conceptualised in terms of an overt remit for an emancipatory research politics, or as a way to direct the researcher encounter towards one with less of a dominating and instrumental dynamic. For us, reflexivity is inherently political; our exposure to it initially emerged from our own engagement with feminist theory and our identification as feminist researchers. Reflexivity has been seen by feminist researchers (and other critical researchers) as a political tool for critically engaging with power issues in research (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002). Underpinning the different types of reflexivity in our taxonomy are assumptions relating to the nature of power in the researcher/respondent relationship and these different reflexivities also generate different (and sometimes ambivalent) power relations in the research encounter. In terms of this constitutive and generative relation to power we found that the taxonomy of reflexivities was a useful tool to reflect in a more structured manner upon the shifts in the researcher/respondent power dynamic which occurred at different parts of our own research. As Wolf (1996) has argued, power differentials are an inevitable part of research, and the necessity is to critically reflect upon these inevitable differentials and the way that these shift and transform as the research progresses. Attending to power as one axis of our taxonomy allowed us to structure our thinking about reflexivity in terms of these shifting power relations.

This paper progresses the authors' recent work on researcher reflexivity which has been developed and augmented with practical guidelines for the different approaches to reflexivity. Guidelines for practical action and points for reflection are given which relate to each of the possible reflexivities outlined in the taxonomy.

Auspiciousness: Coping with Kratophany

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The sacred, described as “more significant, powerful and extraordinary than the self” (Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry, 1989, p.13) is distinguished from the merely special by the key characteristic of efficacy. Belk et al. (1989) also note that the sacred should be approached with care, because the sacred has kratophanous power. Kratophany—the simultaneous devotion to, and fear of, the sacred (Pimentel and Reynolds 2004)—is experienced by consumers because the efficacious power of the sacred is unpredictably multi-valenced: it can be manifest in a benevolent and/or malevolent way (Belk and Wallendorf 1990). Accordingly, when consumers seek the benevolence of the good-sacred, they likely also expose themselves to the malevolence of the bad-sacred (Belk and Wallendorf 1990). Consequently, consumers can simultaneously experience strong positive feelings (e.g. devotion) and strong negative feelings (e.g. fear) towards the sacred (Belk et al. 1989; Pimentel and Reynolds 2004).

Belk et al. (1989, p.8) suggest that ritual prepares profane persons to approach the sacred, and surrounds the contact of these profane persons with the sacred to forestall the unleashing of the evil powers of the sacred. We believe this implies that consumers require ways to cope, when faced with the kratophanous power of the sacred. Consumer researchers have not yet devoted much attention to discovering these coping mechanisms. Consequently, we begin to fill this gap in the consumer research literature by examining how Hindu Indians use auspiciousness to cope when faced with the tension inherent in their kratophanous reactions to the sacred.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The Meaning of Kratophany

The term kratophany was introduced into the English language by Mircea Eliade, as a technical term meaning “an appearance of the sacred in which the experience of power dominates” (Miller 2005). Belk et al. (1989) introduced kratophany to the consumer literature as one of the twelve properties of the sacred, and explained kratophany as the *ability of the sacred* to elicit both strong approach and strong avoidance tendencies. More recently, Pimentel and Reynolds (2004) defined kratophany as the simultaneous devotion to, and fear of, the sacred. This later definition, which focuses on *consumers’ reactions to the sacred*, is consistent with the way the term has been used in more recent consumer research (e.g. Curasi, Price and Arnould 2004). Our reading of the relevant extant literature suggests that consumer researchers’ progress in understanding of kratophany may have been impeded because kratophany has been used to describe *both* the sacred, *and* consumers reactions to the sacred. We adopt Pimentel and Reynold’s (2004) definition of kratophany, and carefully distinguish between “the kratophanous power of the sacred” (a property of the sacred) and kratophany (consumers’ strong, mixed reactions when faced with the sacred’s kratophanous power), throughout this paper.

Coping with Kratophany

Although Belk et al. (1989) give different examples of sacred entities associated with the benevolent good-sacred (e.g. gods) and malevolent bad-sacred (e.g. corpses) powers respectively, they then note that consumers fear malevolence, at the same time as they seek benevolence. Although some entities may be largely seen as

benevolent, and some may be largely seen as malevolent, all sacred entities have the potential to be both benevolent and malevolent, provoking mixed feelings of awe and terror (Belk et al. 1989). We surmise from this that kratophany exists because the power of the sacred does not operate on a simple continuum. Instead, sacred power can be manifest along two orthogonal dimensions—a dimension of good-sacredness and a dimension of bad-sacredness. It is the two-dimensional nature of sacred power, coupled with its unpredictability, which generates the tension inherent in kratophany. Furthermore, even when particular sacred entities are usually perceived of as wholly benevolent, these entities tend to be approached with care, because the power of the sacred, irrespective of its valence, is understood to be dangerous to ordinary beings. It seems logical that consumers would employ coping mechanisms to deal the kratophanous power of the sacred. Accordingly, we ask what these forms these coping mechanisms might take.

Belk and Wallendorf (1990) examine one such kratophanous sacred entity—money—in depth, and suggest that money can be perceived as kratophanous by consumers because it is viewed as having both malevolent and benevolent powers. We surmise from their work that if sacred power is NOT understood or perceived as multi-valenced (for example a child’s faith in a wholly benevolent God), then kratophany may be considerably lessened. Hence it is possible that consumers could cope with kratophany by choosing to view the sacred entity is purely benevolent (leading to a pure approach orientation) or by viewing the sacred entity as purely malevolent (leading to a pure avoidance orientation). To be precise, in these situations, choosing to perceive the sacred entity as wholly positive or wholly negative collapses the good-sacred bad-sacred dialectic to a simple continuum anchored on either end by the benevolent good-sacred and the malevolent bad-sacred respectively. However, a consumer with an approach orientation to the sacred would still need to undertake further preparatory rituals such as self-cleansing, because of the danger inherent in any contact with sacred power.

Two other consumer research studies have briefly discussed kratophany using the illustration of consumers’ relationships with inherited family heirlooms (Curasi, Price and Arnould 2004) and their college football teams (Pimentel and Reynolds 2004) respectively. In both cases, consumers highly value something (the heirloom or the team’s victory) while simultaneously fearing the loss of that thing. These two examples attest to the tension caused by the simultaneous antithetical reactions to the sacred, suggesting that when consumers do perceive sacred power as valenced, it is this *uncertainty* as to the outcome in a particular instance that causes the tension associated kratophany. For example, a confident custodian of family heirlooms or a devoted fan who is aware that loss can occur but who is *sure* that loss will not occur, will likely not experience kratophany. This suggests to us that a more sophisticated coping mechanism might involve attempts to reduce uncertainty. We believe that the Hindu Indian (“Hindu”) concern with auspiciousness may shed light on how consumers cope with kratophany by reducing uncertainty.

Auspiciousness

Auspiciousness is a favorable state that bodes well for the future (Inden 1985). According to Inden, the Roman Empire practice of augury—interpreting signs from nature in order to

TABLE 1
Auspicious and Inauspicious Elements in Hindu Discourse¹

	Auspicious	Inauspicious
Days	Monday, Wednesday,	Tuesday, Thursday
Colors	Red	Black
Numbers	Odd (“Uneven”)	Even
Directions	East	South
People	Pregnant Woman	Widow
Rituals	Marriage	Funeral

¹Based on information in Das 1982; Srinivas 1952; and Yagi (1999)

determine the will of the gods—gave us the word auspicious, which comes from the Latin noun *avis* (bird) and the Latin verb *spicere* (to look at). Although we shall use the Hindu notion of auspiciousness to illustrate our discussion, we note for the record that auspiciousness is also an important conceptual category in other Asian cultures. Furthermore, we note that in contrast to Western consumers’ idiosyncratic use of rituals designed to generate favorable outcomes (such as personalized pre-game rituals undertaken by some professional sportspeople), auspiciousness systematically pervades Hindu Indians’ daily lives. Hindu Indians’ shared understanding of auspiciousness also suggests that such rituals are more likely to be publicly employed in India, as compared to the West. Almost every thing, creature, person, act, or event can be described in Hindu discourse as either auspicious or inauspicious. Anything that predisposes the gods to favor a human undertaking is auspicious. People, events, objects, words, numbers and points in time can be more or less auspicious.

Table 1 draws on the work of Indian sociologists to present examples of auspicious and inauspicious elements in Hindu discourse. As indicated in the table, Das (1982) points out that among Hindus, marriage and other rituals pertaining to life are regarded as auspicious while cremation and other rituals pertaining to death are viewed as inauspicious. Consequently in her view, auspiciousness is defined as pertaining to life and inauspiciousness as pertaining to death. In a similar vein, Marglin (1985) suggests that auspiciousness is reflected in festivities and inauspiciousness in mourning. Narayanan’s (1985) more nuanced example of the auspicious death of an elderly man pre-deceased by his wife and survived by his progeny suggests that inauspiciousness is anything that prevents the extended family from carrying out its *dharma* or destiny of biological immortality (Channa 2000).

Every married Hindu woman, during her husband’s lifetime, is perceived to be the concrete embodiment of temporal auspiciousness, as shown in her colorful attire, jewelry and the red dot on her forehead (Carman 1985). But, as soon as she becomes a widow, she is viewed as inauspicious, and generally avoided (Srinivas 1952). Yagi explains the difference in auspiciousness between the two as a function of their ability to bear “fruit” (1999 p.275). Hence Yagi (1999) views auspiciousness as conduciveness to future prosperity, much like the concept of “lucky” numbers found elsewhere. In a

similar vein, Inden and Nicholas (1977) define the Hindu term *mangala* to mean luck or well-being. Srinivas, on the other hand, writes that “mangala [an emic term referring to the marriage ceremony which involves the tying of a sacred thread or mangala sutra around the bride’s neck] is an auspicious or good-sacred ceremony” (1952, p.74), and later implies that inauspiciousness relates to bad-sacredness. Thus, we seek to clarify the relationship of auspiciousness to the Western concept of “luck” and its relationship(s) to the benevolent and the malevolent sacred.

METHOD

We utilize data from depth interviews conducted with twelve Hindu Indian informants. Two of our informants were resident in India, two were resident in Australia, and eight were resident in New Zealand. The ten non-resident Hindu Indians we interviewed had spent the majority of their adult lives in India, had married Hindu Indian spouses in India, and continued to maintain strong ties with India after immigrating to Australasia. Our informants, eight of whom were female, ranged in age from 24 to 77. In keeping with interpretive research norms, we utilize the use of pseudonyms to preserve our informants’ anonymity. We employed the constant comparative method of analysis, engaging in open ended and axial coding of interview transcripts and fieldnotes and developing interpretations after each wave of data collection. Our emergent insights then informed and directed the next phase of data collection. Our interpretations in each phase were informed by the relevant literature.

FINDINGS

Hindus utilize as many auspicious elements and signs as possible, and avoid anything remotely inauspicious. Auspicious times, places, persons, colors, and objects seem to be valued by Hindus because they attract the benevolence of cosmic powers.

Auspiciousness is a control mechanism

Our informants found it easy to list objects, times or places that are auspicious and those which are inauspicious. We spoke to Sudha (IF 77) and her daughter-in-law Shaila (IF 39) about the meaning of auspiciousness.

- Sudha: auspicious events mean something good...
 Shaila: good
 Sudha: ...inauspicious events are the opposite of that."
 Shaila: "if we want to do something, we note it from the calendar—in India we get calendars that show certain dates that are auspicious...lucky days! It's something to do with lucky and unlucky.
 Int: lucky and unlucky?
 Sudha: we may see from the calendar which days are good.
 Shaila: we do the same with numbers too. Some are lucky and some are unlucky. Nine is a lucky number...
 Sudha: seven also.

According to these comments, auspicious bears some relationship to "lucky" and "good". However, another informant was careful to distinguish the concept of auspiciousness from that of luck. To Geeta (IF 44) an auspicious object is more than a lucky object, as luck implied (to her) something that cannot be controlled. Instead, auspiciousness was explained as something that helped a person increase the chances of a favorable outcome by increasing the probability the gods would approve of their undertaking. This seems to imply that Hindus attempt to exert control over their lives by using auspicious elements and signs. According to Geeta,

"a Hindu believes that there are definitely some things that are better than others and some times that are far better than other times, they are the auspicious times. There are definitely times that are bad or things that are bad that as a Hindu we must avoid. These are the things that have not met with God's approval. Who are we to decide for ourselves what we want to do? Inauspicious times are the worst times or things possible—yes there are 'neutral' times or things but they are avoided for the big decisions as they can be seen as just as bad as the inauspicious times. If we have three choices, have God on our side; have him against us or have him not care, I would like God on our side all the time. If he does not care about our decision either way then it is not auspicious, he is not against us so it is not inauspicious or dirty, but he is not in approval—therefore for the big decisions we cannot go forward."

Geeta's observation—that small tasks can be undertaken in neutral times, but important tasks cannot—implies to us that while it may be acceptable to risk failure with regard to trivial tasks, important tasks need every assistance possible, so as to ensure success. As Dinesh (IM 55) put it, auspicious objects are like "...runway lights for a plane—the better the light, the more chance there is that Ganesh [a Hindu god] will visit us and give us success." We surmise from Dinesh's observation that auspiciousness can serve to beckon the benevolence of the sacred.

Later Vijay (IM 25) elaborated, "...the gods are often called upon for daily as well as life altering events. However, the big decisions require far more effort and planning—the women are the 'prayer warriors' for the family and are seen as responsible for the[ir] husbands' health." As we shall show, this is because auspiciousness can be transferred from one entity to another, and hence allowing the task of generating auspiciousness to be sub-contracted to another.

Auspiciousness can protect

In traditional Hindu belief, the bride and groom ascend to a temporary elevated state, and are believed to be the embodiment of deities (in the case of Brahmins) or royalty (in the case of non-Brahmins) during the marriage ceremony (Dumont 1972). Situating a ritual performance in an auspicious space and time while employing

the use of auspicious artifacts facilitates this movement between liminal and bounded states (Das 1982). Accordingly, several of our informants described preparations for a typical wedding. First, a priest is consulted to select the most auspicious date and time for the wedding, with respect to the birthdates of the bride and groom. Prior to the wedding, the bride, groom, and any ritual objects to be used in the ceremony are purified while the selected venue is physically and ritually cleansed and decorated. Often a dais is erected in a hall or under an awning outside the home. The location in physical space that houses the birth, marriage or death acts as what Eliade (1959) terms an *imago mundi* (a representation of the cosmos on the earth). For example, during the ceremony, the bride and groom often sit on a *mandap*, a raised platform, under a canopy with four pillars. The material directly over the place where the bride and groom sit is often an auspicious red color. The Hindu bride is most often dressed in a new, auspiciously red sari, and adorned with auspicious jewelry. Other ritual attempts to generate auspiciousness are made. Vijay, recollected his own wedding day in India:

"The *hawan* [sacred fire altar] was prepared in the center of the largest room in my ancestral home. As the wedding began, Anita [the bride] and I were seated in front of the *hawan*... and we added *ghee* [clarified butter] to it when instructed by the *pandit* [priest]. He would sing *mantras* [invocations] and after each one we'd add some *ghee* and the guests would add sawdust [sweet smelling wood grains]."

Just as the central mall in Heritage Village was designed to allow its visitors to experience a time and space separate from the profane world without (O'Guinn and Belk 1989), the transcendence of spatio-temporal boundaries is also experienced at the focal point of the Hindu wedding ceremony, the *hawan*. The perfumed smoke of the fire, the burning of incense and the chanting of *mantras* all serve to transport the participants to the liminal zone of the axis mundi, where they may commune with the sacred. The *hawan* is sacralized by the addition of *ghee* [clarified butter] which is considered the most distilled essence of the cow which is revered as sacred by Hindus (Korom 2000).

Sudha explained to us that the date for a marriage is fixed after checking that it is an auspicious date for both groom and bride (as determined from their respective birthdates). However, she elaborated "Fate picks the date of death but within that you can pick your timings [for the cremation]. But if possible they do the cremation on the day of death. But they can pick mornings or evenings depending on which is more auspicious.." We learnt from Sudha that since the date of births and deaths cannot usually be chosen, special care must be taken to removed auspiciousness e.g. by engaging a religious leader to engage in special prayers in order to "stop bad things from happening".

We surmise from Sudha's comments that during dangerous times of transition such as birth, marriage and death, auspicious symbols do more than just attract the benevolent attentions of the good-sacred—they also serve to repel the malevolent attentions of the bad-sacred and/or protect from the danger inherent in sacred power.

Auspiciousness can be sub-contracted

Many Hindu marriages involve the tying of a sacred necklace made of gold and black beads, called a Mangal Sutra—literally "auspicious thread"—(in North India) or a tali (in South India) around the bride's neck. Maya (IF 44), a medical professional now residing in Australasia, was asked about her Mangal Sutra. Maya told the interviewer that she was planning to buy a bigger and more expensive one when she made her next trip to India. This more

elaborate Mangal Sutra was to be purchased to serve as evidence of her now improved financial status. When asked how she would dispose of the old one, she reacted in surprise, “Oh you can NEVER [emphasis present] sell it, you have to melt the old one and use the gold to help make the new one. If not the new one will not be genuine...it will not be auspicious”. It appears that the sacred powers contained in the Mangal Sutra reside in the gold and black beads it is made of, and can be transported by incorporating said gold and beads into another Mangal Sutra.

This ability to transfer auspiciousness from one element to another, coupled with Vijay’s remark that “women were the prayer warriors of the family” led us to ask whether auspiciousness be transferred between individuals as well. Can auspiciousness be generated by one party, while its benefits are enjoyed by another? Further probing elicited that Hindu women’s responsibilities extend well beyond the modern Western notion of women ensuring their husband’s good health by managing their nutrition and medical care. Hindu women are also expected to pray, fast and wear auspicious symbols in order to ensure their husbands’ longevity.

This “sub-contracting” of auspiciousness-generation to the women of the family begins at marriage. One informant, Tara (IF 42) explained that once married, a bride’s new focus was expected to be the well-being of her husband. According to Tara,

“These glass bangles ...are rings of glass with a bit of silver. They are a symbol for matrimony... after marriage, in India, glass bangles are a must for every married woman. And you must be very careful that you don’t break them...glass bangles give long life to your husband...The toe rings as such, that is also part of married...uh...uniform that you have to wear... this Mangal Sutra [pointing to the gold necklace she was wearing] is another thing that every Indian woman wears, these black beads are what we call a symbol of marriage. Every married woman wears these... This ...is also for the longevity of your husband.... everything for the husband, so we... we’re happy.”

The tinkling sounds made by jewelry such as bangles and anklets are believed to be pleasant to the gods. According to Shukla (2000), a bride not wearing the marriage jewelry of toe rings, anklets, and most importantly, bangles, can become a bad omen for the husband. Wearing the jewelry does not just generate positive outcomes for the husband, it avoids the negative outcomes generated by not wearing the jewelry. We surmise from this that auspiciousness simultaneously functions to approach the good-sacred and repel the bad-sacred.

The relationship between auspiciousness and sacredness can be further unpacked by looking at the kratophanous power gold jewelry such as the Mangal Sutra. These strong, ambivalent reactions inherent in kratophany, are evident when we consider the reversal of the rituals involved in marriage when a woman becomes a widow. During the marriage, the adorning of the bride with auspicious gold jewelry prepares the bride to join the groom in a temporary elevated state, as they are believed to be the embodiment of a god/goddess (in the case of Brahmins) or royalty (in the case of non-Brahmins) during the ceremony (Dumont 1972). While the couple is in this common state of elevation, the bride is incorporated into her husband by virtue of the marriage rites which usually include the groom or the officiating priest tying a golden thread bearing the Mangal Sutra pendant around her neck. Since Hindus view the wife as incorporated into her husband’s body, his death means that she is permanently associated with death and bad-sacredness. Thus the voluntary removal (Srinivas 1952) or forcible stripping (Firth

2001) of auspicious wedding jewelry from a widow, is an obvious reversal of the adorning of the bride, to prevent attracting the attention of bad-sacred powers.

The new bride is adorned by the groom’s family with auspicious jewelry to anchor her to her new identity. Once the bride is absorbed into the groom’s self, she does not need to transcend the boundaries of the groom’s extended family but enters it as part of the groom. Consequently, the extended family’s boundaries are maintained intact throughout the process—the groom ascends to a higher cosmic plane temporarily and returns to the extended family augmented with the bride as his “half-body.”When the new wife utilizes auspicious symbols to attract the benevolence of the gods for the benefit of her husband and his extended family, she is also helping to ensure her own favorable destiny since she is now as one with them. Thus selection of auspicious dates, times, and spaces, and the use of auspicious symbols are motivated by the desire to attract the benevolent attentions of the good-sacred while repelling the malevolent attentions of the bad-sacred.

DISCUSSION

Hindus believe in karma—that one’s present social status is prescribed by one’s actions in a previous incarnation (Channa 2000). Thus Hindus are commonly thought of as fatalists and perceived to be very different from North American societies where the majority of individuals are believed to seek to control their own destiny. Yet, Hindus’ concern with generating auspiciousness is second only to their concern with attaining and maintaining purity. When we recognize that purity is viewed as the absence of pollution, which in turn is viewed as “essentially that which cannot be controlled” (Hershman 1974, p.290), we begin to understand that the Hindu attempt to be pure and auspicious is an attempt to control one’s condition by avoiding or removing that which cannot be controlled.

Hindus are concerned with using auspicious symbols to attract the benevolence of the gods and avoiding inauspicious symbols to avoid attracting the attention of malevolent beings. We note that this concern with auspiciousness is heightened at times of birth, marriage and death—all dangerous transitions where we are forced to face the kratophanous power of the sacred. We view this concern with auspiciousness as an attempt to indirectly control (via the superior powers of the gods) what one cannot control directly. Thus, Hindus are, after all, concerned with control. The need to exert control over one’s destiny is universal- and it will find expression in some way, despite the constraints of society and religion. Consequently, even those in the West who seek to exert personal control over their lives, may seek to indirectly control those aspects of their lives cannot be directly controlled. For example, the popular media abounds with stories of people fighting a terminal disease who seek to dominate the uncontrollable by using science, litigation, religion or even, magic. Like purity and pollution, science and litigation operate on a social plane. Like the sacred gods, religion and magic operate on a cosmic plane. Our Western equivalents of auspicious symbols, such as lucky numbers, prayerbooks, magic crystals, and inalienable jewelry, are used to attract benevolent cosmic powers to control what we cannot control, on our behalf. Thus marketers are increasingly faced with consumers who seek to control every aspect of the consumption experience but then may be dissatisfied when the product, service, or experience consumed is not exactly what they had anticipated. For example, while awaiting the discovery of a magical weight-loss pill or elixir of life, some consumers seek to transform their bodies or regain their youth with the aid of a surgeon’s scalpel (Schouten 1991) in an attempt to control their appearance, and perhaps, their destinies.

How does the Hindu conceptualization of auspiciousness inform consumer research on luck, chance, and negotiation? Our realization that consumers employ auspiciousness in attempt to indirectly control their destiny offers insight into the krataphonous power of the sacred. Krataphony may explain the revulsion and vindictiveness consumers experience when omnipotent surgeons and revered ballplayers fail to provide them with the favorable outcomes they seek. We call for research that looks at if, and how, science, religion and magic inter-relate in the lives of postmodern consumers actively seeking to participate in production and consumption processes (Firat and Venkatesh 1995).

Thus our explication of auspiciousness sheds light on the distinction between the good-sacred and the bad-sacred. Sacred powers, whether benevolent or malevolent, cannot be controlled by mere humans. Hence the use of auspiciousness represents a way of manifesting attempts to attract benevolent powers and the removal of inauspiciousness is an attempt to forestall malevolent powers while also protecting oneself from the danger inherent in sacred power. What other coping mechanisms do consumers employ, when faced with the kratophany of the sacred? Research into these coping mechanisms may shed further light on the nature of the krataphonous power of the sacred, and the impact kratophany on consumers.

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One or Many?: Examining Consumption Experiences from the Lens of Multiple Selves

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This paper explores multiplicity in consumers' self-concepts and their relationship with consumption experiences. It builds upon recent streams of consumer research that recognize multiplicity in self concepts and examine multiple selves in different consumption contexts. It addresses the question, what is the meaning of consumption experiences from the perspective of multiple selves? More specifically, does a consumption experience entail one set of attitudes and feelings that are consistent across selves or does it involve many sets of attitudes and feelings that vary across selves?

This research draws from dialogical self theory, which views multiple selves as narrative voices that occupy multiple self-positions (Hermans and Kempen 1993; Raggatt 2000, 2002). This theoretical perspective relies on people's life stories centered on important attachments to people, historic events, beliefs, and consumption activities as the basis for their self-positions. This theory assumes a natural state of multiplicity and allows multiple selves to enter into dialogical relationships. By grounding our study in this theory we are able to gain a broader understanding of the consumer selves, which then can be applied to better understand consumption experiences from the perspective of the different selves.

In this paper, the term multiple selves is used to mean multiple voices that speak from different positions, which is very different from schizophrenia or multiple personality disorder. Moreover, we choose to use the word "multiple selves" instead of "self positions," "multiple voices" or "dialogical self" as it is a more generic term that is consistent with current marketing literature on self-concept.

The dialogical self differs from other more commonly used perspectives in consumer behavior. It is different from the situational self (Schenck and Holman 1980) in that the focus is on the position from which the person is narrating an experience, which is not necessarily tied to a particular situation. Dialogical self is more of an internal perspective based on affective attachments as opposed to a self image that is desirable in a particular situation. It also varies from identity theory, and social identity theory. The dialogical self is a broader construct that subsumes roles and social memberships. While social identities gain salience through positive affirmations, dialogical self emerges from positive and negative attachments. Dialogical self also differs from other conceptualizations as it allows for dialogical relationships. Consequently, the consumption choices would be different from what they would be in the absence of dialogical relationships.

This study employed a mixed-method approach in order to understand consumers within a larger context over and above current explanations of multiple selves as role identities, social identities, and narrators of consumption stories. Raggatt's (2002) personality web protocol, comprising narratives and multi-dimensional scaling, was adapted and used in combination with metaphors in order to discern multiple selves. Metaphor analysis was used to get a further understanding of the feelings attached to the selves discerned and to understand informants' consumption experiences at the overall and self levels.

There were 12 hours of data collection for each of the study's six informants. In this paper we report data from two individuals.

The findings illustrate that the same consumption object or experience can evoke different sets of feelings for different selves. This has significant implications on how we study consumer behavior and also for market researchers in their endeavors to understand consumers' attitudes and opinions. Further, by examin-

ing positive and negative consumption experiences from the lens of multiple selves, this research contributes to current literature in post purchase evaluation.

Current research suggests that products that evoke primarily positive emotions during the consumption experience are positively evaluated (Oliver 1993; Stokmans 1998; Westbrook and Oliver 1991), which was also found in our study. However, when understood from perspective of certain selves, even positive experiences could involve primarily negative emotions. More interestingly, some products and experiences that were considered negative and evoked overall negative feelings were described as very positive experiences when understood from perspective of certain selves. These findings suggest that researchers would benefit from examining consumption attitudes and feelings from perspective of the consuming selves in order to understand complex consumer processes such as post purchase emotions and evaluations.

The findings in this study, consistent with dialogical theory, suggest that decisions are not based on overall feelings or attitude towards a product, but based on feelings of the self that is dominant at the time. The idea of dominant self is similar to that of identity salience (Arnett et al 2003; Dimofte, Forehand, and Deshpande 2003; Forehand, Deshpande and Reed 2002; Kleine et al 1993; Laverie et al 2002). Yet, an importance difference is that the sphere of influence for the dominant self extends beyond that of salient identities, which are primarily concerned with identity-related consumption behaviors. Further, we found that the dialogical self perspective allowed us to study products that are not clearly related to any identity and may be outside the purview of identity studies.

We also found that overall metaphorical feelings were different from feelings expressed by the different selves. This reveals limitations of research methods that do not take into account feelings and attitudes of the different selves. By looking through the lens of multiple selves as a dialog between multiple self positions, we can gain a richer understanding of consumption patterns in consumers. Instead of relying on compensatory reasoning as is done in multi-attribute models, we see that consumption is often based on dominant feelings of one self which may not be congruent with other self perspectives.

The findings in this paper reiterate the importance of studying consumer behavior from the perspective of multiple selves. Other research programs can adapt the methodology used in this study to examine multiple selves in other consumption contexts such as brand loyalty. Further, this study demonstrates the use of dialogical self theory, which can also be used to understand other consumer topics such as ambivalence, conflict resolution, addictions, and self-control.

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Lines in the Sand: Using Category Widths to Define and Pursue Self-Control Goals

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Much of the recent media attention on issues such as obesity in children and adults (Brownell and Yach 2005), rising bankruptcies caused by overextension of credit (Fetterman 2005), and the lack of savings by Americans (Colvin 2005), focuses on individuals' inability to regulate their own behavior. That is, many people seem to repeatedly give in to temptations in an impulsive manner (Baumeister 2002). While this lack of control may well account for many societal ills, lack of control alone does not tell the full story. Rather, failure to properly categorize alternatives is likely a contributing factor to the problems associated with such issues as obesity and consumer debt. In fact, the road to addressing many of the dark issues associated with today's society begins with individual consumers setting goals and creating plans to achieve those goals. One of the first steps in creating such plans is to define the category of goal-consistent options and behaviors. For example, a consumer embarking on a dieting plan needs to determine if buying a McDonald's hamburger should be categorized as a goal-consistent alternative or not. Similarly, a consumer creating a plan to reduce personal debt will need to determine if "buying groceries" using credit should be categorized as an appropriate expenditure that constitutes an acceptable or unacceptable behavior. Ill-defined plans in this early categorization phase can contribute to self-control failure in a variety of consumption domains.

Categorization theory provides insight into the ways that individuals define and group stimuli in their environment. However, despite the realization that self-control goals are contingent upon delineation of target behaviors and outcomes (Gollwitzer 2003), little research has focused on the goal-consistent and goal-inconsistent option categorization process as it relates to goal pursuit. Specifically, category width has long been viewed as an individual difference factor (Huang 1981; Pettigrew 1958), such that individuals are chronically either broad or narrow categorizers of various stimuli in their environments. In this tradition, neither goals nor beliefs about one's own self-control ability should normatively impact the way in which a given set of options is categorized. More recent research has demonstrated that category width can be altered by situational factors (Ulkkümmen, Morwitz and Chakravarti 2006).

In the present research, we are primarily interested in exploring the relationship between self-control goals, individuals' perceptions of their ability to meet self-control goals, and the widths of their categories of goal-consistent and goal-inconsistent alternatives. Importantly, we are interested in the ways that categories of goal-consistent and goal-inconsistent options are subjectively defined by individuals. Options included in the goal-consistent category are, conceptually, those alternatives the individual feels will facilitate the accomplishment of her/his goal(s). On the contrary, goal-inconsistent options are potential choices that hamper efforts toward goal achievement, based on the individual's interpretation. Our research illuminates issues involving category construction and self-control by showing that variation in the construction of goal-consistent and goal-inconsistent option categories can be explained by examining individuals' trait level self-control as well as their particular consumption goals. Furthermore, we demonstrate that the construction of these categories can differentially impact subsequent choice behavior.

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Stress and Eating: Disentangling the Effects of Psychological, Autonomic and Endocrine Components of Stress Response

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ABSTRACT

Using a psychophysiological approach to stress, this study examines the joint effects of psychological, autonomic and endocrine reactivity on consumer food preference under stress through a randomized controlled study. Stress was manipulated using guided mental imagery technique. Consumer showed increased preference for high energy-density snack foods in the stress vs. control condition. The changes in food preference were jointly predicted by psychological, autonomic and endocrine responses. A model comparison approach shows that the inclusion of autonomic and endocrine responses contributed incrementally to the prediction of food preference. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Beating Back that Triple-Chocolate Cake: Mental Accounts as Instruments of Self-Regulation

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

One of the vexing conundrums in everyday life is our inability to say “no” to actions that we would ideally like to say “no” to. It is common for people to profess ‘healthy eating’ goals and yet repeatedly succumb to temptations in the form of foods high in calories, fat, sugar etc. Such instances of goal-behavior inconsistency represent failures of self-regulation (Heatherton and Baumeister, 1996).

Research in consumer behavior has long been interested in strategies aimed at reducing self-regulation failures (Hoch and Loewenstein, 1991). In this research, we examine whether having mental accounts (Thaler, 1980, Thaler and Johnson, 1985; Tversky and Kahneman, 1981), defined as self-specified allowances for action, will lead to improved self-regulation. Why should mental account influence self-regulation? According to Baumeister (2002), effective self-regulation depends on three principal factors which are (a) clear standards for the behaviors to be regulated, (b) ability to monitor one’s status with regard to the standards, and (c) capacity, i.e., resources to alter one’s own behavior should it be warranted.

Mental accounts appear to satisfy all the three criteria outlined by Baumeister (2002) that are necessary for self-regulation. First, mental accounts are set around active goals (Brendl, Markman, and Higgins, 1998), so they inherently provide the necessary standards/goals for behavior. Second, mental accounts enable a person to evaluate current choice in terms of previous choices (Kahneman and Tversky, 1984); therefore, mental accounts enable one to monitor one’s own behavior. Finally, mental accounts have been thought of as instances of categorization (Henderson and Peterson, 1992), which results in resource-efficient decision-making. Thus, having a mental account leaves the decision-maker with more resources to exert self-control. Although the connection between mental accounts and categorization has been made, its connection to the amount of resources needed for decision-making has neither been demonstrated nor been made before in the literature. Since the capacity to change behavior, i.e., having enough resources to change, is a critical element without which having standards or monitoring is less likely to be useful (Baumeister, 2002), we believe it is important to assess whether having a mental account renders decision-making more efficient. Based on the notion that speed of decision is an index of the efficiency, we hypothesize that people with a mental account will make quicker decisions regarding actions relating to the mental account than people without a mental account.

Does this mean that whenever people have mental accounts, they will be able to achieve improved self-regulation? We argue that mental accounts are likely to facilitate self-control only when the task frame adopted by the decision-maker, choose versus reject (Shafir, 1993), is compatible with the goal. Specifically, if the goal is to limit behavior, we argue that a reject task is more compatible with the goal, allowing the mental account to exert its influence. A choose task, on the other hand, orients the person to look for reasons to adopt the behavior, and therefore is less compatible with the goal of limiting the behavior. Based on this reasoning, we suggest that there is reason to expect that the effect of mental accounts in limiting indulgent behaviors will be more pronounced in a reject task rather than in a choose task.

Two studies were conducted as part of a program of research focused on the self-regulatory effectiveness of mental accounts. The first study manipulated presence of mental accounts and task frame, and found that decision time was considerably faster when the decision-maker had a mental account. However, this study found only directionally consistent effects on self-regulation on account of limited variability in the dependent variable. The second study involved the same manipulations and found that mental accounts are successful in facilitating self-regulation only when the task was compatible with the goal of the mental account. Thus, having a mental account significantly reduced the likelihood of engaging in indulgent behaviors, but only when the participant was in a reject task, not in a choose task.

The contribution of this research is threefold. First, we investigate this phenomenon in a non-monetary context, in contrast with the vast majority of the research on mental accounting which focuses on monetary decision contexts. Second, we let the participants estimate the size of their mental account. Majority of the research in mental accounting examines this phenomenon by presenting participants with scenarios that involve pre-set mental accounts (both in terms of size and context). Third, and most important, the connection with self-regulation situates mental accounting as a factor that shapes the cognitive process underlying decision-making rather than as an evaluation frame that affects economic outcomes.

In summary, mental accounts offer an ecologically relevant way of exerting self-control when faced with tempting choices. However, they do so only when the task adopted by the decision-maker is compatible with the goal of the account. We believe that one of the salient features of this research is that it bridges the knowledge from three well researched genres, mental accounting, self-regulation and task framing, to indicate conditions under which people can bring their behavior in line with their own goals.

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Making Prudent vs. Impulsive Choices: The Role of Anticipated Shame and Guilt on Consumer Self-Control

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ABSTRACT

We examine the differential effects of anticipating shame vs. guilt on choice likelihood of a hedonic product. The results demonstrate that when offered a hedonic snack (chocolate cake) consumers who anticipate shame are significantly less likely to choose to consume it compared to those who anticipate guilt. Anticipating guilt also has a more circumscribed effect, impacting choice likelihood only for those consumers who are not attitudinally inclined toward the hedonic product. The results also show that anticipating guilt versus shame has different effects on anticipated happiness after lapses in self-control.

INTRODUCTION

Maria was dismayed at how much weight she had gained. It seemed that no matter how hard she tried, she just couldn't resist indulging in high calorie desserts. Vowing to remember how bad her overeating made her feel, she put a note on the box of left-over cake from her daughter's birthday party that reads "if you eat this, you will feel bad."

Two powerful negative emotions of self-condemnation are shame and guilt. While commonsense knowledge reminds us that these emotions are reactions to self-control failures, little is known about whether *anticipating* these emotions as a consequence of consumption will impact self-control. Hence, one objective of this paper is to examine whether anticipating shame and guilt from lapses in self-control influences actual self-control. Although a limited body of literature has examined the impact of guilt on self-control, knowledge of the impact of anticipated shame is lacking. Thus, a second objective of this research is to assess whether shame and guilt exert differential effects on consumer self-control. Finally, while many consumers are beset by problems of self-regulation as evidenced by overeating, overspending, compulsive shopping, gambling, smoking and drug use, not *all* consumers experience problems with consumer self-control equally. Thus, the third and final objective of this research is to examine whether shame and guilt have a differential impact on consumers whose personality or preferences make them differentially vulnerable to self-control lapses.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Anticipated Affect and Self-Control

Recent work in psychology and marketing has begun to examine anticipated or forecasted emotions and their impact on choice. Anticipated emotions (also called affective forecasts) refer to the prediction of the emotional consequences of decision outcomes (Gilbert *et al.* 1998; MacInnis *et al.* 2005), in this case, to the affective consequences of giving in or not giving in to an impulse.

Though research on anticipated affect and self-control is limited, the little that exists is intriguing. Bagozzi *et al.* (1998) found that anticipating positive emotions (including pride, joy and satisfaction) from self-regulatory success and negative emotions (including guilt, regret and sadness) from self-regulatory failure predicted dieting intentions, plans, and dieting-related actions. Other studies have addressed the relative impact of anticipated positive emotions associated with achieving a goal (e.g., delighted,

happy, proud) versus negative emotions from not achieving a goal (e.g., guilty, regretful, sad) on impulse control (Bagozzi *et al.* 2003; Perugini and Bagozzi 2001; Giner-Sorolla 2001).

An interesting and relevant extension to this literature concerns the impact of anticipated emotions of the same valence on self-control. As Lerner and Keltner (2001) point out, little work has been done to differentiate emotions of the same valence—and this is particularly true in the context of affective forecasting. Relevant here are negative anticipated emotions presumed to arise from the failure to control impulses and consume a hedonic product. Although Bagozzi *et al.* (1998, 2001) found that anticipating negative emotions like shame and guilt can facilitate impulse control, they did not assess whether each emotion can itself impact self-control. Because both are negative emotions induced from moral transgressions, one might expect that either shame or guilt can impact self-control compared to not anticipating any emotions.

H1: Compared to consumers who do not anticipate the emotions presumed to arise from a hedonic choice, those who anticipate the (a) shame or (b) guilt from hedonic consumption will be more likely to exert self-control (and less likely to choose (consume) the hedonic product).

The Differential Impact of Shame vs. Guilt on Self-Control

Lack of understanding of the potentially differential impact of shame vs. guilt on self-control is perhaps understandable because the two emotions are sometimes used interchangeably (Tangney and Dearing 2002). This lack of distinction is likely due to the fact that both are negative self-conscious emotions of self-condemnation that result in response to a moral transgression.

Notably though, cumulative empirical studies reveal that these two emotions are distinct. Shame is evoked from a perceived transgression of the 'self' (e.g., *I am a horrible person*), whereas guilt is evoked from a perceived transgression of one's 'behavior' (e.g., *I did that horrible thing*) (Lewis 1971). Shame evokes counterfactuals of the self ("If only I weren't"), whereas guilt evokes counterfactuals for actions ("If only I hadn't" for guilt) (Niedenthal *et al.* 1994). Finally, shame induces a behavioral motivation to hide, escape, sink or disappear from others and the situation (Lewis 1971). Guilt, on the other hand, induces a behavioral motivation to restore or make amends or atone for transgressions (Wicker *et al.* 1983; Tangney *et al.* 1996).

Notably these differences between shame and guilt are with regard to an experienced emotion. We theorize that these differences between shame and guilt manifest themselves even in anticipation, differentially influencing self-control. Past research finds that shame is a more powerful and intense emotional experience than guilt (e.g., Tangney *et al.* 1996; Roseman *et al.* 1994). Shame is often associated with a stronger physiological response and is more powerful by its implication of the self as the reason for the transgression. Guilt on the other hand involves a less potent physiological response and is a result of an appraisal that implicates one's behavior in the transgression. Furthermore, while guilt evokes the possibility of atonement for one's wrongdoing, shame evokes no such potential, and indeed further implicates the self for one's weakness. Hence, we predict that anticipating the accusation of the

self is more likely to keep people from transgressing than anticipating the blame of a specific behavior. Shame may also induce more self-control by virtue of the fact that it is viewed as a more public emotion, whereas guilt has been viewed as a more private affair (i.e., reaction of one's internalized conscience to a breach of one's personal standards) (e.g., Ausubel 1955; Benedict 1946; Gehm and Scherer 1988). By virtue of its power, lack of atonement potential, and public element, we hypothesize that:

H2: Consumers who anticipate shame from consuming a hedonic product will be more likely to engage in self-control (e.g., choose to forego the consumption of a hedonic product) than will consumers who anticipate guilt from consuming the hedonic product.

Attitude toward Consuming the Hedonic Stimulus

Notably, exerting self-control may be more or less important depending on consumers' apriori predisposition to engage in hedonic choice. The same hedonic choice (e.g., eating chocolate cake) may be extremely appealing to some consumers and less appealing to others given apriori attitudes toward the hedonic product. Hence, an interesting extension to H1 and H2 concerns whether shame and guilt exert an equivalent impact on self-control for consumers with positive vs. neutral attitudes toward the hedonic product.

We predict that for consumers for who have neutral attitudes toward the hedonic product anticipating either shame or guilt will impact self-control. Because the consumption item induces limited attraction, anticipating either negative emotion should induce greater self-control than not anticipating these negative emotions.

H3: For consumers with neutral attitudes toward consuming the hedonic product, anticipating either shame or guilt from consumption will have a greater impact on self-control than will not anticipating either emotion.

However, for consumers who are most vulnerable to self-control lapses—those with a positive attitude toward consuming the hedonic product—shame may exert a greater impact on self-control than will guilt. Because attitudes are more positive, the allure of the product is greater, requiring a strong emotion like shame to induce self control. We thus hypothesize that:

H4: For consumers who have a positive attitude toward consuming a hedonic product, anticipating shame from consumption will have a greater impact on self-control than will anticipating guilt.

Anticipated Happiness from Self-Control or Lack Thereof-

Self-control in the context of hedonic choice involves a trade-off between short-term vs. long-term happiness. This notion is consistent with the idea that preferences can be time inconsistent (Hoch and Lowenstein 1991; Metcalf and Mischel 1999; Giner-Sorolla 2001). Lapses in self-control brings about short-term happiness as impulses are indulged—though longer-term consequences like shame and guilt may be subsequently experienced. On the other hand, engaging in self-control often sacrifices short-term pleasures for longer-term happiness. Delaying gratification in the present can induce a larger and bigger reward—which presumably will induce greater happiness than would succumbing to short-term gratifications.

An interesting question regarding anticipated shame and guilt is whether they evoke similar effects on anticipated happiness in the short term as a consequence of giving in to impulses and engaging

in hedonic consumption. Once consumers decide to commit themselves to indulge even after anticipating guilt associated with consumption, it is more likely that they justify their decision to consume with inflated anticipatory happiness. The fact that guilt implicates the transgression of the specific behavior also implies the motivational readiness to discount their transgression as a one-time, transient incident. As the term, guilty pleasure (Giner-Sorolla 2001), signifies, anticipating guilt, once committed to indulge, may inflate anticipated happiness about consuming the impulse-laden product as a (consequence of) post-decision justification.

On the other hand, since shame is a more intense emotion that arises from the appraisal of the transgression of the self (Lewis 1971), it is likely that one's decision to indulge cannot be easily justified. Moreover, the transgression is less easily discounted as a one-time, fleeting misbehavior since it implicates the self, tarnishing one's self-image. Therefore, we predict that consumers who anticipated shame, but still consume the hedonic product, are likely to anticipate less happiness from consumption than are consumers who anticipate guilt.

H5: Consumers who anticipate guilt from consuming a hedonic product will be more likely to anticipate happiness following hedonic consumption compared to consumers who anticipate shame.

Individual Differences in Impulsivity

Self-control is more difficult for consumers with chronic tendencies toward impulsive behavior. Consumer impulsivity has been widely regarded as an important individual difference variable in self-control (Puri 1996). The impact of shame and guilt on the effects noted above would be noteworthy if they remained robust even after controlling for individual differences in impulsivity.

EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

Method

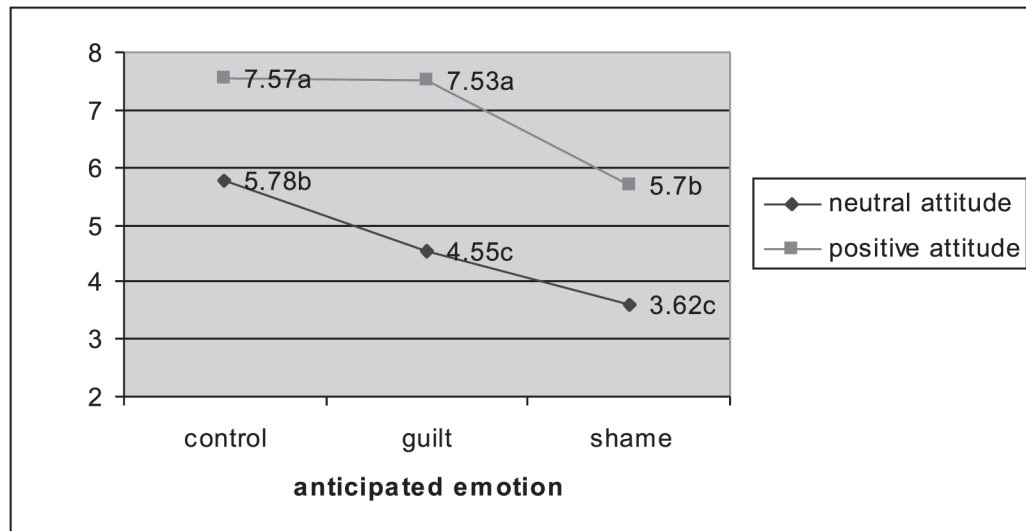
H1-H5 were examined in a 3 (anticipated emotion: shame, guilt, no emotion control) X 2 (attitude toward the hedonic product: positive vs. neutral) experiment. Ninety-one participants were randomly assigned to one of the three anticipated emotion conditions. Attitude toward the hedonic product served as a measured variable.

Respondents were shown a delicious-looking chocolate cake at the start of a computer-based questionnaire and were asked to imagine that it was placed in front of them. To manipulate anticipated emotion, respondents were then told that although they wanted to reach out and take a bite of the cake, they stopped for a moment to anticipate how guilty (vs. ashamed) eating the cake would make them feel. The control condition was not given any instructions to anticipate emotions.

Respondents then completed a set of questions designed to measure how likely they were to eat the cake (1=not at all likely; 9=very likely), their anticipated happiness from eating the cake (1=not at all; 9=very much) and manipulation checks for anticipated shame and guilt (1=not at all; 9=very much). Individual differences in attitudes toward eating chocolate cake were also measured using a 3-item 9-point scale (favorable, positive, good; Cronbach's $\alpha=.92$). The three items were averaged to yield a scale of attitude toward eating cake. A median split divided participants into positive vs. neutral attitude conditions (Median=6.33; M=7.99 for positive and M=4.38 for neutral). To control for individual differences in consumer impulsivity, a scale adapted from Puri (1996) was used as a covariate in the results presented below.

FIGURE 1

The effect of anticipated emotion and attitude toward consuming the hedonic product on choice likelihood



a,b,c Means with different superscripts are different at $p < .05$.

Results

Manipulation Check. The results confirmed that participants in the experimental conditions anticipated the emotions they were instructed to anticipate (M 's=4.58 and 4.61 for anticipated guilt and shame respectively) in the context of eating the cake.

Choice Likelihood. A 3 (anticipated emotion) X 2 (attitude) ANCOVA on the choice likelihood as the dependent variable and consumer impulsivity as a covariate revealed a significant main effect for anticipated emotion ($F(2, 84)=4.77, p < .05$) and a significant main effect for prior attitudes toward cake ($F(1, 84)=18.50, p < .001$). As expected, the main effect of attitudes showed that consumers who had positive attitudes toward eating cake were more likely to choose it (and forego impulse control; $M=6.93$) compared to consumers who had a neutral attitude toward consuming the hedonic product ($M=4.65$). The main effect for anticipated emotion showed that anticipating shame ($M=4.66$) resulted in greater self-control than anticipating either guilt ($M=6.04$) or the control condition ($M=6.68$). These results support H1a and H2.

However, we observed no support for H1b. Consumers who anticipated guilt did not show greater self-control ($M=6.04$) than consumers in the no emotion control condition ($M=6.68$).

Post-hoc contrasts showed that for consumers with neutral attitudes toward the hedonic product showed reduced choice likelihood when they anticipated guilt ($M=4.55$) or shame ($M=3.62$) compared to consumers in the no emotion control condition ($M=5.78$). These results support H3.

The results also support H4. For consumers with positive attitudes toward consuming the hedonic product, anticipating shame had a greater impact on self-control ($M=5.7$) than did anticipating guilt ($M=7.53$) or not anticipating emotion ($M=7.57$).

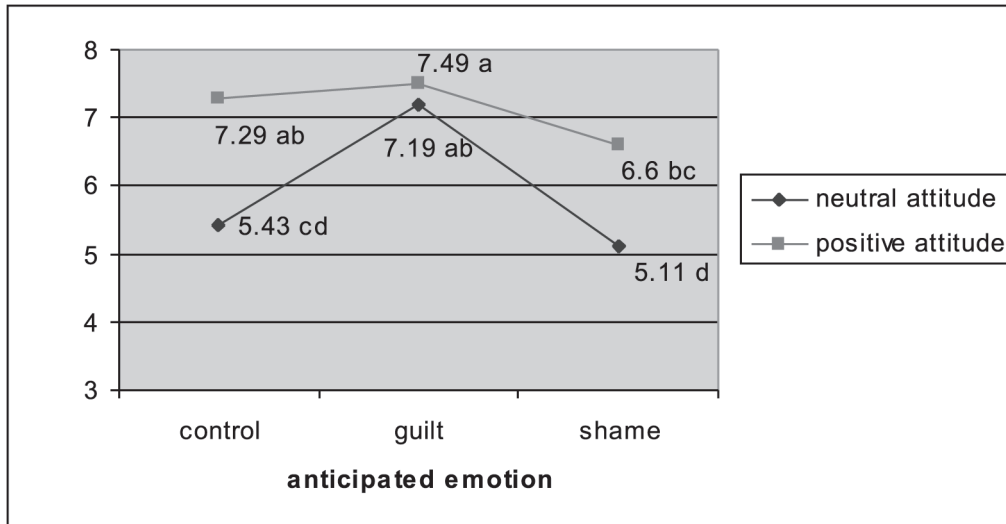
Collectively, these results suggest that while anticipating shame has a consistently positive effect on self-control, the anticipation of guilt impacts self-control only for consumers who have a neutral attitude toward the hedonic product and are thus less predisposed to making an impulsive choice.

Predicted Happiness. Respondents who experienced a lapse in self-control and decided to choose the cake were asked to predict how happy they would be after eating the cake. A 3 (anticipated emotion) X 2 (attitude toward eating chocolate cake) ANCOVA with consumer impulsivity as a covariate revealed a significant main effect for anticipated emotions ($F(2, 48)=4.29, p < .05$) and a significant main effect for prior attitudes toward cake ($F(1, 84)=7.55, p < .01$). The results were replicated in a regression analysis which used a continuous measure of attitudes (vs. a median split).

The main effect of anticipated emotions showed that consumers who anticipated guilt anticipated feelings significantly happier ($M=7.34$) after consuming the cake than consumers who anticipated shame ($M=5.86$) or control consumers ($M=6.36$). These effects support H5. The main effect of prior attitudes toward cake showed that consumers who held a positive attitude toward cake ($M=7.13$) anticipated feeling happier following hedonic consumption than consumers who held a neutral attitude toward cake ($M=5.91$).

Post-hoc contrasts shown in Figure 2 revealed several interesting effects. First, consumers who anticipated guilt from consumption also anticipated greater happiness from consumption than did consumers who anticipated shame—regardless of their prior attitudes toward cake. Second, for consumers with neutral attitudes toward cake anticipating guilt led to higher anticipated happiness from consumption than did not anticipating any emotion. Third, and most interestingly, even consumers who were not favorably disposed toward the hedonic product but who anticipated guilt showed just as much anticipated happiness from consumption as those who were favorably disposed toward the product. The fact that both consumers with favorable and neutral attitudes toward cake anticipated equivalent levels of post-consumption happiness from hedonic consumption suggests a potential association between guilt and pleasure (Giner-Sorolla 2001). The results are also consistent with the recent finding that showed the association between the concepts of “unhealthy” and “tasty” operates on an implicit level (Ragunathan *et al.* 2006).

FIGURE 2
Anticipated Happiness for Consumers Who Decided to Consume the Hedonic Product



a,b,c,d Means with different superscripts are different at $p < .05$.

DISCUSSION

Although prior research suggests that anticipating the emotions that might result from consumption impacts choice of hedonic products, our results extend this research by suggesting that two negative emotions of the same valence (shame vs. guilt) have different effects on both self-control and anticipated happiness from self-control failures.

We find that compared to conditions where consumers do not anticipate emotions from choice, those who anticipate shame are significantly less likely to make a hedonic choice (and hence are significantly more likely to engage in self-control). The impact of anticipated guilt on self-control, however, appears to depend on whether consumers have positive or neutral attitudes toward the hedonic product. Anticipating guilt seems to facilitate self-control, but only for those consumers who need it least—those who have neutral attitudes toward the hedonic product. For those who are pro-attitudinally inclined toward the hedonic product, anticipating guilt has no effect on self-control.

From the standpoint of happiness from consumption, we find that for consumers who chose to engage in hedonic consumption anticipated happiness with this decision varied as a function of both anticipated shame/guilt and attitudes. Consumers felt least happy with their decision to engage in hedonic consumption when they had a neutral attitude toward the hedonic product and anticipated feeling shame. Consumers who anticipated feeling guilty anticipated they would feel just as happy as consumers who did not anticipate any negative emotions when their attitudes toward the hedonic product were positive, and anticipated feeling even happier than those who did not anticipate any negative emotions when their attitudes were neutral. Therefore, anticipating guilt does not appear to deter anticipated happiness from choice for those who chose to engage in consumption.

The results provide an opportunity to revisit the conceptual distinction between experienced and anticipated emotions. We should note that affective forecasting is distinct from experienced affect. Anticipated emotions are cognitions about how one is likely

to feel in the future. A rather constructive consequence of experienced guilt (e.g., motivation to undo the error) may exert less influence when anticipated. In the same way, shame can exert a more powerful influence when anticipated than when experienced in the context of self-control. Anticipating negative consequences of shame such as passivity and desire to escape and hide can serve as a more powerful means to regulate impulses. We weigh the emotional consequences of the events and direct our motivation and behavior in line with our affective prediction.

Interestingly, while shame is a far more intense negative emotion than guilt, anticipating future feelings of shame could potentially decrease the likelihood of experiencing future negative feelings by increasing self-control. Notably though, one wonders about the effects of anticipating shame on outcomes like depression or self-hatred when hedonic choice is rendered despite anticipated shame. In this sense, anticipating shame from consumption may make consumers more vulnerable to negative feelings and self-hatred.

Another limitation concerns the fact that we did not assess how much guilt or shame consumers in the control condition anticipated. It is possible that consumers in this condition naturally anticipated guilt (or shame). This might explain lack of difference in results between the control and the anticipated guilt conditions.

The results of our study provide several opportunities for extension. Anthropologist Ruth Benedict (1946) classifies cultures according to whether they use shame or guilt to regulate the social activities of their members. She posits that some Asian cultures are considered shame cultures whereas European and modern American cultures are considered to be guilt cultures. Future research might investigate cross-cultural differences anticipating shame vs. guilt has on self-control.

The results of our study, while intriguing, are limited by virtue of the fact that self-control was assessed in terms of self-reports of choice likelihood. A stronger test would examine whether the effects we observe here are observed in the context of actual choice. On the other hand, these results were obtained even though a

relatively non-powerful inducement—a photo of a chocolate cake (as opposed to an actual real-life temptation) was used as the stimulus (see Shiv and Fedorikhin 1999). Future research might examine the impact of anticipated shame and guilt in the context of real stimuli and actual choices. By comparing respondents' behavioral responses of the current study with those using actual stimuli, we can tell how far off people can predict the behavior as a result of anticipated shame vs. guilt. Another interesting extension concerns the long-term impact of anticipated shame vs. guilt on self-control. Prior studies showed that self-regulatory strength can in fact be “worn out” like a muscle when mental efforts are prolonged (e.g., Muraven and Baumeister 2000; Schmeichel and Baumeister 2004). Considering that shame is a more powerful and intense emotion than guilt, anticipating shame over time may wear consumer's self-regulatory resources out more easily than anticipating guilt. One wonders whether a greater self-control ability induced by anticipating shame in the short-term can be extended to the long-term. Anticipating shame may make one more vulnerable to relapse over the long term due to its intense mental efforts. The future research should examine the long-term impact of anticipated shame and guilt.

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Building Customer Relationships: A Comparison Across Multiple Service Encounters

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impacts of relational bonds on customer loyalty in various service encounters. Data were obtained from a sample of 621 Taiwanese customers in the securities industry. The findings are threefold. First, financial bonds have little impact on customer loyalty, social bonds create an intermediate impact on customer loyalty, and structural bonds have the greatest impact on customer loyalty. Second, social bonds influence customer loyalty more in person-to-person encounters than in interactive voice response systems or Internet encounters. Third, structural bonds affect customer loyalty more on the Internet than in person-to-person or interactive voice response system situations.

INTRODUCTION

Relationship marketing has emerged a critical tool in the current marketing climate, where managers must seek new ways to create sustainable competitive advantage (Dibb and Meadows 2001). By emphasizing a focus on the ways that companies can build, develop, and maintain successful relational exchanges, relationship marketing represents an important means to build customer loyalty to an organization (Morris et al. 1999). Recently, a body of research surfaced that attempts to discern the types of bonds that enhance relationship marketing (e.g., Berry 1995; Peltier and Westfall 2000; Williams et al. 1998). These bonds have been categorized as financial (e.g., price incentives), social (e.g., interpersonal relationships), and structural (e.g., services that are designed into the system). However, despite the increasing importance of relationship marketing, the effects of these three relational bonds on customer loyalty have not been sufficiently studied empirically.

Service encounters, defined as the moment of interaction between a customer and a firm, are increasingly critical in all industries and may take place in an actual service setting, over the telephone, through the mail, or over the Internet (Bitner et al. 2000). Prior studies have recognized the importance of service encounters in creating and maintaining good relationships between service firms and their customers (e.g., Haring and Mattsson 1999). As customers and businesses interact over time, the opportunity rises for this aggregation of encounters to transform into an exchange relationship (Morgan and Chadha 1993).

Although it is increasingly evident that technological advances will continue to be critical components of customer-firm interactions, little is known about how interactions with such technological options affect customer evaluations and behavior (Meuter et al. 2000). In different service encounters, the ways that customers interact with a business may also differ. For example, customers must personally visit some service facilities and engage in interactions with employees for person-to-person encounters. Therefore, developing buyer-seller relationships through interpersonal interactions or friendships between customers and employees may be more useful for these customers. However, for Internet encounters, customers can easily access high-quality information from the Web site (Detlor 2003). Using a service-delivery system, rather than relying on the relationship-building skills of individual service providers, allows firms to customize their offerings and

may also give customers greater satisfaction. Accordingly, to produce results that can be interpreted at a theoretical level, investigations must encompass a range of interfaces and consider the effectiveness of customer relationships in different encounters. In this study, we attempt to determine whether the impacts of relational bonds on customer loyalty differ for customers in person-to-person, interactive voice response system, and Internet encounters.

THEORETICAL ISSUES

Customer Loyalty

In Oliver's (1999, p. 34) study, loyalty is defined as "a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future." Customer loyalty is considered one of the several means by which a firm can build a sustainable competitive advantage. Loyalty plays an important role in influencing consumers' repeat purchases (Jacoby and Kyner 1973) and creating substantial income for companies (Jones and Farquhar 2003). From a business perspective, structuring consumer retention mechanisms to enhance profits has become more important than ever.

Relational Bonds

Previous literature has indicated that a customer retention strategy can focus on three types of bonds: financial, social, and structural (Berry 1995). Subsequent studies, including Berry (1995), Peltier and Westfall (2000), and Williams et al. (1998), have adopted this typology to discuss the effects of such bonds.

Researchers have argued that one motivation for customers to engage in relational exchanges is money savings (e.g., Berry 1995; Gwinner et al. 1998). However, although financial bonds seem useful in securing customer loyalty, some researchers have suggested that these bonds belong at the lowest level of the relationship hierarchy because price is the most easily imitated element (e.g., Peltier and Westfall 2000; Zeithaml and Bitner 2003).

Social bonds are defined as personal ties pertaining to service dimensions that include interpersonal interaction, relationship building (Wilson 1995), and identifications (Turner 1970). From the customer perspective, a social bonding strategy benefits them significantly through strong service relationships (Gwinner et al. 1998). These social bonds positively influence customers' emotions or feelings associated with the service experience and contribute to the formation of the affective component of attitude, all of which are salient aspects of intimate, high-quality relationships (Thorbjørnsen et al. 2002). Therefore, though social bonds alone may not bind a customer permanently to a company, they will ultimately prove more difficult for competitors to imitate (Zeithaml and Bitner 2003). Some researchers (e.g., Berry 1995; Peltier and Westfall, 2000) in turn suggest that social bonds sit at the intermediate level in the relationship hierarchy and help companies protect against competitive pricing pressures.

Finally, Berry (1995, p. 241) suggests that marketers practice relationship marketing, which depends on structural bonds when "the solution to the customer's problem is designed into the service-delivery system." The structural bonds "offer target customers value-adding benefits that are difficult or expensive for customers to provide and that are not readily available elsewhere" (Berry

1995, p. 240). From the industrial marketing perspective, Turnbull and Wilson (1989, p. 233) argue that effective structural bonds “create value to the customer and either require investment by the buyer that cannot be salvaged if the relationship ends or may be expensive if the buyer must supply this service themselves if they change sources.” Accordingly, structural bonds refer to the value-adding services that are contained in the service-delivery system, including knowledge and information about the industry and product customization; that are not readily available elsewhere; and that are expensive for customers to supply if they terminate the relationship.

In addition, because customers regard the provision of information, knowledge, and goods/services by the business and their participation in this provision as a mutual relationship investment and adaptation, these valuable services forge customer loyalty by creating a psychological barrier to terminating the relationship (Wilson 1995). In turn, some studies suggest that structural bonds belong in the highest level of the hierarchy of relational bonds (Peltier and Westfall 2000). Accordingly, we propose that:

- H1:* The impacts of financial, social, and structural bonds on customer loyalty differ.
- H1_a:* The positive impact of social bonds on customer loyalty will be greater than that of financial bonds.
- H1_b:* The positive impact of structural bonds on customer loyalty will be greater than that of social bonds.

The Role of the Type of Service Encounter

Prior studies have demonstrated the importance of service encounters to businesses. For example, encounters affect critical outcomes such as customers' intention to repurchase, relationship quality, and loyalty (Bitner et al. 2000). A service encounter, defined as a period of time during which customers interact directly with a service (Lovelock 2001), may take place in an actual service setting, over the telephone, through the mail, or even over the Internet (Bitner et al. 2000).

Prior research about service encounters focused on person-to-person encounters or interpersonal interactions (Morgan and Chadha 1993). However, to reduce costs and improve customers' convenience, many companies have redesigned their customer flows. Instead of encouraging situations where customers deal with the company representative in a person-to-person setting, these companies encourage lower contact levels where customers have remote contact with company representatives (Lovelock 2001). Accordingly, recent research has investigated person-to-machine encounters (e.g., Bitner et al. 2000; Meuter et al. 2000).

In all of these settings, the same three types of bonds may apply to the company's attempts to retain its long-term customer relationships. Because financial bonds are easily imitated and do not offer any differences with competitors in the long run (Peltier and Westfall 2000), we omit any discussion of their effects on customer loyalty across service encounters.

Social bonds, however, may affect customers in these types of encounters (i.e., person-to-person, interactive voice response system, and Internet) differently. In person-to-machine encounters, customers obtain services primarily through self-service technologies, which, according to Sauer and Burton (1999), are hard-to-reproduce social elements. In Donthu and Garcia's (1999) study, they reveal that Internet shoppers' socioeconomic, motivational, and attitudinal characteristics differ from those of non-Internet shoppers; furthermore, decreased pressure from salespeople contributes to why consumers make online purchases (GVU 1997). In this context, interactive voice response systems are easily accessible and provide timely information, but they seldom offer inter-

personal interaction or friendship elements to customers. Similarly, in a virtual environment, though the interactivity of the Internet can initiate a two-way conversation, online shoppers are hampered by the lack of personal contact inherent in remote transactions (Croft 1998). In summary, though e-retailers may build social bonds with individual customers through personalized e-mails or customer-to-customer interactions and friendships (Zeithaml and Bitner 2003), many consumers may still prefer the social component of a service encounter.

Because repeated interactions between customers and service suppliers help customers assess the service firm's credibility and benevolence (Donney and Cannon 1997), more interactions may lead to an emotional attachment through the customer's developing a sense of mutual trustworthiness. Therefore, social bonds that stress interpersonal interactions may be more useful for customers in person-to-person encounters than in person-to-machine encounters. In turn, we posit that

- H2:* The effect of social bonds on customer loyalty is moderated by the types of customers in the service encounter, such that the effect is greater for customers of person-to-person encounters than for those of Internet and interactive voice response encounters.

Finally, structural bonds also may affect customers of the three types of encounters differently. The development of electronic technologies has dramatically reduced the time and cost of information exchange, effectively linked processes, and enabled close integration of different parties in the value chain (Tang et al. 2001). Through the Internet, customers may receive personalized services (Wilson 1995). By building fast, well-structured hyperlinks with Web sites of strategic partners, businesses can also provide more integrated services to their customers, which may lead to improved customer loyalty.

In addition, online customers generally want to access product specifications, usage instructions, warranty information, and lists of products on sale (Burke 2002). They also want to be able to receive an e-mail message confirming that the order was received and shipped, and then track their shipment on the Web.

Compared to an Internet encounter, salespersons offer some similar benefits as they visit customers regularly to provide product information and resolve customer concerns, particularly in industries like financial services. From the customer's perspective, however, structural bonds developed through salespeople are probably less timely and less convenient than Internet encounters. Similarly, though interactive voice response systems are easily accessible and provide timely information, they are not customized for each customer and are therefore likely to offer a weaker structural bond. Accordingly, we propose that the impact of structural bonds on customer loyalty is lower for customers in person-to-person encounters and interactive voice response systems than for those in Internet encounters. In turn, we posit that:

- H3:* The effect of structural bonds on customer loyalty is moderated by the type of customers in service encounter, such that the effect is greater for customers of the Internet encounter than those of person-to-person and interactive voice response encounters.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

To examine H1–H3, we conducted a field study in the securities industry in Taiwan. Questionnaires were distributed to one

thousand securities customers who experienced person-to-person, interactive voice response systems, and Internet encounters. To recruit respondents we used customer lists obtained from sponsor securities companies and employees of high-tech or service industries with experience in stock exchanges. A total of 621 responses were gathered, which represents a response rate of 62.1%. T-test results reveal there are no significant differences across these demographics between these two samples.

Each respondent was asked to select one of the three encounters he or she confronted most frequently. Then the respondent selected one securities company in the context of this type of encounter that he or she had patronized previously to purchase the good/service. Finally, the respondent indicated his or her perceptions of the company.

According to the received questionnaires, the sample of respondents consists of approximately the same percentage of women and men (50.1% and 49.9%, respectively), who range in age from 15 to 60 years. The sample sizes for the three types of encounters were as follows: 387 person-to-person encounters, 116 interactive voice response system encounters, and 118 Internet encounters.

Measures

We conducted three separate in-depth interviews with two entry-level managers in the securities industry to determine how they implemented their relationship strategies. From these investigations, we identified 20 measurement items that we categorized as financial (4 items such as “The company provides cumulative points programs” and “The company offers more rebates if I trade beyond a certain amount.”), social (7 items such as “The company is concerned with my needs,” “Service providers help resolve my problem even if it is not related to the business,” and “The company sends me greeting cards or gifts on special days.”), or structural (9 items such as “The company suggests suitable investment options according to my records and assets,” “The company integrates services from other sources to solve my problem,” and “The company provides professional knowledge in the financial area.”). Each item was scored on a seven-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree).

We refined the instrument through a pilot test. We applied an item-to-total correlation analysis to find any items that needed to be dropped at this stage, but because we could not improve any alpha coefficients in the financial, social, or structural dimensions by deleting any items, we did not remove any.

The loyalty construct often is gauged by the relative attitude that a consumer has toward a company and his or her intention to purchase again from the same company (e.g., Jones and Farquhar 2003; Peltier and Westfall 2000). To measure the dependent variable of customer loyalty, we adopted three indicators in accordance with the literature: “I am willing to repurchase” (Peltier and Westfall 2000), “I am willing to purchase other products or services from this firm” (Sirohi et al. 1998), and “I am willing to recommend this firm to others” (Peltier and Westfall 2000). Again, respondents used a seven-point scale to respond to these items.

DATA ANALYSIS

Reliability and Construct Validity

To investigate the reliability of the scale, we computed the Cronbach’s alphas for the financial, social, and structural bonds as .85, .93, and .94, respectively. For the dependent variable of customer loyalty, the coefficient alpha was .83. These values suggest reasonable internal consistency.

To test the construct validity of the three relational bonds, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using LISREL

8.54. Although the χ^2 values of the CFA models of the three relational bonds were 408 (d.f.=167, $p<.05$), the χ^2 /d.f., CFI, GFI, SRMR, and RMSEA were 2.4, .87, .86, .05, and .06, respectively. These latter values suggest an adequate fit of the model to the data.

Furthermore, convergent and discriminant validity should be examined for construct validity, which is supported when the average variance extracted (AVE) between the constructs and their measures is greater than .50 (Fornell and Larcker 1981) and the loading on the hypothesized construct is significant. Here, the AVEs for the financial, social, and structural factors were .59, .64, and .68, respectively, and the factor loadings were all significant at $p<.05$. Thus, convergent validity is supported. The AVE value also can be used to assess discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker 1981); discriminant validity is supported if the AVE for each factor and its measures is greater than the square of the estimated correlation between factors. Discrimination was evident in this study because the largest shared variance among the three factors (.46) was less than the lowest AVE value for each factor and its measures (.59).

Relationship between Relational Bonds and Customer Loyalty

To investigate the impacts of the three relational bonds on customer loyalty, we calculated composite scores for each bond by summing its measurement items. These composite (or simple factor) scores often are highly correlated with factor scores obtained by the more complex least squares and regression methods (Johnson and Wichern 1992). In addition, the variance inflation factors (VIF) values were much below the threshold of 10. Therefore, the effects of multicollinearity can be ignored in this study. We then conducted a regression using customer loyalty as a dependent variable and the three relational bonds as predictors. The results indicate that the structural bond and the social bond significantly influence customer loyalty ($\beta=.50$ and $.18$, $p<.05$), whereas the financial bond has an insignificant impact on customer loyalty ($\beta=-.05$, $p>.05$). Therefore, H1_a is supported.

To further investigate whether the unstandardized regression coefficients of structural bonds and social bonds (which were significantly greater than 0) can be treated as equal, we conducted a t-test. The results indicate that the coefficient of the structural bonds is significantly larger than that of the social bonds ($t=3.81$, $p<.05$), in support of H1_b. As we have already discussed, the insignificant financial bond effect may reflect the ease with which competitors can imitate a financial bond strategy (Berry 1995). Virtually every securities company provides financial bonds to its customers, which decreases their effectiveness. In addition, we find that structural bonds are the most effective in enhancing customer loyalty, in line with Berry’s (1995) suggestion that structural bonds create strong foundations for customer relationships.

Furthermore, to examine the moderating effects of the service encounters, we tested H1–H3 through hierarchical regression analyses, with customer loyalty as the dependent variable and a specific relational bond as the predictor. We employed hierarchical regression analyses in which we mean centered all the variables to reduce the risk of multicollinearity. If there is a significant change in R² when the interaction between a relational bond and the encounter is added, moderation is supported (Arnold 1982). In this study, because our service encounter variable has three levels (i.e., person-to-person, interactive voice response system, and Internet), we code two dummy variables that provide qualitative information.

In table 1, we report a series of hierarchical models for H2–H3. Moderation is supported for social ($\Delta R^2=.012$, $p<.05$) and structural ($\Delta R^2=.01$, $p<.05$) bonds; moderation is not supported for financial bonds ($\Delta R^2=.002$, $p>.05$).

To further investigate whether a specific relational bond has a differential impact on loyalty for a specific encounter, we tested

TABLE 1
RESULTS OF HIERARCHICAL REGRESSION ANALYSES

Step	Independent Variable	Total R ²	ΔR ²
1	Financial bond and service encounters	.109	.109*
2	With financial bond x service encounters	.111	.002
1	Social bond and service encounters	.287	.287*
2	With social bond x service encounters	.299	.012*
1	Structural bond and service encounters	.380	.380*
2	With structural bond x service encounters	.390	.010*

*p<.05.

TABLE 2
RESULTS OF STANDARDIZED REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS

Types of Encounters Variables	Overall Sample	Person-to-Person Encounter	Interactive Voice Response System	Internet Encounter
Independent variables				
Financial bonds	-.05	-.06	-.12	-.02
Social bonds	.18**	.26**	.14	.04
Structural bonds	.50**	.47**	.44**	.63**
R ²	.40	.45	.24	.46
F value	82.34**	61.65**	7.01**	19.42**

**p<.05.

three separate regression models with customer loyalty as the dependent variable and each type of relational bond as the predictor for three different encounters. To avoid the issues related to high levels of multicollinearity among independent variables, which make it difficult to draw inferences about regression estimates, we determined whether the data fit the condition of multicollinearity prior to the regression. The variance inflation factors values ranged from 1.52 to 2.29 and thus are below the suggested threshold of 10. Therefore, the effects of multicollinearity can be ignored in this study.

Table 2 also indicates the relationships between the three relational bonds and customer loyalty during different encounters. The social bond has a significantly positive impact on customer loyalty only in person-to-person encounters ($\beta=.26, p<.05$), in support of H2. The structural bond has the greatest impact on customer loyalty in Internet encounters ($\beta=.63, p<.05$). To investigate the significance of H3, we also compare the unstandardized regression coefficients between structural bonds and customer loyalty across service encounters (Arnold 1982). The results indicate that the impact of structural bonds on loyalty is significantly higher in Internet than in person-to-person ($p<.05$) or interactive voice response system ($p<.05$) encounters in one-tailed tests. H3 is therefore supported. Because the Internet provides an inexpensive means to search, organize, and disseminate complete, relevant, timely, up-to-date, and accessible information, it may be more effective for companies to deliver structural bonds to customers through Internet encounters.

DISCUSSION

Service encounters constitute critical moments of truth where a firm leaves an indelible impression on the customer (Bitner et al. 2000). Recently, because growing numbers of customers are inter-

acting with self-service technologies rather than employees to create service outcomes, Meuter et al. (2000) suggested that research should compare the underlying differences in how customers respond to telephone- versus Internet-based self-service technologies. We responded to this suggestion by investigating the impacts of the three relational bonds on loyalty for customers in different types of encounters.

The empirical results indicate that financial bonds have no significant impact on loyalty for customers in any type of encounter. Social bonds, however, have a significantly positive impact on customer loyalty, but only in person-to-person encounters. Finally, structural bonds are effective in gaining customer loyalty in every type of encounter, though they are more useful in Internet situations than in other types of encounters. This finding suggests that e-tailers should leverage structural bonds to strengthen their customers' loyalty.

Managerial Implications

Loyal customers buy more, are willing to spend more, are easier to reach, and act as enthusiastic advocates for firms (Harris and Goode 2004). The results of this study therefore provide some key strategic implications for managers, especially those in the securities industry, who seek to build customer loyalty.

Identify the nature of the bonds between consumers and businesses. When there is effectively none or little difference between suppliers, customer switching is very possible because one service or supplier is essentially equivalent to another (Turnbull and Wilson 1989). If, as recent research argued, the main purpose of managing customers is to improve long-term profitability, businesses must identify their most profitable customers and strengthen those relationships through relational bonds. Therefore, understanding the key factors that bond customers to firms is important for

customer loyalty efforts and, in turn, for businesses' profit. Managers and employees must be aware of the three types of relationship strategies to enhance customer loyalty. According to the results of this study, structural bonds are the most effective and financial bonds are the least effective ways to enhance customer loyalty overall.

Differentiate relational bonds in service encounters. Traditionally, research about service encounters has focused on person-to-person encounters. However, to reduce costs and achieve greater customer convenience, many companies have turned to person-to-machine encounters. The results of our study indicate that customers in person-to-person encounters find both social and structural bonds useful; however, the structural bond is the most effective for those in the Internet encounters. According to Garvin (1987), managers tend to employ only a few strategies in their drive to compete with other companies, so these findings should help companies identify attributes that they should prioritize in their encounters with their customers.

Develop marketing investment and training programs that lead to customer loyalty in different encounters. The careful development of a relationship investment strategy makes a company more vulnerable to attack from competitors (Turnbull and Wilson 1989), but careful allocation of the marketing budget can be planned according to the results of this study. For example, a business might use the measurement items developed in this research to benchmark its relationship activities with those of competitors and identify comparative strengths and weaknesses from a customer standpoint. The company then could develop a bonding strategy based on the customers that appear in each type of encounter. For example, customers in person-to-person encounters place a great deal of importance on personal ties, so the company should invest more to develop personal ties with this group. However, for customers in an Internet situation, value-added services should constitute the primary investments the company uses to manage its customer relationships. The business might focus on building technologies that record customer preferences and then provide detailed information and customized services to them.

Future Research Directions

Additional research might take some of the following directions. First, further research might study the problems of cross-channels in different buying stages. To enhance customer loyalty, firms likely use a combination of relational bonds at different customer decision stages. For example, customers may use the Internet to search for information but eventually make the purchase from local brick-and-mortar stores. Alternatively, a salesperson might send an e-mail to a customer to provide relevant information before his or her visit to the store, or Web sites might offer contact information for service/sales personnel, which interested customers can use. Therefore, research should investigate the effects of a combination of relational bonds and service encounters at different buying stages.

Second, some studies have suggested that organizations should analyze the position of their customers according to a continuum of transactional to collaborative exchanges and then apply transactional or relational marketing to those customers on the basis of their orientation (e.g., Garbarino and Johnson 1999). Therefore, further research might examine the relationship between the three relational bonds and customer loyalty for low versus high relational customers. For example, might social bonds be more effective in developing customer loyalty than using structural bonds for newer customers?

Third and finally, Hofstede (1980) proposes four dimensions of culture: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/femininity. The primary characteristic

of Chinese culture appears to be a more collectivistic orientation, whereas North American culture is typically characterized as individualistic (Hofstede, 1980; Williams et al. 1998). According to Williams et al. (1998), structural bonds have a greater influence on customer commitment in individualistic countries than in collectivistic countries, whereas social bonds are more significant for collectivistic countries than for individualistic countries. Although this article sheds light on how different types of relational bonds affect customer loyalty in the Taiwan securities industry, additional research should also examine the generalizability of our results to other countries—possibly those considered more individualistic—and compare the results with this study.

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Switching Barriers in the Four-Stage Loyalty Model

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ABSTRACT

Oliver (1997) suggests a four-stage loyalty model proposing that loyalty consists of belief, affect, intentions, and action. Although this model has recently been subject to empirical examination, the issue of moderator variables has been largely neglected. This article fills that void by analyzing the moderating effects of switching barriers, using a sample of 589 customers of a large do-it-yourself (DIY) retailer. The results suggest that these moderators exert an influence on the development of the different stages of the loyalty sequence. Specifically, switching costs, social benefits, and the attractiveness of alternatives are found to be important moderators of the links in the four-stage loyalty model.

INTRODUCTION

Numerous studies have linked customer satisfaction to financial outcomes (Anderson, Fornell, and Lehmann 1994; Anderson, Fornell, and Rust 1997; Bernhardt, Donthu, and Kennett 2000; Ittner and Larcker 1998; Keiningham et al. 1999). However, in moving from a transaction orientation to a relationship orientation (Berry 1995; Grönroos 1995; Morgan and Hunt 1994), contemporary marketing thought acknowledges that gaining and sustaining customer loyalty as the ultimate goal may be more important than achieving customer satisfaction (Agustin and Singh 2005).

Obviously, the link between customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and financial outcome is not as straightforward as it may seem (Carroll 1991; Carroll and Rose 1993; Reinartz and Kumar 2000). Yet researchers and managers acknowledge that small changes in loyalty and retention can yield disproportionately large changes in profitability (Reichheld 1993; Reichheld, Markey, and Hopton 2000; Reichheld and Teal 1996).

Despite this obvious managerial relevance, earlier research primarily analyzed the link between satisfaction ratings and repurchase intention. Few studies have examined the link between satisfaction ratings and repurchase behavior (Mittal and Kamakura 2001; Zeithaml 2000). Adding to that stream of research, Seiders et al. (2005) summarize and extend the literature by proposing that the relationship between satisfaction and repurchase behavior is moderated by customer, relational, and marketplace characteristics. Only recently, has Oliver's (1997) four-stage loyalty model been subject to more extensive empirical testing (Evanschitzky and Wunderlich 2006; Harris and Goode 2004; Olsen 2002). Our study adds to that stream of research by (1) discussing the links between the four loyalty stages and (2) identifying switching barriers as potential moderators of these links.

In the following article, we briefly discuss earlier conceptualizations of the loyalty construct. Oliver's (1997, 1999) framework of the four-stages of loyalty is then introduced. The focus of analysis is on switching barriers as moderator variables which affect the links between the adjacent loyalty stages. A set of hypotheses is derived and subsequently tested, using a sample of 589 customers of a large DIY retailer. In the final section of the article, we discuss implications of our findings, with a focus on generating a deeper understanding of loyalty.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Until the 1970's, loyalty was understood as repeat purchase behavior, primarily considering repeat purchase cycles (Bass 1974). Following that, a behavioral approach toward explaining purchase patterns emerged. Among the first proponents of such a behavioral approach was Jacoby (1973, 1978). Loyalty was defined as a biased (nonrandom) repeat purchase of a specific brand (from a set of alternatives) over time by a consumer, using a deliberate evaluation process (Jacoby and Kyrner 1973). Later, Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) note that the belief, affect, and intention structure of a consumer must be examined in order to analyze loyalty.

Despite these seminal works, there is still no universal agreement on the definition of loyalty (Dick and Basu 1994; Jacoby and Chestnut 1978; Oliver 1999; Uncles, Dowling, and Hammond 2003). According to Uncles et al. (2003), three popular conceptualizations of loyalty exist: loyalty as an attitude that leads to a relationship with the brand; loyalty expressed mainly in terms of revealed behavior; and buying moderated by the individual's characteristics, circumstances, and/or the purchase situation.

We use Oliver's (1997) definition, because it includes both attitudinal and behavioral aspects of loyalty. Oliver (1997) defines loyalty as a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts that have the potential to cause switching behavior. He introduces a four-stage loyalty model, implying that different aspects of loyalty do not emerge simultaneously, but rather consecutively over time (Oliver 1999). More than a clarification, this model extends the loyalty sequence "cognitive-affective-conative" by including an observable behavior, for example actual purchase behavior. At each loyalty stage, different factors influencing loyalty can be detected.

Cognitive Loyalty

At this stage, consumer loyalty is determined by information relating to the offering, such as price, quality, and so forth. It is the weakest type of loyalty, since it is directed at costs and benefits of an offering and not at the brand itself. Therefore, consumers are likely to switch once they perceive alternative offerings as being superior with respect to the cost-benefit ratio (Kalyanaram and Little 1994; Sivakumar and Raj 1997). Cognitive loyalty is influenced largely by the consumer's evaluative response to an experience, in particular to the perceived performance of an offering relative to price (= value).

Affective Loyalty

Affective loyalty relates to a favorable attitude towards a specific brand. Attitude itself is a function of cognition (e.g., expectation). Satisfaction is a global affect evaluation or feeling state which can be predicted from perceived performance as the cognitive component of the evaluation (Oliver 1993; Phillips and Baumgartner 2002; Westbrook and Oliver 1991). Expectancy confirmation leads to satisfaction, which in turn effectuates affect-

tive loyalty (Bitner 1990). Oliver (1997) defines satisfaction as “the consumer’s fulfillment response, the degree to which the level of fulfillment is pleasant or unpleasant.” Affective loyalty is also subject to deterioration, caused primarily by an increased attractiveness of competitive offerings (Sambandam and Lord 1995) and an enhanced liking for competitive brands. This can be, for instance, conveyed through imagery and association used in competitive communications (Oliver 1999).

Conative Loyalty

Conative loyalty implies that attitudinal loyalty must be accompanied by a desire to intend an action, for example repurchase a particular brand. It is stronger than affective loyalty, but has vulnerabilities as well. Repeated delivery failures are a particularly strong factor in diminishing conative loyalty. Consumers are more likely to try alternative offerings if they experience frequent service failures. Even though the consumer is conatively loyal, he has not developed the resolve to avoid considering alternative offerings (Oliver 1999).

Action Loyalty

Action control studies imply that not all intentions are transformed into action (Kuhl and Beckmann 1985). The three previous loyalty states may result in a readiness to act (in this case, to buy). This readiness is accompanied by the consumer’s willingness to search for the favorite offering despite considerable effort necessary to do so. Competitive offerings are not considered as alternatives.

Despite the many attempts to consider selected links between different loyalty phases, relatively little empirical research has been conducted on testing the total four-stage loyalty model. Our study tries to fill that void by empirically testing Oliver’s (1997) loyalty model and possible moderators affecting the links between the loyalty phases in a retail setting.

SWITCHING BARRIERS AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY

In the last decade, a substantial body of research has been conducted to investigate moderating variables influencing the formation of customer loyalty (Bloemer and Kasper 1995; Homburg and Giering 2001; Homburg, Giering, and Menon 2003). In this context, some studies focus explicitly on the moderating effects of switching barriers (Bell, Auh, and Smalley 2005; Jones, Mothersbaugh, and Beatty 2000; Lam et al. 2004). Switching barriers are defined as “any factor, which makes it more difficult or costly for consumers to change providers” (Jones et al. 2000). In line with the literature (Caruana 2003; Jones et al. 2000), we examine the following switching barriers: social benefits, attractiveness of alternatives, and perceived switching costs.

Social Benefits

Customers build interpersonal relationships with service personnel. These bonds between the customers and the firm result in the former receiving social benefits (Berry and Parasuraman 1991). The same interactions can lead consumers to develop strong personal relationships with the company (Grönroos 1990; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1985) and bind customers (Bateson and Hoffman 1999). As interactions between provider employees and customers are repeated over time, the motivation for the development of a social aspect to the relationship necessarily increases (Czepiel, Solomon, and Suprenant 1985). In addition, the more customers rely on the personnel, and the more trust the customers develop, the less risky customers perceive variations in quality.

Therefore the customers will not seek alternatives to their current provider, even if quality varies. Hence, consumers with higher social bonds rely more on past experiences with a particular retailer as a key information cue. Since it is riskier to switch a provider and to try something new, customers with lower social bonds should be less likely to remain affectively loyal if their satisfaction levels change. Empirical evidence in the context of loyalty shows that social benefits moderate the relationship between various aspects of satisfaction and selected measures of loyalty. For instance, Jones et al. (2000) found that the relationship between satisfaction and repurchase behavior is moderated by social benefits. Similarly, Crosby, Evans, and Cowles (1990) offer some support for such a moderating effect. They were able to demonstrate that the quality of the relationship between salesperson and the customer determines the probability of continued interchange. Holloway (2003) discusses social bonds as switching barriers, which especially influence the relationship between the perception of service quality and satisfaction. Based on these findings, a moderating effect of social benefits on the four-stage loyalty model can be assumed.

H1: As perceived social benefits increase, the link between cognitive and affective loyalty will become stronger.

Attractiveness of Alternatives

Depending on the quality of competing alternatives, the customer perceives a benefit in changing the provider (Oliver 1997). The more attractive the alternatives are, the higher the perceived benefits when switching (Jones et al. 2000). Therefore, consumers are likely to switch once they perceive alternative offerings as being superior with respect to the cost-benefit ratio (Kalyanaram and Little 1994; Sivakumar and Raj 1997). There is also empirical evidence from Rusbult, Zembrodt, and Gunn (1982), reporting that the quality of alternatives is associated positively with exiting and negatively with loyalty. In addition to possible direct effects of attractiveness of alternatives on loyalty, moderating effects can be anticipated: In line with Oliver (1997), it can be expected that the link between cognitive and affective loyalty will be stronger under the condition of unattractive alternatives. Hence:

H2a: As the attractiveness of competing alternatives decreases, the link between cognitive and affective loyalty will become stronger.

Furthermore, the deterioration of loyalty at the conative stage of Oliver’s (1997) model is caused primarily by an increased attractiveness of competitive offerings (Sambandam and Lord 1995). Conversely, the less attractive the alternatives, the more favorably customers perceive the offers of its current provider (Jacoby, Speller, and Kohn 1974). Consumers who generally prefer shopping at a certain retailer might therefore differ in their intention to repurchase, depending on the perception of the attractiveness of alternatives. In line with Oliver (1997), we conclude:

H2b: As the attractiveness of competing alternatives decreases, the link between affective and conative loyalty will become stronger.

Perceived Switching Costs

In many instances, customers are loyal to a provider, because of the difficulty of changing to a different firm. In accordance with Jones et al. (2000), switching is likely to involve various behavioral and psychological aspects, given that switching costs include the time, money and effort the customer perceives, when changing

trolled, fit-indices and the proportion of variance explained were almost unchanged in both models, and all path coefficients remain significant. Therefore, we conclude that CMB is not a significant issue in our study.

Analysis

We use multi-group structural equation modeling to test our hypotheses. Median-splits based on the values of the moderator variables were used to create the groups. Testing for moderation, we first looked at a non-restricted model and then restricted three paths in the four stage loyalty model so that they are equal across subgroups. Chi-square differences with three degrees of freedom (critical chi-square value ($df=3$; $p=.05$): 7.81) were assessed. After confirming a general moderating effect, we compared two models that only differ in one effect of one loyalty stage to the next, as suggested by our hypotheses. One model restricts the parameter so as to be equal across groups, while the second model allows variation in one of these parameters across groups. The restricted model has one more degree of freedom than the general model. A moderating effect would be present when the improvement in chi-square, moving from the restricted to the non-restricted model is significant, meaning the chi-square difference between the two models (and one degree of freedom) is larger than 3.84 ($p=.05$).

Measures

A conceptualization and items for measuring the constructs were developed, drawing on prior research in the loyalty literature. Except for attractiveness of alternatives, multi-item seven-point Likert scales (anchored at 1=strongly agree, 7=strongly disagree) adapted from previous studies were used.

Cognitive Loyalty. Cognitive loyalty was defined and measured as evaluation of perceived value associated with the retail outlet. In accordance with the operationalization of Verhoef, Langerak, and Donkers (2004), Sirdeshmukh, Singh, and Sabol (2002) and Baker et al. (2002), the respondents were asked to rate the perceived value.

Affective Loyalty. Affective loyalty was defined as a person's global affect evaluation or feeling state. As proposed by Oliver (1997), we used "Overall Satisfaction" and "Liking" to cover affective loyalty.

Conative Loyalty. Conative loyalty was defined as a customer's behavioral intention to continue buying at a retail store in the future, accompanied by a deep commitment to that store. The scale used was adapted from the behavioral intention battery developed by Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996), and included the items: willingness to recommend, and repurchase intention.

Action Loyalty. Action loyalty focuses on (purchase) behavior. Hence, we do not focus on attitudes such as an intention to purchase or intention to overcome an obstacle. In accordance with Harris and Goode's (2004), we operationalize "action loyalty" as displayed choice preference, and not as "overcoming obstacle." The most common assessments of behavioral loyalty are repurchasing patterns or behavioral frequency like word-of-mouth behavior, purchase frequency, and actual money spent per year, as used here.

Attractiveness of Alternatives. The attractiveness of alternatives was measured with one item, accounting for the evaluation of existing alternatives. Research in the field of neuron science has shown that the first choice is a good indicator for evaluating the attractiveness of alternative brands (Deppe et al. 2005).

Social Benefit. The social benefits measure was adapted from Henning-Thurau, Gwinner, and Gremler (2002), measuring the social benefits resulting from interpersonal relationships with the service personnel.

Switching Costs. Finally, the switching costs measure, adapted from Jones et al. (2000), captures costs across a variety of dimensions and focuses on the overall perceptions of time, money, and effort associated with changing providers.

Measurement reliability was examined through confirmatory factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

It can be noted that the coefficient alpha exceeds .7, the threshold generally proposed in the literature (Nunnally 1978). Also, composite reliabilities exceed .6 for all constructs (Bagozzi and Yi 1988). The discriminant validity of the constructs was assessed using the criterion proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and this criterion was met. Therefore, reliability and validity of the constructs in this study are acceptable.

RESULTS

Firstly, it is evident that the links between the various stages of the loyalty model are all significant ($p<.01$) and the model displays a good overall fit ($\chi^2/df=4.312$; CFI=.941; TLI=.926; SRMR=.073; RMSEA=.078). Therefore, we can continue analyzing the moderating effects.

After confirming the influence of the main effects in the model, we tested for moderator effects. A chi-square difference test was conducted for the three possible moderator effects, comparing a restricted and a non-restricted model. As can be seen, "attractiveness of alternatives" (at .01-level) and "switching costs" (at .05-level) have a significant, general moderating effect on all links in the loyalty model, whereas "social benefits" displays only a weak moderating effect at .1-level. Nevertheless, we continue analyzing the specific moderator effects suggested by our hypotheses.

As can be seen from table 4, each moderator only moderates one link in the loyalty model. "Attractiveness of alternatives" moderates the link between affective and conative loyalty, "social benefits" moderates the link between cognitive and affective loyalty, and "switching costs" moderates the link between conative and action loyalty.

Hence, three of four hypothesized moderating effects in the four-stage loyalty model were supported by these findings. It only seems that only "attractiveness of alternatives" fails to moderate the link between cognitive and affective loyalty as hypothesized in H2a. Furthermore, a smaller random sample of 250 respondents confirmed these results.¹

DISCUSSION, LIMITATION, FURTHER RESEARCH

Gaining customer loyalty is less straightforward and more complex than several previous studies have suggested. Using Oliver's (1997) model of loyalty, it is not until a customer shows high consistency through the four distinct stages that loyalty is achieved. In such case, customers possess not only a stable disposition but also a stable, routine purchase pattern, making them relatively resistant to competitive offers. Therefore, examining moderator variables of the links in the four-stage loyalty model leads to a clearer understanding of how to build loyalty.

The results of our empirical study suggest that there are indeed moderator variables that display conditions under which a customer moves from one loyalty stage to the next. In particular, high perceived social benefits from a relationship with a retailer are likely to turn cognitively loyal customers into affectively loyal customers. If the attractiveness of alternatives is relatively low, a customers liking (affective loyalty) of a particular retailer can be

¹We thank one anonymous reviewer for suggesting this test.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTION OF ITEMS USED TO MEASURE THE CONSTRUCTS

Scale/Item	Coefficient Alpha	Composite Reliability	Variance Extracted
Cognitive Loyalty (Baker et al. 2002; Sirdeshmukh et al. 2002; Verhoef et al. 2004)* 1. How would you rate your overall shopping experience at this store? 2. The quality/price ratio with the dealer is good (merchandise). 3. The quality/price ratio with dealer is good (service). 4. For the time you spent in order to shop at this store, would you say shopping at this store is highly reasonably/highly unreasonable? 5. For the effort involved in shopping at this store, would you say shopping at this store is not at all worthwhile/very worthwhile? 6. The store is attractive. 7. For the prices you pay for DIY-items at this store, would you say shopping at this store is a very poor deal/very good deal?	.862	.869	.571
Affective Loyalty (Bettencourt 1997; Oliver 1997)* 1. Based on all my experience with this store, I am very satisfied. 2. My shopping experiences at this store have always been pleasant. 3. Compared to other stores, I am very satisfied with this store.	.883	.885	.720
Conative Loyalty (Zeithaml et al. 1996)* 1. Repurchase intention 2. Word-of-mouth intention	.804	.802	.670
Action Loyalty (De Wulf, Odekerken-Schröder, and Iacobucci 2001) 1. How often do you buy DIY things in this store compared to other stores where you buy DIY things?*	.850	.858	.673
2. What percentage of your total expenditures for DIY do you spend in this store?*** 3. Of the 10 times you select a store to buy DIY at, how many times do you select this store?***			
MODERATORS			
Switching Costs (Jones et al. 2000)* 1. In general, it would be a hassle changing DIY-retailers. 2. It takes me a great deal of time and effort to get used to a new company.	.863	.932	.870
Social Benefits (Henning-Thurau et al. 2002)* 1. This store offers high-quality service. 2. Customers could expect to be treated well in this shop. 3. Employees of this store could be expected to give customers personal attention. 4. This store's employees would be willing to help customers. 5. Employees of this store would not be too busy to respond to customers' requests promptly.	.848	.958	.635
Attractiveness of Alternatives* 1. This store will be my first choice for my DIY needs.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

* Measured using seven-point Likert scales anchored by 1=strongly agree; 7=strongly disagree.

** Measured in percentage of total expenditures.

*** Measured in times of selection.

TABLE 2
CORRELATION MATRIX

	Cognitive Loyalty	Affective Loyalty	Conative Loyalty	Action Loyalty
Cognitive Loyalty	1			
Affective Loyalty	.692	1		
Conative Loyalty	.622	.707	1	
Action Loyalty	.455	.526	.505	1
Average Variance Extracted	.571	.720	.670	.673

TABLE 3
PATH COEFFICIENTS (“FOUR-STAGES OF LOYALTY”)

	Four-Stages of Loyalty	
	Coefficient	R ²
Cognitive Loyalty → Affective Loyalty	.786*	.618
Affective Loyalty → Conative Loyalty	.799*	.639
Conative Loyalty → Action Loyalty	.604*	.365

*=.01-level.

transformed into a strong intention to repurchase. If retailers are able to create switching costs, those customers intended to purchase, are very likely to do their actual purchase at that retailer. Our results did not, however, find a moderating effect of the attractiveness of alternatives on the link between cognitive and affective loyalty. A possible explanation could be that both satisfaction and liking are still just attitudes and consumers may not consider an actual purchase situation. However, we acknowledge that more research is needed to test this link in particular.

As with all empirical studies, our study suffers from limitations. First, our object of analysis was a particular retailer from one industry. Second, we analyzed data from one point in time only. By doing so, we assume there is no time-lag between a customer's feeling of being satisfied and the attitudinal and behavioral consequences. Thirdly, we considered only linear relations between the four loyalty stages. However, as indicated in the literature (Anderson and Mittal 2000; Keiningham, Perkins-Munn, and Evans 2003), these relationships might in fact be curvilinear. Furthermore, some scholars are skeptical about the use of median split, due to the loss of information. Further research might consider alternative ways to split the sample in appropriate sub-samples. Moreover, we only use self-reported measures for the action loyalty. Furthermore, longitudinal data would further improve our understanding of the mechanisms influencing the link between satisfaction and loyalty in general, and the effect of certain moderators in particular.

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TABLE 4
RESULTS OF MULTI-GROUP ANALYSIS

Attractiveness of Alternatives				
	Low	High	χ^2	$\Delta \chi^2 (df=1)$
Cognitive Loyalty → Affective Loyalty	.745	.618	413.476	1.006
Affective Loyalty → Conative Loyalty	.808	.589	404.281	10.261***
Conative Loyalty → Action Loyalty	.380	.422	413.489	1.053
	$\Delta \chi^2 (df=3): 12.654***$			
Social Benefits				
	Low	High	χ^2	$\Delta \chi^2 (df=1)$
Cognitive Loyalty → Affective Loyalty	.644	.798	707.977	5.085**
Affective Loyalty → Conative Loyalty	.767	.767	711.271	1.791
Conative Loyalty → Action Loyalty	.563	.569	713.062	.001
	$\Delta \chi^2 (df=3): 6.437*$			
Switching Costs				
	Low	High	χ^2	$\Delta \chi^2 (df=1)$
Cognitive Loyalty → Affective Loyalty	.777	.702	445.766	.131
Affective Loyalty → Conative Loyalty	.829	.716	445.617	.280
Conative Loyalty → Action Loyalty	.365	.581	439.056	6.841***
	$\Delta \chi^2 (df=3): 7.836**$			

*=.1-level.
**=.05-level.
***=.01-level.

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734 / *Switching Barriers in the Four-Stage Loyalty Model*

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Why Companies Should Make Their Customers Happy: The Neural Correlates of Customer Loyalty

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INTRODUCTION

The relevance of customer loyalty for company success is widely acknowledged in the literature as well as in practice (Chaudhuri and Holbrook 2001; Dick and Basu 1994; Gwinner, Gremler, and Bitner 1998; Oliver 1999; Reichheld and Sasser 1990). While relationship marketing approaches have emphasized the importance of building personal relationships with their customers, the affective foundations of customer loyalty has received less attention and is less understood than the cognitive or rational basis of customer loyalty (Chaudhuri and Holbrook 2001; Fullerton 2003). However, initial studies could show that for customer loyalty the relative strength of affective loyalty antecedents is more significant as compared to normative or “rational” ones (Fullerton 2003, Evanschitzky and Plassmann 2005). Given the homogeneity of most of today’s product and service markets and other characteristics that may constrict the customer’s use of “rational” criteria for product evaluation, brand-induced affect may represent a global evaluation measure more readily used by customers as empirical evidences from neighboring disciplines suggest (e.g. Bechara et al. 1997; Bechara and Damasio 2005 and also Slovic, Finucane, Peters and MacGregor 2002, 2004; Yeung and Wyer 2005).

In this paper, we attempt to expand our understanding of the basis of emotional bonds customers built with companies and brands. Past research could show that people sometimes use affective reactions to a stimulus as information about its reward value (Schwarz and Clore 1988, Yeung and Wyer 2004). As recent studies on consumer decision-making propose that most information processing and, in particular, the processing of emotions is subconscious (see for reviews Bargh, 2002; Fitzsimons et al., 2002; Woodside, 2004; Zaltman, 2003) we followed the approaches from Ambler et al., Deppe et al., McClure et al. and Yoon et al. and employed functional brain imaging techniques to investigate the neural correlates of customer loyalty (Ambler, Braeutigam, Stins, Rose, & Swithenby, 2004; Deppe, Schwindt, Kugel, Plassmann & Kenning, 2005; McClure et al., 2004; Yoon, Gutchess, Feinberg, & Polk, 2006).

The paper is organized as follows. First, we review concepts of customer loyalty and the role of emotions within these concepts. Then, we provide a review of neuropsychological literature on the neural foundations of emotion-based decision-making and offer hypotheses on their implications for customer loyalty. In the following, we describe our empirical study and present our results. We conclude with implications for managers and suggestions for future research.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Loyalty Concept

Historically, loyalty was understood as observable repurchase behavior. It was defined as a biased (nonrandom) repeat purchase of a specific brand (from a set of alternatives) over time by a consumer using a deliberate evaluation process (Jacoby and Kyner 1973). Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) later asserted that also psychological states of a consumer had to be examined to analyze loyalty. In accordance with this reasoning, customer loyalty has been defined by Oliver (1999) as “a deeply held commitment to rebuy or

repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future.” The repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing would occur among loyal customers, despite situational influences and marketing efforts that could potentially enable switching behavior. Accordingly, commitment, i.e. the extent to which the customer desires to maintain a continued relationship with the firm or brand, is understood as the underlying psychological mechanism of loyalty (Allen and Meyer 1990; Morgan and Hunt 1994). Recently, customer commitment was found to be composed of different dimensions (Bansal, Irving, and Taylor 2004; Fullerton 2003). On the one hand, these are more rational aspects such as a lack of alternatives and institutional or technical requirements to use a specific product (Bendapudi and Berry 1997). On the other hand, these are affective aspects understood as an emotional attachment customers built with companies and brands (Fournier 1997; Fullerton 2003; Thomson, MacInnis, and Park 2005).

In contrast to traditional studies we attempted here to gain complementing insights by separating behavioral and psychological aspects through the use of two different data sources. Firstly, we extracted “real” purchasing behavior from a club card database of a department store including customers’ monthly spending and number of purchase days within a period of 6 months. Secondly, we investigated the underlying psychological states by means of functional brain imaging. In the neuropsychological literature a great body of studies is devoted to the impact of emotions on behavior and decision-making (for reviews, see for example O’Doherty 2004; Schultz 2006). In the following we attempt to give an introductory overview about these studies.

Neuropsychological Background

One initial common conclusion relating to the neuropsychological foundations of decision-making refers to the role of emotion in human decision-making (e. g. Bechara 2004; Bechara and Damasio 2005; Bechara, Damasio, and Damasio 2004; Paulus 2005). It is suggested that “rational” or advantageous decision-making depends on prior emotional processing related to the specific decision parameters (Bechara et al. 1997). This notion is based on neurobiological evidence that seeking rewards and avoiding punishments guides the behavior of both, humans and animals (for reviews, see for example O’Doherty 2004; Schultz 2006). In constantly changing environments, it is necessary to adapt decision-making strategies by updating changes of reward contingencies. Thus, central to the organization of such behavior is the ability to estimate the reward value of stimuli, predict when rewards will occur and integrate these predictions into decision-making strategies.

Two areas found to be involved in the representation of rewards and punishments are the orbitofrontal cortex (OFC) and the amygdala. Human (O’Doherty, Kringelbach, Rolls, Hornak, Andrews 2001) and animal (Rolls, Sienkiewicz, Yaxley 1989) studies have confirmed the role of OFC in coding for stimulus reward from a variety of sensory modalities, such as taste (Kringelbach, O’Doherty, Rolls, and Andrews 2003), olfaction (Gottfried, Deichmann, Winston, Dolan 2002), somatosensory (Rolls, O’Doherty, Kringelbach, Francis, Bowtell McGlone 2003), auditory (Blood, Zatorre, Bermudez, Evans 1999), and vision

(Aharon, Etcoff, Ariely, Chabris, O'Connor, Breiter 2001) as well as for more abstract rewards such as money (Elliott, Newman, Longe, Deakin 2003) or sports cars (Erk, Spitzer, Wunderlich, Galley, Walter 2002). Furthermore, various studies have revealed that the amygdala is involved in the processing of aversive (Morris et al. 1996) and pleasant (Canli et al. 2002) stimuli.

In most consumption decision situations, however, rewards are not received immediately, but at a later point in time and can be understood as a consequence of the decision. Thus, the ability to predict future rewards is crucial for consumer decision-making. Neuroimaging studies have found brain regions such as the amygdala, OFC, and striatum to be correlated with reward predictions (Gottfried, O'Doherty, and Dolan 2003; Knutson and Cooper 2005; O'Doherty et al. 2004; Schultz, Dayan, and Montague, 1997).

Then, the learning of stimulus-reward-response associations is required to integrate anticipated and experienced values into the decision-making process. Neuroscientific studies in this context have revealed that the dorsal striatum might play a crucial role in processing contingencies between responses and rewards (O'Doherty 2004; Zink et al. 2005). Additionally, areas of emotional memory such as the ventromedial prefrontal cortex (VMPFC) need to be involved in order to retrieve rewarding memories and relate them to the stimulus (Bechara and Damasio 2005; Paulus 2005). In the context of consumption decisions an initial study by Deppe et al. could show that an activation network linking the ventromedial prefrontal cortex, the striatum and anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) is involved in brand preference judgments (Deppe, Schwindt, Kugel, Plassmann, Kenning 2005). Deppe et al. (2005) described the network as an affective and self-referencing path during brand choice. Against this background our hypothesis was that the underlying neural activation patterns of reward attribution to stimuli customers feel emotionally attached to would be similar to Deppe et al.'s findings.

Thus, we hypothesize:

H: During brand choice, loyal customers as compared to disloyal customer will show a greater activity in the striatum, VMPC and ACC.

In the following, we describe our empirical study to test this hypothesis.

EMPIRICAL STUDY

The empirical study was designed to investigate differences in brain activity of loyal customers as compared to disloyal customers of a department store.

Participants and Study Design

A total of 300 customers of a local department store were chosen randomly from a department store's club card database of which 22 (9 females, 13 males, median age 46) were recruited, after several screening procedures, to participate in an fMRI study. Exclusion criteria were relating to fMRI safety (e.g., metal or implanted devices in the body, claustrophobia), factors known to affect brain organization, function, or blood flow (such as handedness, pharmaceutical / drug use, psychiatric, neuropsychological and medical disorders). Furthermore, participants were selected to proceed to the fMRI task only if they were either classified for the last six months as "A" customer (monthly spending of 250 EUR or more for clothing and 5 or more monthly shopping days) or "C" customers (monthly spending of 50 EUR or less for clothing and 1 or less monthly shopping days).

All participants were healthy, right-handed and, gave their written consent to participate in the study in accordance with the

guidelines of the University Medical School Ethical Committee. The sample size is smaller than in typical in behavioral studies, however, it is representative of fMRI studies (see e.g. Desmond and Glover 2002; Murphy and Garavan 2004).

Experimental Procedure and Design

Participants were imaged during one functional run while making choices between two out of four department stores where they would buy different types of clothing. The experimental paradigm was designed to investigate systematic differences of neural processing during purchase decisions in the presence or absence of the specific target department store (T, the department store from which we extracted the subject pool), in contrast to three other department stores, which were classified as diverse (D_1 , D_2 , D_3). Nine different pieces of clothing (P1, P2; ... , P9) were chosen, that could be bought in all four department stores. They were neutral in the sense that no brand name or other criteria that allow an identification of a special brand were visible. The stimuli were presented as follows. In middle of each stimulation, a piece of clothing (P1, P2, ... , P9) was shown. Slightly above that piece of clothing, on the left and on the right side, the logos of two department stores were presented. These were either the target store brand (T) and one of the diverse store brands (D_1 , D_2 , or D_3), or two of the diverse store brands, resulting in sequences of TDPz and DDPz stimuli (or simplified TD and DD). The order of the stimuli was randomized referring to brands as well as to pieces of clothing. Each subject had to make a total of 120 decisions (60 TD and 60 DD).

We employed a one-factorial event related design (Bandettini & Cox, 2000; Buckner, 2003; Dale, 1999; Friston, Zarahn, Josephs, Henson, & Dale, 1999) with an inter-stimulus-interval (ISI) of 5 seconds each and a randomized stimulus presentation. In order to avoid response-related activations and movement artifacts we did not request for any feedback during scanning (Deppe et al. 2005).

The subjects were instructed to choose between two stores, according to where they would prefer to buy the piece of clothing shown on the screen. Thus, the store brand itself functions as the only selection criterion. After the fMRI scan, participants were asked to provide general personal information. Then, participants were compensated EUR 25 per hour, thanked and debriefed.

Data Acquisition

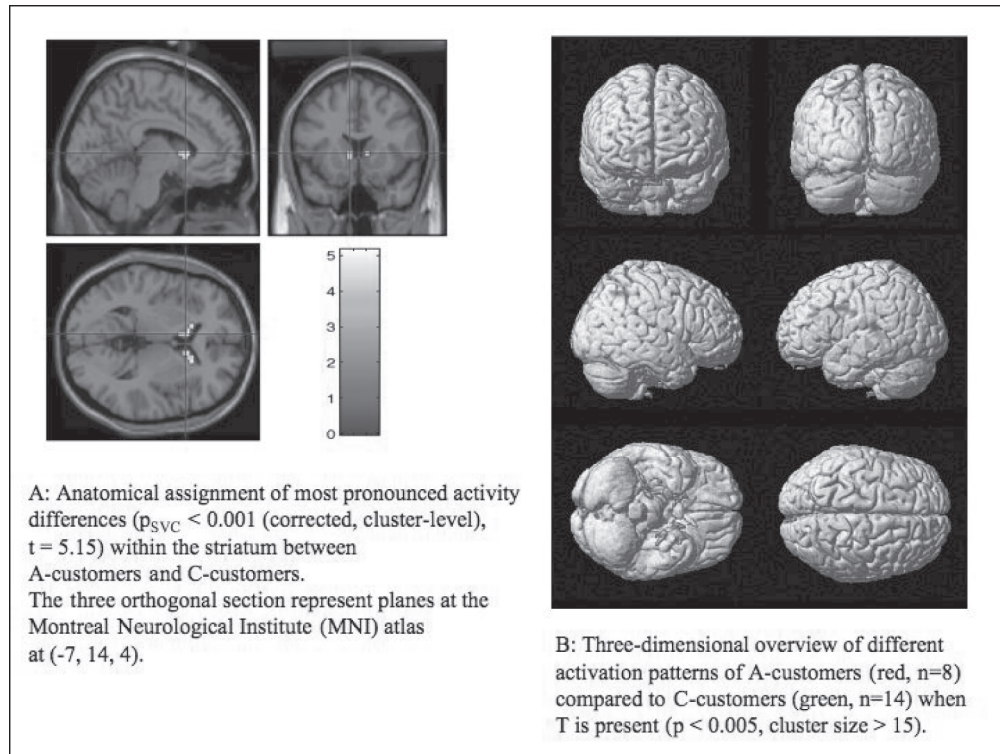
All fMRI data were acquired from a 3.0 Tesla whole body scanner (Intera T30, Philips, Best, NL). Prior to the functional data acquisition structural T1 weighted datasets were acquired for anatomical identification. The functional T2* images were acquired using single-shot gradient echo-planar imaging (EPI) sequence that covered nearly the whole brain. The data set consisted of 36 transversal slices of 3.6 mm thickness without gap. Images were acquired every three seconds (TR).

In combination with the fMRI measurement, data about the subjects' monthly spending at the target store and the number of shopping days per month in the fashion segment, were extracted from the department's store club card database.

Data Analysis

All acquired fMRI data were preprocessed using Statistical Parametric Mapping (SPM2; Wellcome Department of Cognitive Neurology, London, UK). For the statistical analysis, we specified regressors of a General Linear Model (GLM) according to our experimental design at the single-subject level. We then calculated contrast images for the events when T was present (TD) compared to when the T was not present (DD). These single-subject contrast images were used for a random effects analysis at the group level.

FIGURE 1
Results from random effects group analysis



The sample was divided into two groups (A- and C-customers) based on a customer value index (monthly spending and number of monthly shopping days). A two-sample t-test was calculated on the group level to compare neural activations patterns of the two groups when T was present.

Results

The most pronounced increased activation in the presence of T in the group of A-customers compared to C-customers was found in the striatum (see Figure 1A). This area was revealed to be involved in the representation of reward prediction (Gottfried, O'Doherty, and Dolan 2003; Knutson and Cooper 2005; O'Doherty et al. 2004; Schultz, Dayan, and Montague, 1997). Zink, Pagnoni, Martin, Dhamala, & Berns (2003) found increased activity in the particular part of the striatum that we are reporting here, in response to the prediction of behaviorally relevant rewards, as compared to "only" unexpected rewards which are represented in other parts of the striatum.

Furthermore, other areas involved in the TD decision of A-customers as compared to C-customers, confirm to Deppe et al.'s First-Choice-Brand activation pattern (Deppe et al. 2005, see Figure 1 B).

The brain areas shown in Figure 1 are the activation network linking VMPFC, striatum, and ACC. Deppe et al. (2005) described the network as an emotion-based and self-referencing information processing mode during brand choice. This network was found to be involved in decisions when the subject's first choice brand was present. Conversely, where only second or lower-ranked brands were available, the underlying neural network represents an analytical weighing of alternatives, mathematical calculation, strategic thinking and object recognition (Deppe et al., 2005). In particular

in the present study, both the latter and areas involved in semantically processing such as reading and speaking were found to be activated increasingly.

DISCUSSION

In this paper, we attempt to expand our understanding of the basis of emotional bonds customers built with companies and brands. We conducted an fMRI study to assess differences in neural activations between loyal and disloyal customers of a department store. Based on prior findings in the literature, we assumed that for loyal customers the store brand would modulate the underlying information processing via an emotion-based decision path, as compared to disloyal of the respective store.

As a result, we were able to replicate Deppe et al.'s neural correlate of brand preference for the particular case of store brands (Deppe et al., 2005). In addition to Deppe et al.'s findings (Deppe et al., 2005), we linked the neural activation patterns to the actual buying behavior of the subjects. We showed that, for customers with a high monetary customer value (A-customers) the presence of the specific store brand acts as a rewarding signal during the choice task, whereas customers with a low monetary customer value (C-customers) do not reveal such a rewarding activation pattern.

Implications for relationship management

Our findings offer some important insights for management. It can be noted that for a company, it is not sufficient to concentrate on 'bounding' customers for instance with technical requirements (e.g. hard- and software which is only compatible with specific operating systems) or general price promotions, but encourage customers in creating affective bonds to the company or its brands. This could be achieved by for example personalizing the commu-

nication with the customer and provide the basis for emotional events the customers links to the company or brand.

Limitations and future research

The interpretation of our empirical findings are based on binary decision making tasks conducted in a controlled laboratory environment and thus, do not reflect the richness of brand choices in a real-world shopping situation. Hence, further refinement of the experimental design, such as integrating more mobile brain imaging methods, will be needed in the future.

Furthermore, we focused only on the link between one department store and their customers' loyalty. Future studies should broaden our findings by investigating multi-brand-loyalty linkages.

In addition, we linked the neural activation patterns to past buying behavior. In following studies it might be useful to investigate whether the rewarding store brand effects can also predict future purchasing behavior. This could be implemented either by a panel data analysis over a longer period of time before and after the fMRI scanning or by including customers' purchasing intentions (i.e. attitudinal loyalty).

In conclusion, we could deepen the understanding of the psychological states underlying customer loyalty by providing initial neurobiological evidences of "the tie that binds" customers to companies and brands.

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Optimizing Variety in Mass Customization: A Theoretical Perspective

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Markets today are fragmenting with individual needs and wants increasingly prone to shifts and changes (Hart 1995) necessitating products that are mass customized and customerized (Simonson 2005; Wind and Rangaswamy 2001). Although considerable literature has examined mass customization from a production perspective (e.g., Papathanassiou 2004, Jiao, Ma, and Tseng 2003), it is only recently that marketing scholars have begun to examine this phenomenon (e.g., Murthi and Sarkar 2003; Simonson 2005; Wind and Rangaswamy 2001).

Typically, in mass customization, customers are provided varying options of a product's attributes to select and thus "build" their product. A major managerial challenge in such cases is to determine the optimal variety of options to offer (Simonson 2005). Too many options would be expensive, and confusing to customers, while too few options may annoy the customers who may be unable to configure the product based on their true preferences (e.g., Huffman and Kahn 1998).

We build on the work of Sherman et al. (1984) on human qualities to classify product attributes as *universally* or *variably* evaluated. According to Sherman et al (1984), for universally-evaluated qualities, there is consensus in a population about whether a particular level is good or bad, regardless of individuals' preference for the level. For example, people would agree that being honest is good and being dishonest is bad whether they themselves are honest or not. In contrast, there is more variability and person-specificity in variably-evaluated qualities. For example, opponents of abortion may think of a pro-choice political candidate as undesirable ("low quality") whereas pro-choice individuals may find that candidate very appealing. Thus, for universally-evaluated qualities there exists a widely accepted evaluation basis, whereas for variably-evaluated qualities, the evaluation schemes are more individual-specific.

Similarly, in a consumption context, universally-evaluated product attributes (universal attributes), such as battery life in cell phones, would have a common and widely accepted evaluation, whereas the evaluation schemes for variable attributes, such as exterior color of cell phones, would be more consumer-specific. In laptops, consumers would generally agree that 40 Giga Bytes (GB) of hard disk space (a universal attribute) is better than 20GB of hard disk space. In contrast, the color kit options in laptops (a variable attribute) are likely to be evaluated based on personal preferences—'Charcoal Leather' maybe evaluated positively by one while another consumer may prefer 'Mediterranean Blue.'

We suggest that this difference in evaluation schemes would result in consumers using different strategies for evaluating the two types of attributes.¹ Specifically, we suggest that, since consumers'

knowledge of the product category would influence how they search and utilize attribute information, consumer knowledge would affect the processing of information related to variable attributes. In particular, we examine the moderating effects of two constructs related to consumer knowledge, i.e., (1) objective knowledge, (Alba and Hutchinson 1987), and (2) knowledge function of attitudes, (Katz 1960, Grewal, Mehta, and Kardes 2004), for the influence of the levels of universal and variable attributes on consumer satisfaction with mass customization platforms. Objective knowledge refers to how knowledge with respect to the object (e.g. cell phones) may influence attribute processing. The knowledge function of attitudes pertains to the most basic function of attitudes that enables individuals to make better sense of their world (Shavitt 1989). While the former refers to the use of knowledge with respect to the object (e.g. cell phone), the latter refers to the use of the object (cell phone) as a means of knowledge. Thus these two knowledge related constructs represent two sides of a coin concerning consumer knowledge. We suggest that, since a variable attribute is more personal and more likely to serve as a peripheral cue than a universal attribute (Huffman and Houston 1993; Park and Lessig 1981), variable attributes would be more important for novices than for experts such that the positive effect of increasing variable attribute options on satisfaction with the customization platform would be stronger for novices than for experts. Further, we posit that if a product serves the knowledge function of attitudes (Katz 1960; Locander and Spivey 1978), consumers are likely to have a stronger personal relationship with the product, thereby increasing the importance of variable attributes such that the positive effect of increasing variable attribute options on satisfaction with the customization platform would be stronger when the product serves the product knowledge than when it does not.

We test these propositions with two experiments set in the context of customizing cell phones. In the first experiment, we examine the moderating role of objective knowledge and find that variable attributes are more important for novices as opposed to experts. In the second experiment, we study the moderating role of the knowledge function of attitudes towards cell phones and find that variable attributes are likely to generate higher satisfaction with the mass customization platform if cell phones perform the knowledge function of attitudes than if the cell phones do not perform the knowledge function of attitudes. The results of the two experiments also suggest, as hypothesized, that objective knowledge and knowledge function of attitudes do not influence the evaluation of universal attributes.

There are several important theoretical implications of this research. We distinguish between universal and variable attributes and show their differential effects on consumer evaluation of a mass customization platform. Future research might study the criticality of this categorization in other consumption contexts, such as evaluation of competing offerings of durable goods. It would be also worthwhile to examine how this attribute classification influences satisfaction with the product or service. Additionally, we have identified important moderators (objective knowledge and knowledge function of attitudes) in consumers' assessment of universal and variable attributes. From a managerial standpoint, our

¹Customization platform represents an interface where the product options are presented as attributes and options of those attributes are also listed. For example, a hypothetical customization platform can have two attributes—color and quality, with three options for color—red, green, and blue, and two options for quality—high and medium.

results should help marketers in deciding the number of attribute options that would provide the optimal variety in customization platforms. Also, the moderators we have identified, (namely, objective knowledge and knowledge function of attitudes), offer insights for segmenting the customers for design of mass customization platforms.

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Temporal Sequence Effects: A Memory Framework

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

While much attention has been given recently to studying temporal sequences of events, few have offered explanations to account for how people integrate these events into a holistic evaluation of the experience, and virtually no attention has been given to the underlying mechanism involved. A temporal sequence refers to an experience that consists of a series of outcomes spaced over time. The findings from the temporal sequence literature indicate that people form global retrospective ratings of an experience using salient characteristics of the experience, such as the peak intensity, the end intensity, and the trend (Ariely, Kahneman, and Loewenstein 2000). The current explanations that have been proposed to account for temporal sequence findings (e.g., Ariely and Carmon 2000; Baumgartner, Sujan, and Padgett 1997) tend to be ad hoc in nature and are limited to explaining reported findings rather than offering a comprehensive account of the findings in the literature. We propose that adopting a memory-based framework can provide a parsimonious explanation for the findings on retrospective evaluations of temporal sequence.

Retrospective evaluations inherently require that people recall aspects of the experience. Past research suggests that information that is easily accessible in memory will impact judgments the most (e.g., Hamilton and Gifford 1976; Tversky and Kahneman 1973). Accessibility of information has been studied in the memory literature using a free recall task in which people are presented with a list of words that they may recall in any order (Ashcraft 2002). Findings from this research show that respondents have higher recall performance on early items on a list (primacy) because these items receive sufficient rehearsals to transfer them to long-term memory and final items on a list (recency) because these items are temporarily available in short-term memory. Though a temporal sequence is affective in nature and a free recall task is cognitive in nature, we suggest that there are parallels between an affective experience and the experience of learning a list. Thus, memory findings on free recall are expected to explain current findings in the temporal sequence literature and predict findings that would otherwise not be predicted by the temporal sequence literature.

In studies 1 and 2, we test whether a memory-based framework, utilizing primacy and recency effects, can account for the impact of the beginning, end, and trend of an experience on retrospective evaluations of the experience (e.g., Ariely 1998; Redelmeier and Kahneman 1996). Specifically, we argue that assuming that a memory-based structure is responsible for temporal sequence findings, then introducing a delay between an affective experience and evaluations of the experience should diminish the impact of the end of an experience and enhance the impact of the beginning of an experience on retrospective evaluations, reversing consumer preferences for improving versus declining trends. Consistent with expectations, in study 1 we show that an improving vacation experience is evaluated more favorably immediately than after a delay. Consistent with primacy and recency effects, recall of the early instances was not affected by the delay; however, recall of the final incidents declined following a delay. Study 2 replicates the findings from study 1 using both an improving and declining vacation trend and demonstrates that the differential memory for events is based on their temporal location, not their valence. Consistent with a memory-based explanation, the final events in the vacation are heavily weighted when the experience is evaluated

immediately, replicating the findings from Redelmeier and Kahneman (1996). However, the initial events are heavily weighted when the experience is evaluated following a delay, resulting in higher evaluations for the improving trend immediately but a preference for the declining trend following a delay, a finding which is predicted by proposed framework but contrary to previous findings in the temporal sequence literature (e.g., Ariely 1998; Redelmeier and Kahneman 1996).

Studies 3 and 4 further confirm the role of memory by manipulating the uniqueness of one event in a vacation experience to test whether a memory-based structure can account for the impact of the peak of an experience on retrospective evaluations of the experience (e.g., Kahneman et al. 1993). Uniqueness is examined because past research using diary studies suggests that intense emotional experiences are unique (Bower 1981), leading to the expectation that peak intensity incidents are more accessible than other incidents because they are uncommon, consistent with the von Restorff effect in memory (Wallace 1965). We argue that if a peak intensity event occurs in a temporal location of an experience that impedes memory, such as the center or end of an experience that is evaluated following a delay (Ashcraft 2002), then making that event unique will facilitate recall of the event and result in that event being heavily weighted in retrospective evaluations of the experience. Consistent with expectations, study 3 shows that making the peak intensity final event in an improving vacation experience atypical enhances the recall of this event following a delay relative to a common event with the same affective intensity, demonstrating a recovery of the recency effect previously shown to diminish after a delay. Additionally, study 3 shows that evaluations are based on the peak intensity final event when the event is unique, consistent with Kahneman et al. (1993), while evaluations are based on the initial events when the peak intensity final event is common, contrary to previous findings (e.g., Fredrickson and Kahneman 1993). Study 4 further confirms these findings by replicating the results with the peak incident in the center of an experience and by demonstrating the robustness of the effects for both positively and negatively-valenced peak incidents.

In sum, the findings from this research demonstrate that a conventional memory-based framework appears to provide a coherent structure to account for consumers' use of specific aspects of a temporal sequence when forming retrospective evaluations of an experience. In addition to accounting for past findings such as a preference for improving over declining temporal sequences and the important role of peak (both high intensity and unique) experiences, our findings demonstrate that imposing a delay prior to retrospective evaluations can create a preference reversal due to the reduced accessibility of final or common instances.

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Mood and Comparative Judgment

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Previous research has shown that consumers' affective experience, regardless of whether it is a genuine integral affective response to a target, or a feeling arising incidentally from a transient mood state, can influence their evaluations of products (e.g., Adaval 2001; Pham 1998; Schwarz and Clore 1996). While we know mood can influence consumers' absolute judgments of products, we are less clear about how it would influence consumers' comparative judgments and choices among products. Consider a consumer who is choosing among a number of options. Suppose s/he happens to be experiencing a mood state when s/he receives information on each of these options one by one, would mood influence his/her evaluations of each of the options to a similar extent, and hence have no *net* effect on choice? Alternatively, would mood influence evaluations of only one of the options, and lead to changes of his/her choice? If so, which particular option would be influenced? Our research provides answers to this series of questions.

We suggest that mood can have a differential effect on comparative judgment because consumers are likely to incorporate their mood into the first evaluation being constructed during the comparison process. Moreover, once incorporated, mood will cease to influence evaluations of the latter options because its informational value for these options will be discounted. Note, however, consumers may form the first evaluation at different points in time during the comparison process. When the timing of the first evaluation varies, the influence of mood on comparison may vary accordingly. Suppose consumers evaluate the very first option from a set (e.g., the item shown on the first page of a catalog) right away when they encounter it, before they see the other options. Their mood is likely to be incorporated into the evaluation of this first option rather than into those of the subsequent ones. Alternatively, suppose consumers deliberately wait until they encounter the last option before beginning their evaluation and take a perspective focusing on the last encountered option. In this case, the evaluation into which mood is incorporated may "shift" to the last option. As such, we expect mood to influence the evaluation of the last option, rather than those of the preceding ones.

We further show that the timing of constructing the first evaluation may vary systematically as a function of choice set characteristics. For example, it may depend on whether the alternatives are differentiated by descriptive features or by their global appearance. When consumers choose among options that have similar descriptive features but differ in external appearance, they are likely to form an evaluation of the first option very quickly once they come across it, without waiting to see the comparison options. Consequently, their mood is likely to influence their evaluations of the first encountered option, and hence their choices of this option. In contrast, when consumers choose among options that are differentiated by descriptive features, they tend to wait until they have encountered all the options and to know about their features before making any comparison. Consequently, their mood is likely to influence their evaluations of the last encountered option, and hence their choices of this option.

Three experiments were conducted to test the above predictions regarding (a) how the influence of mood on comparison may vary as a function of the timing of the first evaluation and choice set characteristics and (b) the underlying mechanism through which the influence occurs.

Experiment 1. We examined the influence of mood on choices among options that only differed in global, aesthetic aspects. We induced participants' mood by asking them to write a piece of happy or unhappy personal experience. Then they moved on to the second (ostensibly unrelated) task where they saw pictures of three mango-flavored desserts sequentially. After that, they indicated their choices and absolute evaluations of the options. As predicted, the choice share of the first option was higher when participants were happy than when they were unhappy. Absolute evaluation data confirmed that happy participants liked the first option more than the unhappy participants did.

Experiment 2. In experiment 2, the timing of the first evaluation was delayed to the last option due to changes in choice set characteristics. The procedure was essentially the same as experiment 1. However, participants chose among three desserts that differed in flavor (which is presumably an important descriptive feature for desserts). Consistent with our prediction, choice share of the last option was higher when participants were happy than when they were unhappy. Happy participants also liked the last option more than their unhappy counterparts.

Experiment 3. In experiments 1 and 2, we assumed the timing of the first evaluation would change as a function of choice set characteristics. While the literature provides theoretical supports for the assumptions, we validated these assumptions empirically in experiment 3 by manipulating the timing of the first evaluation through experimental instructions. This experiment had a 2 (induced mood: positive vs. negative) by 2 (flavor: same-flavor vs. different-flavor) by 3 (instruction on the timing of the first evaluation: no-instruction vs. immediate-judgment vs. deferred-judgment) factorial design. Participants either received no instruction or an instruction as to when to start making their evaluations before they saw pictures of two desserts. After seeing the two options one by one, they indicated their relative preferences. As predicted, happy participants in the immediate-judgment group of conditions (i.e., the "no-instruction, same-flavor" condition and the two "immediate-judgment" conditions) had a stronger preference for the first option, whereas their unhappy counterparts had a weaker preference for the first option. A reversed pattern was observed in the deferred-judgment group of conditions (i.e., the "no-instruction, different-flavor" condition and the two "deferred-judgment" conditions).

In combination, findings from experiments 1-3 support the notion that mood is likely to be incorporated into the first evaluation consumers make during a comparison process, and this evaluation could be the evaluation of the initial option or the final option of a choice set.

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Complexity Effects on Consumer Choice Consistency

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The consistency with which consumers make product choices has important consequences for organizations interacting with consumers. If consumer choices are not very consistent (i.e., if consumers do not make the same choices in otherwise identical choice situations), the impact of changes in marketing mix variables on choice will be lowered. This situation may be harmful to for example innovative producers that develop products that are superior to existing alternatives. The reason is that if consumers do not respond consistently to the new product's strengths in their decisions, market share of the new product will be lower than it could otherwise have been. For consumers also it may be undesirable to make inconsistent choices, for example if it leads them to ignore beneficial product attributes in making product purchase decisions.

In this study we focus on choice set complexity as a potentially important driver of consumer choice consistency. Recent empirical work on the relationship between effort and consistency (Haaijer et al. 2000), and on the effects of choice set composition on the level of error in consumer choice models (Caussade et al. 2005, Swait and Adamowicz 2001) suggests that consumer choice consistency may vary with complexity. We add to this research an analysis of observed consistency in consumers' repeated choices and how it is affected by task-based and context-based complexity.

Task-based complexity refers to the number of cognitive steps a consumer needs to choose an optimal product (Johnson and Payne, 1985). It is expressed as the combined effect of the number of attributes and the number of alternatives in the choice set. Context-based complexity refers to the difficulty of the trade offs that consumers have to make. We express this effect using three variables based on Shugan (1980): the variability of the attribute utilities of the products in the choice set (VAR), the covariance between the attribute utilities of these products (COV), and the difference in total utility between these products (DIF).

The effects of choice set complexity on choice consistency are not straightforward. The simulation analysis of Johnson and Payne (1985) shows that with equal effort, consumer choice consistency is inversely related to choice complexity. The effect of complexity on consistency then depends on how consumers adapt their choice strategy and their effort level. In particular, if consumers respond to increased complexity by increasing their effort, the consistency of their decisions may be stable (or even improve) if complexity increases.

Results of Haaijer et al. (2000) suggest that in general consumers' effort responses to increases in choice set complexity are not sufficient to maintain equal choice consistency. Fischer et al. (2000) analyze consumer preference judgments. They find that, if judgment tasks become more complex in terms of variance, responses take more effort and become less accurate. The latter finding suggests that increases in VAR in a choice context may also lead to less consistent choice behavior. Dellaert et al. (1999) find that logit model error increases when price based utility trade-offs increase. This effect also suggests that increases in VAR (i.e., higher price variance), and possibly decreases in COV (i.e., lower correlations between price and other attributes), lead to less accu-

rate choices. An opposing effect of increases in VAR may be that the differences between the products become larger, increasing the incentives to perform well in the choice task. Hence, VAR could also increase choice consistency as more effort is exerted. With respect to task complexity, Caussade et al (2005) investigate the effects of the number of alternatives and the number of attributes, finding a positive effect of the number of alternatives and a negative effect on the number of attributes, implying a mixed result for the effect of task complexity (TASK). We are not aware of previous research on the effect of DIF, but greater differences in utility make the best alternative stand out from the rest, we expect it to facilitate consistency in choosing the best alternative from a set.

To investigate the proposed effects of complexity on consistency, data was collected through a stated choice experiment where each one of the 1114 respondents was randomly assigned to two of twelve possible choice complexity conditions. These twelve choice conditions were composed of different numbers of alternatives, different numbers of attributes, and different attribute levels, resulting in substantial variation in task and context complexity across conditions.

To quantify context-based complexity and its effects on choice consistency we first estimate a heteroskedastic mixed logit model. The variance of the error component in the mixed logit model is allowed to vary across choice sets, permitting the level of error in the choice model estimates to vary freely on choice set composition. In the next step, we obtain individual level preference parameters. These parameters are used to compute attribute utilities for each alternative for each respondent in each condition. Based on these utilities we calculate measures VAR, COV and DIF for each choice set. TASK is a function of the number of attributes and alternatives only, and varies only across choice sets.

In our main analysis, we empirically test the effects of choice set complexity on choice consistency using a Logit model. The dependent variable is whether the repeated choice task is performed consistently, i.e. the same alternative is chosen twice or not, and the independent variables are the complexity measures introduced above. The results show that TASK complexity decreases consistency and we conclude that increases in task complexity are not sufficiently compensated by increased effort to maintain the same level of accuracy. For context complexity, we find that differences in utility between the alternatives in the choice set increased choice consistency, Variance of the attribute utilities in the choice set alternatives also increased choice consistency, and the effect of covariance between the attribute utilities in the choice set alternatives was not significant. These results suggest that increased differences in utility between alternatives and greater variability in the attribute levels raise the stakes to the decision maker, resulting in more effort being exerted in the choice task and higher choice consistency.

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Recollections of Pleasure and Pain: When Losers are Motivated to Edit their Retrospective Evaluations

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

People have unrealistically positive views of self and are unrealistically optimistic about the future (Taylor and Brown 1988). For instance, they believe they will be more likely than their peers to like their first job, earn a good salary, and have a 'gifted' child (Weinstein 1980). On the other hand, people believe that they are much less likely than their peers to be a victim of crime (Perloff and Fetzer 1986) or contract the HIV virus (Raghubir and Menon 1998). All of these examples show that people are optimistic when they predict the outcome of future events. Will the same biases occur when people reflect back on events that have already occurred? Are people motivated to make the past seem better than it was? Autobiographical memory research shows that the intensity of negative affect associated with memories fades faster over time than positive affect (Walker, Vogl, and Thompson 1997). Additionally, hedonic editing suggests that people focus on the 'silver lining' in a loss frame (Thaler 1985) to maximize their happiness. However, to date there is no evidence that people in a loss frame edit their retrospective evaluations of an experience to be more positive.

We propose that gamblers in a loss frame are motivated to hedonically edit their evaluation of the experience such that the gambling experience will be remembered more positively. We show that losers use the peak win to improve the retrospective evaluation of a gambling session. In particular, gamblers that believe that winning at gambling is a skill they possess are motivated to edit their retrospective evaluation of a losing gambling episode. We also propose that gamblers are not motivated to hedonically edit their evaluation of a winning gambling episode. Instead, we show that the retrospective evaluation of the winners is determined by the amount of cash they won, regardless of their belief that gambling is a skill that they possess.

In study 1, participants were given 30 opportunities to bet on the future outcome of a coin toss. Once each outcome was revealed, the study administrator distributed winnings and collected losses based on the outcome of the coin toss. Participants were asked to report how the outcome of the bet made them feel by marking an 'X' on a 125 mm continuous scale anchored with a happy face and a sad face. A time series cross sectional regression analysis was run on moment-by-moment evaluations with the outcome for each bet as the independent variable as an additional test of whether the current outcome explained the current moment-by-moment evaluation. To check for the independence of moment-by-moment evaluations, a lagged outcome variable and a lagged evaluation variable were included to test whether current moment-by-moment evaluations were affected by the previous outcome or the evaluation associated with the previous outcome. The results indicate that the current outcome explained the moment-by-moment evaluation, that there were no remnants of the previous outcome, and that there were only slight remnants of previous evaluations. This is an important finding because study 2 is based on an assumption that the outcome of each gamble (amount won or lost) determines the moment-by-moment evaluations.

In Study 2, 102 gamblers bet on 20 coin toss games. After the gambling experience, gamblers were asked to report their evaluations of the experience and their intention to replay the game, and the illusion of control scale.

The retrospective evaluations of winners and losers were tested with separate regressions including the amount of money

won on the peak win, the amount of money lost on the peak loss, the trend of outcomes (winning, losing), the final cash position, and their score on the illusion of control scale. The retrospective evaluation of the experience for winners was determined by the final cash position only, a larger win resulted in a more positive retrospective evaluation. The retrospective evaluation for losers was determined by the peak win. Losers appear to look for the silver lining (i.e. something positive) in an otherwise negative situation. The illusion of control score was also significant: the higher the illusion of control, the more positive the retrospective evaluation.

We also ran an ANOVA on the retrospective evaluation with final outcome (winner, loser) and the illusion of control score (high, low). The ANOVA revealed a significant interaction. It is the losers with a high score on the illusion of control scale that edit the retrospective evaluation to be more positive. The losers with a low illusion of control score were significantly less positive than the winners with a low illusion of control score. The losers with a high illusion of control were not significantly different in their evaluation of the experience.

Previous research has found that the peak moment and the final moments of an experience play an important role in the construction of retrospective evaluations of purely painful experiences. An opportunity to use an optimizing strategy in the construction of a retrospective evaluation is present when reflecting back on a mixed experience that is not available when remembering a purely painful experience. We found that when people are asked about a past gambling experience, the peak win is important in the memory of losers and the final cash outcome is important in the memory of winners: facilitating the construction of a most positive retrospective evaluation. Interestingly, we found that the illusion of control did not affect the retrospective evaluation of the winners, but it did affect the losers. It was the losers with a high illusion of control score that edited their retrospective evaluation.

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Author Index

Aboulnasr, Khaled	360	Cha, Taihoon	355
Aditya, Sutapa	394	Chalmers, Tandy D.	187
Aggarwal, Praveen	355	Chan, Haksin	675
Agrawal, Nidhi	200	Chandon, Pierre	84, 345, 647
Ahlert, Dieter	726, 735	Chatterjee, Patrali	304
Albarracin, Dolores	444, 464	Chattopadhyay, Amitava	392
Almeida, Stefânia Ordovás de	644	Chebat, Jean-Charles	303
AlShebil, Saleh	434	Cheema, Amar	519
Argo, Jennifer J.	557	Chelminski, Piotr	369
Ariely, Dan	163	Chen, Jihui	448
Ashworth, Laurence	326, 423	Chen, Li-Ya	720
Atalay, Selin	373	Cheng, Shirley Y. Y.	368
Aurier, Philippe	55	Chernev, Alexander	159
Bahl, Shalini	709	Chiu, Hung-Chang	720
Baker, Stacey Menzel	83	Christensen, Glenn L.	8
Barbaranelli, Claudio	329	Chronis, Athinodoros	67
Baumeister, Roy	411	Chun, HaeEun	715
Beatty, Susan	138	Chun, Seungwoo	355
Becerra, Alberto	324	Cialdini, Robert B.	15, 47, 191, 427, 642
Bee, Colleen C.	447	Close, Angeline Grace	256
Bei, Lien-Ti	405	Conlon, Bernard	747
Bekin, Caroline	31	Cornelissen, Gert	701
Belk, Russell W.	11, 12, 131	Cornwell, T. Bettina	383
Bellman, Steve	247	Corus, Canan	679
Bennett, Christine M.	358, 361	Cotte, June	689
Berger, Jonah	541	Coulter, Robin	369
Bertini, Marco	163	Cours, Deborah	636
Bettany, Shona	703	Cowart, Kelly O.	517
Bhattacharya, C.B.	687	Cowley, Elizabeth	749
Biehal, Gabriel J.	509	Craig, Adam	344
Block, Lauren	634	Creyer, Elizabeth H.	335, 337, 341
Blut, Markus	726	Cunha, Marcus	551
Bode, Matthias	624	Czellar, Sandor	332
Boerstler, Courtney N.	406, 424	Dahl, Darren	235, 557
Boland, Wendy A.	222, 566	Dalli, Daniele	680
Bolton, Lisa E.	530	Dambrin, Claire	450
Borgerson, Janet	652	Darke, Peter	326
Botti, Simona	89	Daryanto, Ahmad	346
Boush, David M.	406	Dawar, Niraj	507
Boven, Leaf Van	344	Decrop, Alain	75
Brakus, Josko J.	580	Delbaere, Marjorie	436
Brancaleone, Vito	522	Dellaert, Benedict G. C.	354, 747
Brasel, S. Adam	470, 471	Dellande, Stephanie	249
Briers, Barbara	571	Derbaix, Maud	75
Brinol, Pablo	324	Dermody, Janine	167
Brown, Rick	464	DeRosia, Eric D.	8
Brown, Stephen	70	Deschenes, Jonathan	20
Brownlie, Douglas	175	Deshpande, Sameer	164
Brucks, Merrie	222	Devinney, Timothy	12
Brunel, Frédéric F.	238, 528	Dewitte, Siegfried	100, 510, 571, 701
Bruyneel, Sabrina	23	Dholakia, Utpal M.	644
Bryant, Frank K.	446	Diehl, Kristin	478
Burgess, Steven Michael	682	Donkers, Bas	747
Burroughs, James E.	112	D'Rozario, Denver	446
Burton, Scot	341	Du, Shuili	687
Calder, Bobby	686	Dube, Laurette	104, 712
Caldwell, Marylouise	10	Ebert, Jane E J	361
Carlson, Kurt A.	454, 497	Eckhardt, Giana	12
Castaña, Raquel	10	Eisend, Martin	320
Catterall, Miriam	559	Ekici, Ahmet	438
Cervellon, Marie-Cecile	104	Elmadag, Ayse Banu	452

Erickson, Lance-Michael	566	Hsieh, Yi-Ching	720
Esch, Franz-Rudolf	498	Hu, Yu	414
Espinoza, Francine	395	Huang, Yanliu	266
Evanschitzky, Heiner	726	Huggins, Kyle A.	335, 341
Faber, Aida	712	Humphreys, Ashlee	696
Farrell, Colin	749	Humphreys, Michael S.	383
Fennis, Bob M.	206	Hunt, David M.	421
Fernandez, Karen V.	704	Hutchinson, J. Wesley	266
Fishbach, Ayelet	569	Ineichen, Simon	353
Fitzsimons, Gavan J.	263	Inman, J. Jeffrey	511
Floh, Arne	403	Irwin, Julie R.	357
Florack, Arnd	353	Ittersum, Koert Van	627
Forehand, Mark	380	Jain, Shailendra	200, 209
Fort, Fatiha	55	Jakubanecs, Alexander	442
Fowler III, Aubrey R.	39	Janssens, Wim	684
Fox, Gavin L.	517	Jarnebrant, Peter	18
Fransen, Marieke L.	206	Jewell, Robert D.	555
Gallan, Andrew S.	427	Jia, Jianmin	350
Gebhardt, Gary F.	7	Jiang, Ying	349, 425
Geisler, Markus	488, 696	Johnson, Eric	18, 146
Geuens, Maggie	684	Joiner, Christopher	500
Gistri, Giacomo	680	Kachersky, Luke	362
Goldsmith, Kelly	575	Kachroo, Pushkin	445
Goldstein, Dan	482	Kaefer, Frederick	410
Goldstein, Noah J.	47, 191, 642	Kaikati, Andrew	519
Goorha, Saurabh	465	Kaltcheva, Velitchka D.	365
Goss, R. Justin	439	Kamins, Michael	312
Goukens, Caroline	510	Kardes, Frank R.	209, 740
Gould, Stephen J.	305	Katona, Zsolt	392
Gountas, John	522	Keeling, Kathy	138
Grant, Ian	280	Kees, Jeremy	335, 341
Grappi, Silvia	680	Kelly, Aidan	81
Grewal, Dhruv	549	Kemp, Elyria	337, 342
Grewal, Rajdeep	740	Kenning, Peter	735
Griskevicius, Vladas	15, 47, 191	Kenrick, Douglas	15, 191
Groot, Miriam de	354	Kidwell, Blair	555
Gunasti, Kunter	374, 375	Kim, Hakkyun	358
Gupta, Reetika	151, 305	Kim, Hyeong Min	362
Hagtvedt, Henrik	358	Kim, Jae Il	386
Hamilton, Kathy	559	Kim, Kyeongheui	114
Hamilton, Rebecca	395	Kimura, Junko	13
Hamilton, Ryan	159	Kivetz, Ran	515
Handley, Ian	439, 464	Kjeldgaard, Dannie	5
Hanmer-Lloyd, Stuart	167	Kleine, III, Robert E.	588
Hanna, Richard	470, 471	Knauper, Barbel	104
Hareli, Shlomo	677	Knoguchi, Kenji	444
Hassan, Louise	31	Knowles, Eric	341
Häubl, Gerald	214	Kocher, Bruno	363
Haugtvedt, Curtis	329	Kohli, Chiranjeev	406
Haws, Kelly	334, 711	Kohne, Mary Lou	457
Heilman, Carrie	410	Koo, Minjung	483
Heisley, Deborah D.	636	Kramer, Thomas	634
Hemetsberger, Andrea	194	Kravets, Olga	45
Henry, Paul	10	Kreuzbauer, Robert	240, 440
Herrmann, Andreas	441	Krishen, Anjala	445
Herzenstein, Michal	598	Krishnamurthy, Parthasarathy	713
Hewer, Paul	175	Kronlund, Antonia	407
Hickman, Thomas	314	Kruger, Justin	214
Ho, Hillbun (Dixon)	494	Kruglanski, Arie W.	569
Hoeffler, Steve	235	Kumar, Rishtee	238
Hogg, Gillian	31	Kumkale, Ece	464
Holtzman, Jordan	418	Kwak, Dae Hee	472
Houliez, Chris	145	Kwon, Kyoung-Nan	288

Kwon, Yoo Jin	288	Mead, Nicole	411
Kwong, Jessica Y. Y.	368, 385	Meloy, Margaret G.	497
Lai, Ai-Ling Janine	167	Mende, Martin	462
Lajos, Joseph	392	Meyvis, Tom	575
Lancellotti, Matthew	358	Mikhailitchenko, Andrei	110
Lange, Addie de	339	Mikhailitchenko, Galina	110
Langner, Tobias	498	Milne, George	709
Laran, Juliano	551	Mish, Jenny	449
Laroche, Michel	303	Mishra, Arul	166
Lastovicka, John L.	704	Mishra, Himanshu	166
Lawlor, Katrina	81	Mitchell, Andrew	270
Leak, Roland	344	Mittal, Vikas	54, 511
LeBoeuf, Robyn A.	594	Monga, Ashwani	492
Lee, Angela Y.	483	Monroe, Kent B.	97, 406
Lee, Eun-Ju	664	Montgomery, Nicole Votolato	743
Lee, Hak Chul	386	Moore, David	64
Lee, Monle	720	Moore, Robert	295
Lee, Woo-Young	468	Morewedge, Carey K.	534
Lee, Yih Hwai	404	Mortensen, Chad	191
Lehmann, Donald R.	263	Mugge, Ruth	339
Li, Eric	11	Muller, Brigitte	363
Li, Hong	464	Munch, James M.	16
Li, Xiuping	452	Murray, Jeff B.	335, 342
Liang, Beichen	116	Murray, Kyle B.	247
Liang, Minli	233	Na, WoonBong	628
Lieb, Daniel S.	497	Nakamoto, Kent	445
Lin, Ying-Ching	553	Nam, Myungwoo	688
Lin, Yu-Tse	405	Nayakankuppam, Dhananjay	166
Lindsey, Charles	209	Naylor, Rebecca Walker	357
Liu, Jen-Yuan Martin	377, 396	Nguyen, Hieu P.	16
Liu, Maggie Wenjing	630	Nicolao, Leonardo	467
Liu, Wendy	692	Nielsen, Jesper	192
Loibl, Cäzilia	338	Nyer, Prashanth	249
Loken, Barbara	358	O'Donohoe, Stephanie	81, 280
Long-Tolbert, Sylvia	399	Ofek, Elie	163
Luchs, Michael	357	Omeraki, Sahver	610
Ma, Jingjing	389	Ostberg, Jacob	5
Ma, Xinxin	389	Otnes, Cele C.	565
Ma, Zhenfeng	712	Ouwersloot, Hans	507
MacInnis, Deborah J.	715	Oza, Shweta S.	573
MacIntyre, Peter	412	Ozanne, Julie L.	20, 679
MacNeil, Elaine	412	Ozcaglar-Toulouse, Nile	385
Madlberger, Maria	403	Page, Karen L.	54 93, 511
Madrigal, Robert	424, 447	Pandelaere, Mario	571, 701
Maheswaran, Durairaj	200	Paniculangara, Joseph Thomas	474
Maimaran, Michal	583	Park, Jongwon	114
Main, Kelley	394	Patrick, Vanessa M.	358, 715
Mak, Vincent	632	Patterson, Paul G.	346
Malkoc, Selin A.	653	Pavia, Teresa	590
Mallalieu, Lynnea	409	Payne, Collin R.	189, 345
Malter, Alan J.	240	Pechmann, Cornelia	146
Mandel, Naomi	427	Peck, Joann	513
Marcati, Alberto	329	Pelozza, John	347
Marshall, Roger	628	Pelsmacker, Patrick De	684
Martin, Ingrid	312	Pennings, Joost M.E.	627
Mason, Marlys	590	Peracchio, Laura	233
Matear, Margaret	423	Pérez, Maria Eugenia	10
Matta, Shashi	648	Peters, Ellen	461
McAlister, Anna R.	383	Pettigrew, Simone	306
McCulloch, Kathleen C.	444	Petty, Richard	324
McDaniel, Stephen R.	468, 472	Petty, Ross D.	446
McGoldrick, Peter	138	Phillips, Joan M.	208
McGuire, Donna	278	Pichler, Elisabeth A.	194

Plassmann, Hilke	735	Sheinin, Daniel A.	509
Pombet, Fabrice	391	Shiu, Edward	31
Poynor, Cait	344, 711	Shoham, Aviv	677
Poynor, Catherine	14	Shrum, L.J.	370
Press, Melea	373, 449	Shu, Suzanne	513
Prokopec, Sonja	713	Siddiqui, Shakeel	122
Pruppers, Roger	507	Simcock, Peter	286
Pruyn, Ad Th. H.	206,669	Simmons, Joseph	265
Puligadda, Sanjay	740	Sivaramakrishnan, Subbu	274
Punj, Girish	295, 425	Sivaramakrishnan, Subramanian	495
Qiu, Cheng	404, 745	Sivaraman, Anu	360
Quintanilla, Claudia	10	Sjodin, Henrik	49
Rademacher, Mark A.	366	Smarandescu, Laura	459
Radford, Scott	421	Smith, Malcolm C.	436
Raghubir, Priya	553	Smith, Robert	328
Raghunathan, Rajagopal	357, 467	Snelders, Dirk	440
Raju, Sekar	662	Soest, Arthur Van	747
Ramenofsky, Samuel	410	Solomon, Michael R.	417
Rangaswamy, Arvind	740	Soman, Dilip	630
Ratner, Rebecca K.	545	Son, YoungSeok	628
Redler, Joern	498	Song, Yiping	351
Reynolds, Thomas J.	208	Sprott, David	487, 539
Richard, Marie-Odile	303	Srivastava, Joydeep	573
Rickman, Tracy A.	417	Staton, Mark	380
Riis, Jason	27	Stern, Barbara B.	400
Rindfleisch, Aric	112	Sternthal, Brian	210, 688
Ritchie, Robin	326	Sudbury, Lynn	286
Roberts, Michele	306	Supphellen, Magne	442
Roggeveen, Anne	549	Suri, Raj	399
Romani, Simona	680	Suri, Rajneesh	406
Rompay, Thomas J.L. Van	669	Swain, Scott	470, 471
Rose, Randall L.	14	Swindle, Paul A.	7
Ross Jr., William T.	374, 375	Tagg, Stephen K.	391
Roux, Dominique	602	Tal, Aner	454
Rozin, Paul	345	Tanaka, Hiroshi	13
Rucker, Derek	324	Tang, Felix	350
Ruiz, Salvador	405	Tang, Zaiyong	495
Russell, Cristel Antonia	147	Taylor, Leah C.	446
Russell, Dale	331, 387	Thakkar, Maneesh	414, 420, 460
Ruvio, Ayalla	677	Thomas, Manoj	28
Ruyter, Ko de	346	Tietje, Brian	380
Saaksjarvi, Maria	435	Toder-Alon, Anat	528
Sagara, Namika	461	Tolstikova, Natasha	624
Saini, Ritesh	492	Tomaseti, Eva	405
Sandikci, Ozlem	610	Torelli, Carlos	567
Sar, Sela	428	Toubia, Olivier	18
Saraneva, Anna	435	Trendel, Olivier	102
Sarvary, Miklos	392	Tsiros, Michael	365
Schaffner, Dorothea	441	Tumbat, Gülnur	488
Scharff, Robert	338	Tuncay, Linda	565
Schau, Hope Jensen	187	Turley, Darach	122
Schmitt, Bernd H.	498, 580	Ulusoy, Ebru	6
Schneller, Eugene	427	Unnava, H. Rao	662, 743
Schoormans, Jan P. L.	339, 440	Urbany, Joel E.	208
Schwarz, Norbert	456	Urminsky, Oleg	515
Scott, Andrea D.	475	Vaidyanathan, Rajiv	355
Scott, Linda	229	Valck, Kristine de	450
Scott, Maura	462	Valenzuela, Ana	147
Sellier, Anne-Laure	210	Valle, Carmen	324
Sen, Sankar	151, 687, 700	Van den Bergh, Bram	100
Seo, Joon Yong	11	Van Raaij, W. Fred	329
Shapiro, Stewart	192	Vecchione, Michele	329
Shaw, Deirdre	31	Veer, Ekant	704

Verhoeven, Joost W.M.	669
Vogel, Verena	726
Vohs, Kathleen	411
Vosgerau, Joachim	27, 536
Wadhwa, Monica	225, 657
Walsh, Gianfranco	278
Walsh, Michael	54
Wamwara-Mbugua, L. Wakiuru	180
Wan, Fang	495
Wan, Lisa C.	675
Wang, Cheng Lu	349
Wang, Jing	686
Wang, Kai-Yu	233
Wang, Qing	377, 396
Wansink, Brian	84, 189, 345, 647
Ward, James	314
Ward, Morgan K.	384
Warlop, Luk	100, 102, 510, 571, 701
Wedell, Douglas	459
Weeks, Clinton S.	383
Weinberger, Michelle F.	218
Weisfeld-Spolter, Suri	414, 420, 460
Wetzels, Martin	346
Wheeler, S. Christian	155, 583
White, Katherine	344, 347
Williams, Patti	487
Williams-Smith, Stacy-Ann A.	475
Wilson, Andrew E.	517
Wingate, Sooyeon Nikki Lee-	400
Woisetschlager, David M.	616
Wong, Kin Fai Ellick	385
Wong, Nancy	112
Woodruffe-Burton, Helen	703
Wurster, Dayna	64
Wyer, Jr., Robert S.	631
Xia, Kang-Ning	402
Xia, Lan	97
Xie, Guang-Xin	406
Xu, Alison Jing	631
Xu, Jing	456
Yang, Xiaojing	209, 328, 448, 303
Ye, Gewei	329
Yeo, Jungsang	114
Yeung, Catherine W. M.	745
Yip, Jeaney	381
Yoon, Carolyn	407
Yu, Chang-Min	405
Zarantonello, Lia	580
Zemack-Rugar, Yael	263
Zhang, Jingyun	452
Zhang, Li	389
Zhang, Ying	85, 569
Zhang, Yinlong	370
Zhao, Min	235
Zhao, Xin	131
Zhu, Baijun	351
Zhu, Rui (Juliet)	557
Zinkhan, George M.	256
Zwick, Rami	632