



Consumer Society as a Modern Lover's Happy Hunting Ground: A Year Inside the Seduction Community

Patrick Bilodeau, M.Sc. Candidate
Jonathan Deschênes, PhD
HEC Montreal

.Postmodern society as a **consumer culture** (Firat & Venkatesh 1995; Arnould & Thompson 2005).

.**Two dominant discourses** accross the littérature (Izberk-Bilgin 2010):

.**Manipulation and enslavement** (Marx 1867; Horkheimer & Adorno 1944; Baudrillard 1970; Ewen 1976; Jameson 1991)

.**Agency and empowerment** (Douglas & Isherwood 1979; de Certeau 1984; Bourdieu 1984; Miller 1987; McCracken 1990; Howes)



.Consumer culture offers consumers “*a social arrangement in which the relations between lived culture and social resources, and between meaningful ways of life and the symbolic and material resources on which they depend, are mediated through markets*” (Arnould & Thompson 2005, 869).

Postmodern consumers can “*adapt the classical principle of **maximizing profits, minimizing costs** to their own consumption*” engaging in “***opportunistic exploitation of marketplace resources** using manipulative devices in order to achieve one’s own consumption objectives*” (Odou & Pecperou 2011, 1802)

.Prior research on this cynical approach to consumption has been bounded to an individualistic perspective (Chylinski & Chu 2010; Darke & Ritchie 2007; Helm 2004; Odou & Pehpeyrou 2011)

.It has been conceptualized as “a major obstacle to collective forms of resistance” (Odou & Pecperou 2011, 1807)

.Understanding of how consumers can aggregate themselves in a communal setting to cynically exploit consumer society’s resources is fairly limited.

.Exploring this phenomenon could provide a broader framework accounting for new manifestations of consumer resistance in the brand relationships literature.

Research Problem

.How do consumers aggregate themselves to pursue a cynical agenda in a collective form within consumer society?

.What are the implications of the collective aspects of the consumer's opportunistic and manipulative exploitation of marketplace resources?

Methodology

.An ethnography (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994) of Montreal's french seduction lair and it's forum.

.12 months of participant observation in the community

.Semi-structured in-depth interviews with 8 members

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Litterature

**Research Problem &
Methodology**

Fieldwork &
Results

Discussion

The seduction community is...

. A self –help movement

. A subculture of men sharing strategies about how to attract and seduce women

.Members share the belief that they can become **better seducers** through a **transformative process** where they **shed unattractive behaviours** and **construct a new, attractive identity** that they must learn to **authentically inhabit**.

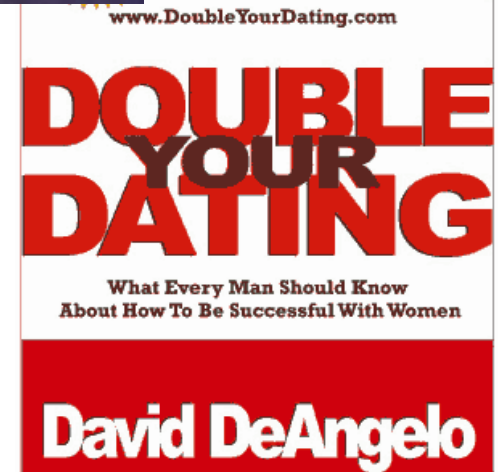
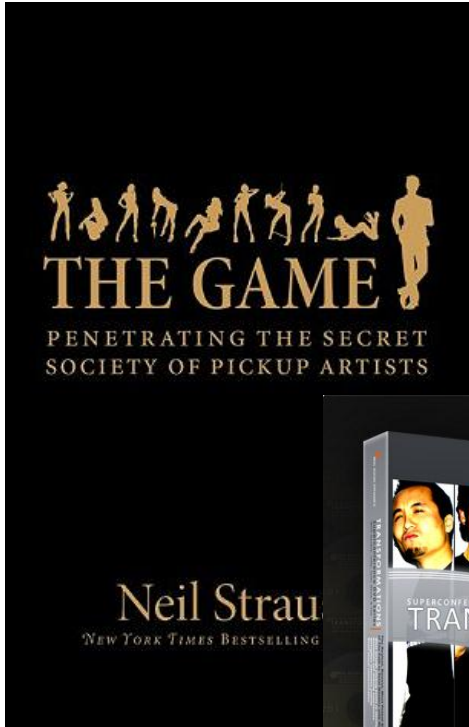
Litterature

Research Problem &
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**Fieldwork &
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The seduction community as a market and a brand



Litterature

Research Problem &
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Fieldwork &
Results

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Seven stages corresponding to the member's empowerment process

1. Initial reasons for joining the community
2. Acquirement of a new identity via community adhesion
3. Access to resources and support through community adhesion
4. Significant goals related to love and sexual life are defined or redefined
5. Decision to carry out action toward goal achievement
6. Observation and reflexion on the impact of action taken in relation to goal achievement
7. Decision to pursue membership or to leave the community

Literature

Research Problem &
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.Members use moderne (Wacquant 2004) and pre-modern (Herrigel 1989)principles to empower themselves in the postmodern consumer society (Arnould & Thompson 2005).

.Members aim to emancipate themselves from the community in a relatively short period of time . Short duration membership commitment is therefore valued which goes against the common representations of communal value creation in the consumer research literature (Schau, Muñiz & Arnould 2009).

.Grassroots perspective shows a consumer to consumer empowerment process not acounted for in the previous co-creation (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004; Sawhney, Verona & Prandelli 2005) or business to consumer (Cova & Pace 2006; Wathieu et al. 2002) empowerment models.

Research implications

“(...) consumer behavior and the ideology of consumption have diffused across the world to every corner, to virtually every individual, to such an astonishing scale that living and consuming are more complexly interdependent than at any other time in human history. ” (Mick 2006)

The “productive consumer ” creates value as well as the marketer by and for himself and this value creation can be in opposition to marketers.

Post-postmodernism ? (Cova 2013)

Introduction of a sharing paradigm in consumer research (Belk 2007, 2010)