

Detailed Conference Program

Wednesday, May 15

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm **Registration** (5th Floor Lobby)

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm **Welcome Reception** (5th Floor Lobby and Outdoor Terrace)

Thursday, May 16

8:00 am – 12:00 pm **Registration Continues**
(5th Floor Lobby)

8:00 am – 8:45 am **Breakfast**
(5th Floor Lobby, M-513 Executive Dining Room)

8:45 am – 9:00 am **Welcoming Remarks**
Associate Dean Deborah Marlino and the Conference Organizers
(5th Floor, M-501)

9:00 am – 10:30 am **Paper Session 1: The Utility of Brand Relationships**
(5th Floor, M-501)

Chair: Mike Breazeale, University of Nebraska Omaha, USA

Degrading Brands and Consumer-Brand Relationships

Scott Stewart, The NPD Group, CANADA

Zeynep Arsel, John Molson School of Business - Concordia University, CANADA

When Closeness Facilitates Taking: Cuing Utility Maximization by Consumer-Brand Relationships

Suzanne Rath, University of Guelph, CANADA

Tanya Mark, University of Guelph, CANADA

The Impact of Fear on Emotional Brand Attachment

Lea Dunn, University of British Columbia, CANADA

JoAndrea Hoegg, University of British Columbia, CANADA

10:30 am – 11:00 am **Break**
(5th Floor Lobby and Outdoor Terrace)

11:00 am – 12:30 pm **Paper Session 2: The Relationship Through the Eyes of Different Consumers**
(5th Floor, M-501)

Chair: Giana Eckhardt, Suffolk University, USA

"With a Little Help from My Brands" Brand Support and Wealth

Danielle J. Brick, Duke University, USA

Tanya L. Chartrand, Duke University, USA

Gavan J. Fitzsimons, Duke University, USA

Biculturals and Brand Preference

Umut Kubat, Akdeniz University, TURKEY
Vanitha Swaminathan, University of Pittsburgh, USA

How Do Brands Travel with Us? Consumer-Brand Relationships Across National Boundaries

Fleura Bardhi, PhD, Prof. of Marketing, Cass Business School, City Univ. of London, UK
Anders Bengtsson, Ph.D., Protobrand Sciences, Boston, USA

12:30 pm - 1:00 pm

Lunch (5th Floor, M-501)

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Keynote Speaker Robert Kozinets; “
(5th Floor, M-501)

2:00 pm – 3:30pm

Paper Session 3: The Role of Brand Communities

(5th Floor, M-501)

Chair: Robin Coulter, University of Connecticut, USA

Building Business-Based Brand Communities

Ben Lawrence, Cornell University, USA
Patrick J. Kaufmann, Boston University, USA

Helping Firms to Do Good While Doing Well: Community Participation as Driver of Direct Consumer Participation in CSR Sponsored Causes

Scott A. Thompson, University of Georgia, USA
Molan Kim, University of Georgia, USA

The Impact of Socially-Derived Network Effects on Product Consumption

Keith Smith, University of Georgia, USA
Scott Thompson, University of Georgia, USA
John Hulland, University of Georgia, USA

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Break
(5th Floor Lobby and Outdoor Terrace)

4:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Practitioner Keynote Speaker Max Blackston
(5th Floor, M-501)

4:30 pm – 5:15 pm

Snap Talks Session 1
(5th Floor, M-501)

Chair: Susan Fournier, Boston University, USA

Antecedents of the Tendency to Anthropomorphize Products: A Cross-Cultural Analysis

Mandeep Kaur, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, INDIA
Li Huang, University of South Carolina, USA
Thomas J. Madden, University of South Carolina, USA
Martin S. Roth, University of South Carolina, USA

Consumers' Relationships with Ice Hockey Brands from Childhood to Adulthood

Samir Aledin University of Turku, TURKEY

Consumer Co-Creations: Understanding Disappointment with Co-Created Products and the Role of Brand Relationships

Leigh Anne Donovan, Illinois State University, USA

Richard J. Lutz, University of Florida, USA

5:15 pm - 5:30 pm	Official Conference Photo (Lobby)
6:30 pm	Bus Departs for the Museum of Science (Lobby)
7:00 pm – 9:30 pm	Gala Dinner (Museum of Science, on the Charles River in Boston)

Friday, May 17

8:00 am – 9:00 am	Breakfast (5th Floor Lobby, M-513 Executive Dining Room)
9:00 am – 10:15 am	Snap Talks Session 2 (5th Floor, M-501)

Chair: Fleura Bardhi, Northeastern University, USA

When the Brand is a Person: Understanding Corporeal Brands

Susan Fournier, Boston University, USA

Giana Eckhardt, Suffolk University, USA

Beyond Brand Advocacy: WOM as Brand Defense

Mansoor Javed, Coventry University, UK

Consumer-Brand Congruence: Identifying and Measuring Positively and Negatively Valued Brands

Piya Ngamcharoenmongkol, NIDA Business School, THAILAND

Margaret K. Hogg, Lancaster University Management School, UK

What Football Consumers are Willing to Do to Be Close to their Football Club Brand

Ricardo Cayolla, PhD student at University of Aveiro and Sport Entrepreneur, PORTUGAL

Sandra Maria Correia Loureiro, ISCTE-UII Business School of Lisbon, PORTUGAL

How Could You Do This To Me? Brand Betrayal and its Consumer Behavior Implications

Arianna Uhalde, USC Marshall School of Business, USA

Deborah MacInnis, USC Marshall School of Business, USA

10:15 am – 10:45 am	Break (5th Floor Lobby and Outdoor Terrace)
----------------------------	---

10:45 am – 12:15 pm	Paper Session 4: The Narratives of Brands (5th Floor, M-501)
----------------------------	--

Chair: Jill Avery, Simmons School of Management, USA

Does Intimate Disclosure Make Bloggers More Influential? The Role of Relationship Type

Soyean (Julia) Kim, Boston University, USA

Barbara A. Bickart, Boston University, USA

Frédéric F. Brunel, Boston University, USA

Seema Pai, Boston University, USA

Branding Destruction: Applying a Marketing Framework to the Notoriety of Violent Extremist Organizations

Gina Ligon, University of Nebraska Omaha, USA

Mike Breazeale, University of Nebraska Omaha, USA

Erin Pleggenkuhle-Miles, University of Nebraska Omaha, USA

Mackenzie Harms, University of Nebraska Omaha, USA
Samantha Woracek, University of Nebraska Omaha, USA

Essentialism, Hybridity, and Kinship: Translating the Creative Father as Producing Mother in the Media Brand Twilight

Margo Buchanan-Oliver, The University of Auckland, NEW ZEALAND
Hope Jensen Schau, University of Arizona, USA

12:15 – 12:45 pm

Lunch

(5th Floor, M-513 Executive Dining Room and Outdoor Terrace)

12:45 pm – 1:15 pm

Practitioner Keynote Speaker, Ed Lebar

(5th Floor, M-501)

1:15 pm - 2:15 pm

Snap Talks Session 3

(5th Floor, M-501)

Chair: Scott Thompson, University of Georgia, USA

Relationship Marketing Program Rewards: Choice, Post-choice Regret, and Customer Commitment to the Brand
Judy Graham, St. John Fisher College, USA

A Closer Look at the Role of Warmth and Competence in Consumer Relationships with a Higher Education Brand
Jamie Ressler, Anderson University, USA
Christopher Malone, Relational Capital Group, USA

Complementary, Instrumental, Substitution (CIS) Theory
Aaron Ahuvia, University of Michigan Dearborn, USA
Philipp Rauschnabel, Otto Friedrich University Bamberg, GERMANY

Tryvertising: The Impact of Social Testing on Branded Goods
Manuela Oberhofer, University of Innsbruck, AUSTRIA
Katja Hutter, University of Innsbruck, AUSTRIA
Johann Füller, University of Innsbruck, AUSTRIA

Building Consumer-Brand Relationships: Can Engaging Your Senses Create Stronger Consumer-Brand Connections?
Robin Coulter, University of Connecticut, USA
Tilottama G. Chowdhury, Quinnipiac University, USA

2:15 pm – 2:45 pm

And now, a word from our sponsor

2:45 pm – 3:00 pm

Awards and Closing Ceremony

(5th Floor, M-501)

Program Subject to Change

Presentation Abstracts

Thursday, May 16

PAPER SESSION 1

The Utility of Brand Relationships

Degrading Brands and Consumer Brand Relationships

Scott Stewart, The NPD Group, CANADA

Zeynep Arsel, John Molson School of Business - Concordia University, CANADA

Purpose: Consumer researchers frequently investigate how individuals use brands for self-expression. Existing research suggests that the brand gestalt incorporates a myriad of meanings including those that are disparaging. When these meanings are identity enhancing, the brand serves its identity purpose: people benefit from using them as favorable resources for their identity projects and desirable social signals. However, if they are identity degrading or stigmatized, these meanings could actually hurt the identity goals of the owners. In this paper, we investigate the latter, and inquire about the ways individuals relate to brands that they have a strong relationship with, despite subjectively perceiving them as identity degrading.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Our data predominantly consists of unstructured in-depth interviews with consumers of Apple products. We recruited 13 Apple users through online calls for participation. The salience of the brand to our participants' identities was further confirmed during the interview process. Through the data collection and analysis process, we also conducted passive Netnography in Apple online communities and familiarized ourselves with the fan discourses.

Findings: We discuss how identity value—even when undesirable—is managed socially as a resource to capitalize on and how this is reflected on brand relationships. The strategies we elaborate also demonstrate how behaviors such as anti-brand moralism that are depicted in earlier studies serve for distinct brand relationship goals.

Originality/Value: Our research extends the consumer-brand relationships literature by inquiring about a previously understudied topic: consumers' relationships with brands that are perceived as identity degrading.

When Closeness Facilitates Taking: Cuing Utility Maximization by Consumer-Brand Relationships

Suzanne Rath, University of Guelph, CANADA

Tanya Mark, University of Guelph, CANADA

Purpose: The Self Expansion Model (Aron & Aron, 1986) suggests that if brands are viewed as “best friends”, consumers will allocate more resources to them and fewer resources to themselves (Aron et al, 1991). This prediction assumes that consumers draw little distinction between the relationships consumers have with brands and those they have with people. However, are brand relationships and human relationships really so similar? The Self Expansion Model predicts that the utility gained from close members of one's social group results in an exchange of resources between members; however, the utility gained from material consumption is not necessarily the same as utility gained by social interactions. Therefore, what if seeing a brand as a “best friend” does the opposite of what one would expect from an interpersonal perspective? What if a “best friend” brand relationship provides implicit permission to extract, rather than share, resources? Therefore, close brand relationships may cue individuals to maximize utility.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Three studies investigate this question. Brand relationship type (best friend vs. business partner) is primed by presenting a scenario which asks participants to imagine a relationship with a fictional brand. The difference in money allocations made to a brand and to the self serves as the main dependent variable for all of three studies. Study two incorporates a measure of social utility, and study three introduces the independent variable of impression management (high vs. low) to test the mechanism.

Preliminary Findings: Preliminary results support utility extraction as opposed to sharing. The results a 1-way ANOVA for study 1 reveal no significant effect of brand relationship type on self minus brand allocations [$F(1,43) = 0.913$, $p = 0.345$]; however, a significant effect of brand relationship type on self allocations was found [$F(1, 43) = 5.826$,

p=0.020]. This suggests that those in a best friend brand relationship allot more money to themselves than those in a business partner brand relationship.

Originality/Value: This research suggests that brand relationships and interpersonal relationships are not as similar as extant literature assumes since material consumption strengthened by close brand relationships cue individuals to maximize utility rather than exchange resources.

The Impact of Fear on Brand Attachment

Lea Dunn, University of British Columbia, CANADA

JoAndrea Hoegg, University of British Columbia, CANADA

Purpose: Brand attachment, or the strength of the bond connecting the consumer to the brand, is a construct that develops over time as consumers have numerous experiences with the brand. However, day-to-day life is filled with affective experiences, both good and bad, that may involve the brand to some degree. Given previous research which shows that the fear can increase desire for affiliation, and consumers can treat brands as relationships partners, we, counterintuitively, hypothesize that fearful experiences may facilitate the creation of emotional brand attachment.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Across several studies, we primed emotional experiences through video clips, and assessed brand attachment for fearful compared to other negative (e.g., sadness) and positive (e.g., happiness and excitement) experiences. To assess whether perceived shared experience drives the attachment effect, we both measured and manipulated affiliation to show that affiliation satiation can mitigate the positive impact of fear on brand attachment. Finally, using a longitudinal procedure, we demonstrated the potential long-term loyalty implications for this initial emotional attachment.

Findings: We show that only fear increases measures of emotional brand attachment to an unfamiliar brand. Further, we show that this emotional attachment is driven by perceived shared experience or affiliation. We also find that initial emotional brand attachment has longer term positive implications for loyalty and cognitive measures of attitude.

Originality/Value: First, we show how incidental fear experienced in the presence of a brand can facilitate an initial consumer-brand emotional attachment. Second, we identify the desire for affiliation with the brand as the causal link between fear and emotional brand attachment. Finally, we show that the increase in consumer emotional brand attachment developed in this instance subsequently increases longer-term measures brand loyalty.

PAPER SESSION 2

The Relationship through the Eyes of Different Consumers

With a Little Help from my Brands: Brand Support and Wealth

Danielle J. Brick, Duke University, USA

Tanya L. Chartrand, Duke University, USA

Gavan J. Fitzsimons, Duke University, USA

Purpose: Research has demonstrated that social support is necessary for general well being (Cohen et al. 2008). Research has also demonstrated that increased wealth is associated with weaker social connections and a reduced tendency to rely on others for support (Vohs, Meade and Goode 2006). Since individuals view brands as contributing members of relationships (Fournier 1998, 2009), we argue that instead of turning to others, wealthier individuals are turning to their brands for support. We posit greater perceptions of support come from wealthier individuals having formed stronger connections with their brands (i.e., self-brand connection, SBC; Escalas and Bettman 2003), which we predict mediates the relationship between wealth and brand support.

Design/Methodology/Approach: We test these hypotheses in several studies using a measure of brand support, the extent to which individuals perceive their brands can be relied upon, and the SBC scale. Wealth is either measured (Studies 1 and 2) or manipulated (Studies 3 and 4). Three of the four studies examine brands individuals already have a relationship with and we evaluate the specific type of brand in Study 1. In Study 4, we investigate the effects of wealth on perceptions of support from a new brand and measure individuals' willingness to purchase and pay for the new brand.

Findings: Across four studies, we find that wealthier individuals report feeling more supported by their brands. We find SBC mediates this effect (Studies 2-4), and contrary to prior research, individuals report greater connection with privately consumed, necessity brands. We also find that greater perceptions of potential support from a new brand increase individuals' willingness to purchase and pay for the new brand.

Originality/Value: This research demonstrates a novel use of brands – support – and illustrates behavioral intentions associated with this construct. As such, these findings have direct relevance for consumers, brand equity, and marketing managers.

Biculturals and Brand Preferences

Umut Kubat, Akdeniz University, TURKEY

Vanitha Swaminathan, University of Pittsburgh, USA

Purpose: This research has three main purposes. First, this research examines the role of bilingual advertising in strengthening brand liking among individuals with different acculturation orientations, specifically synthesized or host culture oriented biculturals. A second purpose of this research is to investigate the role of brand cultural symbolism among biculturals as a moderator of the impact of bilingual advertising on brand liking. Third, this research examines the role of bicultural identity integration (BII) in effecting the impact of bilingual advertising on brand liking among biculturals.

Design/Methodology/Approach: We tested the hypotheses across three experimental studies. We designed study 1 to assess brand preferences for a culturally symbolic and less culturally symbolic clothing brand across the two acculturation strategies. The ads featured either English only or a combination of Spanish and English. Study 2 replicates this effect in a different context (i.e., beer brands). Study 3 provides further insights into the role of BII mechanisms by directly manipulating this construct.

Findings: We found that the bilingual ad had a more positive effect on brand liking among synthesized biculturals than the English ad, but only for a less culturally symbolic brand. For the less symbolic brand, host culture oriented biculturals evaluated the English ad as favorably as the bilingual ad. For the high culturally symbolic brand, advertising language did not cause a change in brand evaluations. We also found that participants who are asked to think about commonalities between the host and the home cultures are significantly more likely to evaluate bilingual ads favorably than participants who are focused on differences between the two cultures

Originality/Value: This research demonstrates that bilingual advertising has no significant increase in brand liking for culturally symbolic brands and therefore can result in wasted advertising dollars for brands such as Budweiser and Levis. These effects do not seem to hold true for brands that have low cultural symbolism; these brands (e.g., Gap, Coors) have greater flexibility in advertising to synthesized biculturals using bilingual ads. This research sheds light on how synthesized biculturals are likely to be different from host-culture-oriented people and provides a path forward for people to begin integrating two conflicting identities.

How Do Brands Travel with US? Consumer Brand Relationships Across National Boundaries

Fleura Bardhi, PhD, Prof. of Marketing, Cass Business School, City Univ. of London, UK

Anders Bengtsson, Ph.D., Protobrand Sciences, Boston, USA

Purpose: A standardized global branding strategy cross-culturally markets leads to consistent and well-defined brand meaning. We challenge this thesis by empirically examining whether and how global brands travel with consumers. We study how consumers create brand meanings and relationships at home and abroad as well as the impact of context (e.g. place) on the meaning of global brands for the same consumers.

Design/methodology/approach: The study takes a qualitative approach to examine brand meanings for two prototypical global brands, McDonald's and Starbucks, at home and abroad. Data was collected through photo-elicited interviews, personal diaries, and essays with 29 middle-class American consumers before, during, and after a short-term trip to China. Interviews lasted from 30 to 90 minutes and the data was analyzed using a hermeneutic approach.

Findings: Taking a cultural branding approach, this study demonstrates that despite perceived standardized global brand platforms, consumers develop divergent brand meanings abroad. While at home, global brands have come to symbolize corporate excess, predatory intentions, and cultural homogenizations; abroad they evoke meanings of comfort, predictability, safety, and national pride. In foreign contexts, global brands become dwelling resources that enable travelers to sustain daily consumption rituals, evoke sensory experiences of home, as well as provide a comfortable and welcoming space.

Originality/value: This study challenges the brand management literature assumption of a consistent brand image for standardized global brands. We show that the cultural context (e.g. place) impacts consumer-derived brand meanings even among the same group of consumers. Further, we argue that standardization offered by global brands provides an important symbolic value to mobile consumers of serving as an anchor to the home left behind.

PAPER SESSION 3

The Role of Brand Communities

Building Business-Based Brand Communities

Ben Lawrence, Cornell University, USA

Patrick J. Kaufmann, Boston University, USA

Purpose: This paper examines the formation and maintenance of business-based brand communities in the context of channels of distribution. Work that examines relationships among channel members (e.g. between dealers), some of which take on communal characteristics, and the organizational structures that bound such relations (e.g. collectives) have received little attention. This despite the prevalence of such relationships in channel settings to include multi-level marketing organizations such as Mary Kay or Tupperware, retailer cooperatives such as Ace Hardware and True Value, independent franchisee/dealer associations such as the Association of Kentucky Fried Chicken Franchisees, and farm cooperatives such as Sunkist, and Land O' Lakes. These structures facilitate purchasing and advertising cooperatives, fulfill brand stewardship functions, employ professional legal counsel and engage in product development, playing a vital role in the functioning of modern distribution systems. Yet we know very little about these cooperative relationships among channel members, how these structures start, exist, evolve and maintain over time, or how their membership is motivated to participate and contribute to a common resource (e.g. the brand).

Design/Methodology/Approach: Franchisee associations were selected as the primary unit of study. Many franchisees have long term commitments to the brand and they have regularly occurring conferences where we could conduct field work. The authors collectively attended six unique franchisee based conferences. These conferences involved both national and regional association membership and included two of the top ten largest franchise systems. These conferences were held throughout the country and occurred on an annual or biennial basis. Each conference spanned on average 4 days resulting in a total of 25 days of intensive participant observation. In addition to 36 recorded interviews, informal discussions with approximately 100 individual franchisees during said conferences helped to inform this research. Secondary data available via mass media channels and from association websites and literature (newsletters) were also used.

Findings: We find that communal structures exhibiting the established markers of brand communities do exist within channel relationships and that channel members do develop deep meaningful relationships with the brands and individuals that constitute these structures. Our data reveal that some associations are rich repositories of brand meaning, much like brand communities in the consumer space. These communities can exist independent and often in opposition to the parent company that controls and owns the rights to the brand. We find that six important features provide strength to these communal structures, (1) a strong cultural core, (2) homogeneity, (3) stability and (4) dependency of its members, (5) frequent and meaningful interaction and (6) a strong local foundation.

Originality/Value: Though work on consumer-brand relationships has spawned an entire subfield within marketing in its focus on the organizations themselves, the channels literature has failed to recognize the role of the brand as a legitimate relationship partner for channel members. Stripped of any cultural embeddedness to include the symbolic value of the franchise founder and the heritage of the brand, conceptualizations of many channel relationships, we argue, have been oversimplified.

Helping Firms to Do Good While Doing Well: Community Participation as Driver of Direct Consumer Participation in CSR Sponsored Causes

Scott A. Thompson, University of Georgia, USA

Molan Kim, University of Georgia, USA

Purpose: Firms employ Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives to "do well while doing good." As part of these CSR initiatives, companies are partnering with non-profit organizations in a variety of ways in the hopes of inspiring consumers to directly join and contribute to worthwhile causes. However, little research has addressed when and if consumers directly contribute to the causes. Moreover, there is little guidance for companies that want to "do good" by effectively encouraging their consumers to directly contribute to the CSR cause itself. In response, this research examines which consumers within a firm's community are most likely to respond to CSR calls and directly contribute to causes, and which consumers companies should target to generate the most prosocial outcomes.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Data were collected from a product category dominated by two brand communities, the related product category community, and a forum dedicated to a CSR cause promoted by the relevant firms. The dataset tracks participation, membership duration, and helping behavior for 15,198

individuals over a 60 month period, including 408 CSR join events across three communities. A hazard modeling approach is employed to evaluate the impact of these factors on the likelihood to directly contribute to the cause.

Findings: We find that consumers who participate in brand communities are significantly less likely to directly join CSR sponsored causes, while product category participants and those who help fellow consumers are more likely to. Although members who help other consumers show a relatively higher willingness to join the causes than those who do not, the negative impact of brand community participation is significant.

Originality/Value: By examining the role that product category community participation and brand community participation play in fostering and inhibiting CSR contribution behavior, this research contributes to the social identification literature, the consumption community literature, and the consumer-to-consumer helping literature.

The Impact of Socially-Derived Network Effects on Product Consumption

Keith Smith, University of Georgia, USA

Scott Thompson, University of Georgia, USA

John Hulland, University of Georgia, USA

Purpose: Existing research on product purchase has assumed that measures of product adoption are synonymous with consumption. However, product purchase and product consumption represent different stages of consumer experience. Social-cue relevant product features have the potential to provide social benefits in a consumption context by communicating group norms and consumer status through consumption or brand communities associated with a product. These features strengthen identification with the group and yield network effects that are not the direct result of a product's functional utility. Thus, brand communities provide a utility to consumers that grows as the number of consumers grow, in other words, a socially-derived network effect.

Method: Data was collected from the industry leader in online computer game sales, over the course of a month. Collected at the product level, data included consumption information (consumers playing the game), a number of measures of brand community activity, product quality, and two different social-cue relevant product features. Hypothesized relationships were tested via OLS regression.

Findings: Product-specific social norm sign features and social status sign features have a positive impact on consumption. Further, socially-derived network effects from brand communities have a primary influence on product consumption, partially mediate the relationship between social norms signs and consumption, and fully mediate the relationship between social status signs and consumption.

Contributions: The results in this study indicate that socially derived network effects play an important role in post-purchase consumption, and suggest that the drivers of purchase behavior may differ markedly from those for consumption when purchase and consumption are not simultaneous. Social signaling product features act through socially-derived network effects to facilitate post-purchase social interaction in brand communities such that consumers can manage their social identity and increase status.

SNAP TALKS SESSION 1

Anthropomorphism and Brand Relationship Quality: A Cross-national Analysis

Mandeep Kaur, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, INDIA

Li Huang, University of South Carolina, USA

Thomas J. Madden, University of South Carolina, USA

Martin S. Roth, University of South Carolina, USA

Purpose: The tendency to anthropomorphize is inherent in every human being, but does not occur to the same extent in all countries. Anthropomorphism increases with greater accessibility of human knowledge, and decreases with greater accessibility of nonhuman knowledge. Cultural collectivism increases accessibility of human knowledge, while market development increases accessibility of nonhuman knowledge. Therefore, we hypothesize that collectivism increases and market development decreases individuals' tendency to anthropomorphize nonhuman entities in general and products in particular. Further, this study investigates the impact of anthropomorphizing tendency on brand relationship quality. People make relationships with human beings; analogously, they may have emotion-laden relationships with the brands. We hypothesize that consumers' anthropomorphizing tendency increases the strength of relationship between a consumer and a brand.

Methodology: We measure anthropomorphizing tendency (AT), product anthropomorphism and brand relationship quality (BRQ) from student populations in China (n=260), India (n=140) and the United States (U.S., n=212). Product anthropomorphism and BRQ are measured for two products - mobile phone and athletic shoes.

Findings: We find that AT varies across countries. In China and India, consumers have higher AT than those in the U.S. Similarly, product anthropomorphism is the same among Chinese and Indian consumers, and significantly higher compared to U.S. consumers. Next, we find a positive relationship between AT and BRQ for both product categories.

Originality/Value: Our findings add to theory by examining country characteristics as antecedents to anthropomorphism and BRQ as a consequence of anthropomorphism. Anthropomorphism varies across cultures - higher in the Eastern cultures due to their collectivism and less industrialization and lower in the Western cultures due to their individualism and higher industrialization. Individuals with higher tendency to anthropomorphize have higher tendency to build human like relationship with brands. These findings have important implications for marketers.

Consumers' Relationships with Ice-Hockey Brands from Childhood to Adulthood

Samil Aledin, University of Turku, TURKEY

Background/purpose: People relate to their favourite sport teams in a passionate manner. The experienced emotions are multifaceted ranging from happiness, pleasure and pride to deep disappointment, anger and hate. Usually, the team is chosen at childhood under the influence of family members or peers. Unlike e.g. in the case of most FMCG brands, consumers do not tend to change their sport brands. These characteristics make consumer-sport brand (/team) relationships a special among the diverse types of consumer-brand relationships. These underexplored relationships require more academic attention. The objective of this study is to explore and understand consumer-ice hockey brand relationships from childhood to adulthood.

Methodology/Approach: The data was collected in ten semi-structured personal interviews with men from 30 to 55 years of age. Childhood was "roughly" limited to elementary school, adolescence to junior high and high school, and adulthood to the period after high school. Data analysis was conducted applying Thompson's (1997) hermeneutic framework for interpreting consumer stories. Thompson's framework consists of two stages of part-to-whole iterations; intratextual and intertextual.

Findings: The consumer-sport brand relationships tend to change from childhood to adulthood. While commitment and loyalty to the brand stay exceptionally stable during the years, individual's distance and emotional stance towards the brand are distinct at different life stages.

Originality/value: Firstly, this study gives a longitudinal account of consumer-sport brand relationships by examining their development from childhood to adulthood. Secondly, it increases the understanding of the underexplored and special domain of consumer-ice hockey brand relationships.

Consumer Co-Creations: Understanding Disappointment with Co-Created Products and the Role of Brand Relationships

Leigh Anne Donovan, Illinois State University, USA

Richard J. Lutz, University of Florida, USA

Purpose: We explore how consumers react towards disappointing co-created products and the role of prior brand relationships. Previously, work has highlighted the positive effects of consumer co-creations, but what happens when consumers are disappointed with products that they helped to co-create? One of the primary positive effects that emerges from co-creation is that consumers form self-brand connections with the products they co-create. However, there has not been any research examining when consumer customizations do not meet consumer expectations and are disappointing. Additionally, researchers have recently explored how self-brand connections influence our reactions to negative information about brands that we are close to, demonstrating that we do not want to accept this information because this would hurt the self as well as the product. However, these consumers are willing to accept the negative information if they can make themselves feel better, but will they be able to do this when they not only have a relationship with the brand, but they also helped to create the negative information. We explore how consumers react to disappointing product customizations, because in coping with customization failures we may have to blame the self and that can be painful.

Design/Methodology/Approach: In multiple studies we examined how consumers reacted to unsuccessful and successful co-created products based upon their prior relationship with the brand. We examined emotional reactions, attributions regarding the disappointing or successful outcome, and the interaction of prior brand relationships.

Findings: We find that close self-brand connections increase the negative emotions such as embarrassment and

feelings of shame following a failed customization experience. We also examine the differences in attributions based upon the type of failure.

Originality/Value: Our research addresses a gap in the literature, understanding how consumers react to their own product customization failures and how prior close brand relationships influence these reactions. This is an important topic to understand as consumer co-creation is increasing every day, however, attempts at co-creation and designing products are not infallible.

Friday, May 17

SNAP TALKS SESSION 2

When the Brand is a Person: Understanding Corporeal Brands

Susan Fournier, Boston University, USA

Giana Eckhardt, Suffolk University, USA

Purpose: When a person and a productized brand are inextricably entwined, as is the case in what we call corporeal brands, how can we understand the interplay and relationship between the physical person and the brand, and what are the implications of corporeality for brand management? We theorize a corporeal brand as having two bodies – the body natural (the physical body) and the body politic (the immortal public persona) – which are joined together in a body corporate in the public eye and use this framework to understand the development and performance of the brand over time.

Design/methodology/approach: Using the extended case method (ECM), we examine how the Martha Stewart brand—a prototypical exemplar of a corporeal brand—has been enacted in the media in order to uncover the aspects of corporeality that explain brand development and performance.

Findings: The primary tenets of the body natural – the physical person – that dictate how the body politic – the brand – should be managed are: (1) mortality –Martha struggles in coming to terms with her mortality and engages ineffective succession planning, exacerbates risk for the firm; (2) hubris – Martha exhibits exaggerated ego, pride, self-confidence and greed which promotes denial, sets her up for downfalls, and impedes remorse; (3) the unpredictability of human nature – Martha as a person exhibits strong emotions and rarely stays on message, sending inconsistent signals that complicate the brand management task; and (4) the sociality of the body natural – Martha's neighbors, family members, and entourage contribute significantly to her public persona and affect the fate of the brand.

Implications: The aspects of mortality, hubris, unpredictability and sociality characterizing corporeality manifest in brands that are inherently more risky and difficult to manage. The body natural is often in conflict with the body politic, and doppelgangers can exist within the very brand.

Originality/value: We point out how the corporeality of the brand has implications for authenticity, how the two faces of the brand complicate and interfere with positioning clarity, and how when self-interest (body natural) takes over and is in conflict with the body politic, it can interfere with crisis management. These insights go beyond what has been written on human, person or celebrity brands.

Beyond Brand Advocacy: WOM as Brand Defence

Mansoor Javed, Coventry University, UK

Purpose: To understand, recognize and highlight the role of different facets of positive WOM, and explores the importance of close consumer-brand relationships, particularly Brand Love in generating positive WOM behaviors towards a loved brand to avert negative WOM crisis.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Exploratory study using phenomenological interviewing based on Fournier (1998) to develop themes using Thematic Content analysis, followed by critical incidents (ICTs, Sweeney et al. 2010) for validity and generalizability of the findings.

Findings: The most noteworthy finding of this study suggests that consumers used to defend their loved brand for any wrong doings, or any rumors, or criticisms regardless of believing them, or not. It is also revealed that the intensities of WOM behavior vary with the levels of relatedness with the brand, the closer the consumer-brand relationship the higher, and more positive are the WOM attributions. The findings emerged from this study are threefold: firstly, refusal to believe any negative information about the brand; secondly, to forgive the brand for any wrong doings. Third, and most important finding suggests that in both the initial scenarios the consumer attributes positive WOM, Advocacy and/or Defense towards its loved brand.

Originality/Value: The study informs consumers' positive WOM attributions towards a loved brand in averting negative WOM crisis. The study explores WOM as a focal outcome of brand love, and identifies the three facets of favorable WOM towards a brand: Positive WOM, Brand Advocacy, and Brand Defence. The different facets of WOM are ranked in a hierarchy based on the intensity and impact of WOM behavior. It is suggested that beyond positive WOM and Brand Advocacy, Brand Defence is the strongest form of WOM that protects the brand and fights against any brand criticisms.

Consumer-Brand Congruence: Identifying and Measuring Positively and Negatively Valued Brands

Piya Ngamcharoenmongkol, NIDA Business School, THAILAND

Margaret K. Hogg, Lancaster University Management School, UK

Purpose: Most of the self-concept research has focused on explaining how consumers approach positively valued brands by examining the congruencies between consumer self-image and brand-user image. It is suggested that consumers would be motivated to purchase positively valued brands to maintain, enhance, and protect their self-image. However, considerably less attention has been given to the role of consumer-brand congruence in avoidance behavior; that is, how consumers avoid negatively valued brands based on the interactions between consumer self-image and brand-user image. This is partly due to the methodological difficulty of identifying and classifying the brands into positively valued and negatively valued brands. A brand is presumed to have a unique and differentiated image held by particular groups of consumers, which may not be the same across different consumer groups. Positive brand image might not always be perceived as positive or desirable for all consumer groups, whereas negative brand image might be appealing for a particular group of consumers.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This research employed a procedure (Reference Group Brand Usages) to identify and classify the brands into positively valued and negatively valued brands. A new direct method with a non-dimension-based approach (Marker Placement Task using Dartboards) was used to measure the congruencies between consumer self-image and brand-user image.

Findings: The research findings confirm the theoretical expectations that the congruencies between consumer self-image and brand-user image may vary depending on the types of brand that are being evaluated by consumers.

Originality/Value: This research has extended previous research by demonstrating how positively valued and negatively valued brands can be identified and how the relationships (congruencies) between these brands (positive and negative) and different aspects of consumer self-image can be measured.

What Football Consumers are Willing to Do to be Close to Their Football Club Brand?

Ricardo Cayolla, PhD student at University of Aveiro and Sport Entrepreneur, PORTUGAL

Sandra Maria Correia Loureiro, ISCTE-UIIL Business School of Lisbon, PORTUGAL

Purpose: Some consumers tend to have extreme behaviors in their relation to certain brands. This is the case of football fans. Therefore, we propose to understand what football consumers are willing to do, what kind of sacrifices they are willing to do, in order to be close to their football club brand.

Design/Methodology/Approach:

In this first study, 97 structured telephone interviews (from a list of 123 potential respondents) were conducted. Each interviews lasting 5 to 15 minutes. Respondents were between 22 and 81 years of age. The percentage of men is 97% and profile varies from a entrepreneur, manager, student, lawyer, retired, employee (public and private), professor, athlete, coach.

Participants were contacted in accordance with the procedures of snowball sampling type, starting with finding the perpetrators of personal contacts that fit the profile request for the study: the main criterion of the integral elements of this first study is to be people who really like football, people who have the willingness to make sacrifices for the sake of their relationship with the football club brand and team.

Findings: The findings of this first study reveal four major facets: passion/soul, be different, leave all behind, personal risk. Now we are working in depth interviews (about 60 minutes) with several selected respondents based on the contacts provided by this first study in order to better understand the personal risks wherein fans incur and the kind of religious experience that fans seem to have.

Originality/Value: Our research will contribute to knowledge in marketing field given new insights about the extreme consumer-brand relationship. The football (soccer) context was selected to explore how far football fans are willing to go to be close to their football club brand.

How Could You Do This To Me? Brand Betrayal and Its Consumer Behavior Implications

Arianna Uhalde, USC Marshall School of Business, USA

Deborah MacInnis, USC Marshall School of Business, USA

Purpose: We outline the conceptual properties and hypothesized effects of brand betrayal, defined as *a negative consumer experience resulting from a deceit-based brand transgression directly related to the basis for brand attachment*. Two studies consider how brand betrayal influences consumers' emotions, brand attachment, perceived brand authenticity, forgiveness, and desire for revenge.

Design/Methodology/Approach: In study 1, participants were asked to describe a memorable brand transgression, and report how that brand transgression affected their emotions and relationship with the brand. In study 2, participants viewed a scenario in which a person brand (i.e., a well-known athlete) committed a noteworthy transgression. Study 2 involved a 2 (brand attachment: high vs. low) x 2 (relation between transgression and basis for attachment: related vs. unrelated) x 2 (nature of brand transgression: monetary fraud vs. drug use) between-subjects design.

Findings: In both studies, the more consumers felt attached to the brand prior to the transgression, the more they felt betrayed by the brand. The more consumers felt betrayed by the brand, the more negative emotions they had toward the brand and the self, and the more they began to hate the brand. The more consumers felt betrayed by the brand, the more they agreed that the brand had lost its authenticity, the less willing they were to forgive it, and the more they wanted to take revenge against the brand.

Originality/Value: Limited research examines the construct of brand betrayal and its effects on consumers. Our research offers insight into how brands that have committed serious transgressions could begin to address consumers who feel betrayed.

PAPER SESSION 4

The Narratives of Brands

Intimate Self-Disclosure with Strangers on Social Media: By Sharing Intimate Personal Stories, Can You Make Your Word-of-Mouth More Persuasive?

Soyean (Julia) Kim, Boston University, USA

Barbara A. Bickart, Boston University, USA

Frédéric F. Brunel, Boston University, USA

Seema Pai, Boston University, USA

Purpose: The objective of this research is to provide insights into online WOM strategies through the development of a conceptual framework that explains how online communicators (specifically bloggers) share intimate self-disclosures in their WOM messages (i.e., sharing of a deeper level of personal information that may potentially invoke risk and a feeling of vulnerability) and how such sharing of intimate personal stories is perceived and processed by audiences in different types of relationships.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Across three studies, participants are exposed to several posts from a health and fitness blog in which we manipulate the blogger's relationship with the audience to be either communal or exchange. In addition, in one of the posts, we manipulate the blogger's disclosure of an intimate personal story. We examine the effects of these manipulations on participants' likelihood of purchasing a book recommended by the blogger, as well as perceptions of the blogger.

Findings: We find that the effectiveness of sharing intimate self-disclosure as a persuasive tactic depends on the blogger's relationship (i.e., communal versus exchange) with the audience.

In particular, the results show that when bloggers have a communal (exchange) relationship with their audience, the persuasive impact of sharing intimate self-disclosure increases (decreases) relative to a no-disclosure control condition. The effect is mediated by trust and by the perceived violation of relationship norms.

Originality/Value: Disclosure of intimate personal stories and self-relevant emotions is an essential part of our daily conversations. Despite the frequent occurrence of such intimate self-disclosure on social media, its impact on the persuasive impact of a speaker is surprisingly limited. This research extends our knowledge on online self-disclosure and persuasion by examining when intimate self-disclosure can *help* versus *hurt* communicator's ability to persuade their audience

Branding Destruction: Applying a Marketing Framework to the Notoriety of Violent Extremist Organizations

Gina Ligon, University of Nebraska Omaha, USA

Michael Breazeale, University of Nebraska Omaha, USA

Erin Pleggenkuhle-Miles, University of Nebraska Omaha, USA
Mackenzie Harms, University of Nebraska Omaha, USA
Samantha Woracek, University of Nebraska Omaha, USA

Purpose: Previous research in the business sector has indicated that a favorable reputation is critical to an organization's economic benefits, performance, and success. Despite obvious differences in organizational goals, violent ideological organizations share many structural similarities with business organizations (such as formalization, centralization, and hierarchy) that contribute to their overall performance. In a series of studies funded by the Department of Homeland Security, we applied Rindova and colleagues' research on "celebrity" organizations to examine the effects of group dynamics and norms on the notoriety of terrorist organizations.
Design/Methodology/Approach: To accomplish this, we applied a historiometric content coding scheme to a sample of 40 violent ideological organizations to analyze factors that contribute to the organization's overall notoriety.

Findings: It was hypothesized that factors that contribute to the brand reputation of business organizations would contribute in comparable ways to violent ideological organizations. Furthermore, these factors were expected to differ between western and non-western organizations, as well as between hierarchical and cell-based organizations.

Originality/Value: No research to date has utilized marketing theory to explain the branding of violent extremist organizations. The theoretical implications of this research are discussed with particular emphasis on future cross-disciplinary research opportunities.

Essentialism, Hybridity and Kinship: Translating the Creating Father as Producing Mother in the Media Brand Twilight

Margo Buchanan-Oliver, The University of Auckland, NEW ZEALAND
Hope Jensen Schau, University of Arizona, USA

Purpose: Given the immersive power of the Twilight brand for its female participants it is not surprising that its socio-cultural lensing of concepts of motherhood – a discourse historically proscribed to the female - should feature prominently in participants' use of the brand narratives as they use their relationship with the brand to make sense of and explore their own views on mothering.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Our data set comprises: 4 novels, 4 films, literary/film criticism of Twilight media products, naturalistic observation in 4 online fan discussion forums, participant observation of 3 Twilight fan events, fan-created artwork, email and chat interviews with forum participants/fan artists, and face-to-face interviews with fans. Primary data used theoretical sampling (Glaser and Strauss 1967) relating to central theoretical streams. Participants were also identified through online forums, offline fan events and snowballing, and data were analysed iteratively and thematically following the hermeneutic tradition (Noy 2008).

Findings: Brand narratives and their brand characters may be deployed to act as proxies for competing meaning systems and become "transformative devices" (Heilbrunn 2006), that allow contradictory and paradoxical tensions or ideas to cohabit" (Arnould and Thompson 2005:874). In essence, the brand narrative's characters and the brand relationships they enable can be used to instruct consumers and act as consumption guides through the prevailing socio-cultural issues of the times.

Originality/Value: The Twilight brand narrative maps to central discourse on the role of mothering and offers a new, hybrid, transformative form of mothering that is not gender specific and is not essentialist but is concerned with nurturance and kinship. As the female participants of this study show, it is through the mothering actions of the marginal and hybrid 'Other' brand characters found in this popular brand text that they received instruction in a newly desired normativity in the role of The Mother in society.

SNAP TALKS SESSION 3

Relationship Marketing Program Rewards: Choice, Post-choice Regret, and Customer Commitment to the Brand

Judy Graham, St. John Fisher College, USA

Purpose: The extrinsic rewards of typical relational programs are thought to increase customers' continuance commitment but not intrinsic commitment to the brand. Self-Determination Theory establishes that extrinsic rewards often denigrate individuals' motivation and commitment, but that providing choice lessens this denigration. Hence, choice based relational program rewards may engender greater commitment than equivalent non-choice based program rewards. However, previous studies have shown that increasing the number of choices available to subjects may increase post-choice regret. This study investigates how choice

based versus non-choice based rewards, and the number of choices offered, affect customer commitment and post-choice regret. It is hypothesized that customers who experience choice will exhibit higher levels of commitment than those who don't experience choice, and that there exists a relationship between the number of choices provided and levels of post-choice regret.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Participants will experience either a non-choice based rewards system or one of a number of choice based rewards systems of increasing number of choices. A variation of the Net Promoter® approach will be used to assess customer commitment to a brand. Customer post-choice regret will be measured using an established scale (Sweeney, Hausknecht, and Soutar 2000).

Potential Contribution: If extrinsic rewards behave in the capacities proposed by Self-Determination Theory, the key to effective rewards programs may involve decreasing the salience of the controlling aspect of relational program rewards by providing choice. At optimal levels, the provision of choice may both increase customer commitment to the brand and mitigate post-choice regret. This study investigates the complicated and important relationships between the provision of choice versus no choice in a rewards program context, the number of choices provided, post-choice regret, and customer commitment to the brand.

A Closer Look at the Role of Warmth and Competence in Consumer Relationships with a Higher Education Brand

Jamie Ressler, Anderson University, USA

Christopher Malone, Relational Capital Group, USA

Purpose: This paper is an extension of the Brands as Intentional Agents Framework that was presented at the 2012 Consumer Brand Relationship Conference. The Stereotype Content Model has been used in social psychology as a predictor of human interactions. Kervyn, Fisk and Malone (2012) adapted the Stereotype Content Model for application to understanding consumers' perceptions of brands and named it the Brands as Intentional Agents Framework. They identify the traits of warmth and competence as intentions and ability. Warmth is represented by a brand that has positive intentions toward the consumer. Competence is represented by a brand that is able to carry out its intentions toward the consumer.

Design/Methodology/Approach: In this study, warmth and competence is assessed in a higher education setting. We propose that the relationships with the brand representatives will influence the perceptions of warmth and competence. We also propose that the perceptions of warmth and competence will drive enrollment in the university. In this study, we asked 1,577 admitted students of a university about their relationships with current students, the admissions and enrollment staff, faculty and staff, alumni, and athletic teams. We seek to link their relationships with the brand representatives to their perceptions of warmth and competence of the university. Finally, we will assess the impact of warmth and competence on their decision to matriculate.

Originality/Value: This research will allow the use of warmth and competence as predictors of consumers' interactions with brands to be further validated. Additionally we are seeking a better understanding of the role that relationships with brand representatives have on the perceptions of warmth and competence. In the area of higher education, the research will allow for the identification of ways to improve perceptions of warmth and competence resulting in stronger brand relationships

Complementary, Instrumental, Substitution (CIS) Theory: In which is revealed the relationship between relationships-between-people-and-people and relationships-between-people-and-brands

Aaron Ahuvia, University of Michigan Dearborn, USA

Philipp Rauschnabel, Otto Friedrich University Bamberg, GERMANY

Purpose: How are a person's consumer brand relationships (CBRs) influenced by his or her interpersonal relationships, and vice versa? The evidence from extant studies is mixed, at times suggesting that (1) CBRs substitute for interpersonal relationships, (2) CBRs are used instrumentally to foster interpersonal relationships, or (3) people with a strong relationship orientation will form many interpersonal relationships as well as many CBRs, thus creating a positive correlation between the two types of relationships. This paper begins the development of CIS theory as a more comprehensive and integrated framework for understanding how CBRs and interpersonal relationships influence each other.

Approach: This presentation will provide a 10-minute conceptual overview of the major theoretical principles and propositions underlying CIS theory.

Findings: We are currently analyzing seven data sets collected as part of this ongoing research program. Relevant findings will be shared as available.

Originality/Value: A large number of studies have investigated aspects of the relationship between CBRs and interpersonal relationships, but a coherent overarching framework is still needed.

Tryvertising: The Impact of Social Testing on Branded Goods

Manuela Oberhofer, University of Innsbruck, AUSTRIA

Katja Hutter, University of Innsbruck, AUSTRIA

Johann Füller, University of Innsbruck, AUSTRIA

Purpose: Since mass advertising is not sufficient anymore to increase consumers' brand awareness, literature shows that the trend regarding consumer purchase behavior goes towards recommendations that come from a trustworthy source. However, the lately entitled approach of tryvertising aims at advertising goods over personal product experience in order to increase consumers' relationship towards the brand. Within the age of web 2.0 and the possibility of exchanging valuable product experiences with likeminded, our study explores the power of online communities in affecting consumer attitudes and their offline behavior. We hypothesize that users contribution level within online communities has a significant impact on their attitudinal change and their offline behavior in terms of WOM and sampling behavior that in turn has a significant positive impact on consumer's buying behavior.

Methodology: For studying the research model, we have adopted a quantitative research method by collecting data from an online-tryvertising campaign that has been organized for a toothpaste brand called 'parodontax®'. First three online surveys were conducted to gather information on consumers' behavior during the six-weeks product testing campaign and second, quantitative data regarding consumers' contribution behavior within the according online community was collected. After having identified the appropriate factors, ANOVAs and logistic regressions were conducted with SPSS Statistics 18.0.

Findings: We find that online communities are favorable for companies in order to benefit from highly positive attitudes but also higher levels of offline WOM that lead to increased purchase behavior.

Value: Our research shows that social tryvertising as an authentic marketing approach linked with the possibility for consumer to share their consumption experience within a corresponding online community has a major impact on attitude formation and offline WOM behavior that results in increased purchase behavior. Therefore companies should make use of the beneficial power of online communities by creating attractive communication channels that motivate consumers to actively participate.

Building Consumer-Brand Relationships: Can Engaging Your Senses Create Stronger Self-Brand Connections?

Robin A. Coulter, University of Connecticut, USA

Tilottama G. Chowdhury, Quinnipiac University, USA

Purpose: In considering the building blocks of consumer-brand relationships, past research has examined an associative memory model to identify the connections between a brand and the user. Over the past decade, marketers have increasingly engaged sensory phenomenon to promote and deliver more engaging brand experiences. In this research, we draw upon research on sensory perception from cognitive neuroscience which holds that our senses provide integral information about meanings of everyday life, to argue that engaging one's multi-sensory imaging can facilitate the development of stronger consumer-brand relationships.

Design/Methodology/Approach: We present a series of experiments to: 1) understand the nature of brand associations elicited via cognitive priming versus sensory imaging priming, and 2) assess the impact of priming one's sensory imaging (relative to no prime, a negative sensory prime, a cognitive prime) on the strength of self-brand connections (e.g., "I feel a personal connection to the brand," Escalas and Bettman 2005) across brands from an array of product categories.

Findings: Our results document that sensory imaging elicitation and cognitive elicitation tap more versus less abstract aspects of a consumer's brand associations. We find that priming positive sensory imaging (vs. no prime) results in stronger self-brand connections for brands in two product categories that vary on the dominant sense, computers (touch) and potato chips (taste), and that sensory thoughts mediate the effect of the sensory imaging prime on self-brand connections. Further, in a third product category (detergent with dominant senses of touch and smell), we find that priming positive sensory imaging (vs. cognitive priming) results in stronger self-brand connections. Finally, in a fourth product category (audio speakers with the dominant sense of sound), our results indicate that priming sensory imaging (positive vs. negative) significantly affects the favorability of self-brand connections.

Originality/Value: Our work provides a much needed focus on the importance of sensory imaging as a means to develop consumer-brand connections and relationships, providing insights across a diverse set of brands in product categories that differ on dominant sense.