Ownership: A Perennial Prize or a Fading Goal? A Curation, Framework, and Agenda for Future Research

CAIT LAMBERTON
KELLY GOLDSMITH

Ownership has long been considered the focal action for marketers, as captured in the definition of consumer behavior as the "acquisition, consumption and disposal of time and offerings" (Morrin and Jacoby 2015). For consumer behavior researchers, the centrality of ownership has proven both theoretically and practically fortuitous. Ownership has been shown to offer numerous benefits (e.g., a sense of control, personal identification, risk reduction) and trigger a multitude of marketing-relevant effects (e.g., the endowment effect, incorporation into the extended self, different disposal tendencies).

Today's marketplace, however, provides an abundance of examples suggesting that the desire to consume and the desire to own may be orthogonal. For example, social media visibility and workplace "casualization" have created pressure for completely non-duplicative wardrobes (Boniface 2019), giving rise to clothing and accessory rental services (e.g., Rent the Runway Unlimited, Le Tote, My List at Bloomingdales), which cater to individuals who want to appear well-dressed yet no longer view product ownership as a worthwhile investment (Weliver 2019). Indeed, "fast fashion" may reflect this phenomenon more broadly, as it provides affordable clothes that capture immediate trends that are intended to be quickly discarded (Thomas 2019).

For many, it is difficult to imagine that sharing used clothes with strangers and/or buying low-quality, temporary garments could ever be preferable to owning our own. However, new findings from the *Journal of Consumer Research* suggest there may be contexts in which, and consumers for whom, this may in fact be true. We suggest that, given this work, consumer researchers are uniquely situated to explore whether we have indeed reached the proposed, "End of Ownership" (Perzanowski and Schultz 2017). If so, we must ask what may be gained as the desire for ownership wanes, in addition to what marketers, consumers, and society might stand to lose in its absence.

To this end, we begin this curation with a discussion of Bardhi and Eckhardt's (2017) conceptual paper, which offers a framework for ownership in the modern market. We then apply this framework to five articles that highlight novel antecedents and consequences of ownership for consumers and marketers, culminating in an overall theoretical structure for studying ownership (see figure 1). We conclude with an agenda for future research intended to inspire the development of a cumulative knowledge base driven by these rich, important papers.

BUILDING A FRAMEWORK: OWNERSHIP AS A LIQUID–SOLID CONTINUUM

On the surface, the assumption that ownership is preferable to consumption without ownership has a great deal of merit. Consider the relatively common consumer choice between buying a car, leasing a car, or joining a car-sharing program. Regardless of one's decision, they will likely be faced with a monthly payment. If they buy, there are likely to be loan payments. If they lease or share, they

Cait Lamberton (catlam@wharton.upenn.edu) is the Alberto I. Duran President's Distinguished Professor of Marketing at the University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Business, 763 Jon M. Huntsman Hall, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA. Kelly Goldsmith (kelly.goldsmith@vanderbilt.edu) is an Associate Professor of Marketing at Vanderbilt University, Owen Graduate School of Management, 401 21st Ave S, Nashville, TN 37203, USA. Please address correspondence to Cait Lamberton. The authors greatly appreciate the help and support of their four editors, Jeff, Meg, Amna, and Linda, and also the help of managing editor Vlad Dovijarov.

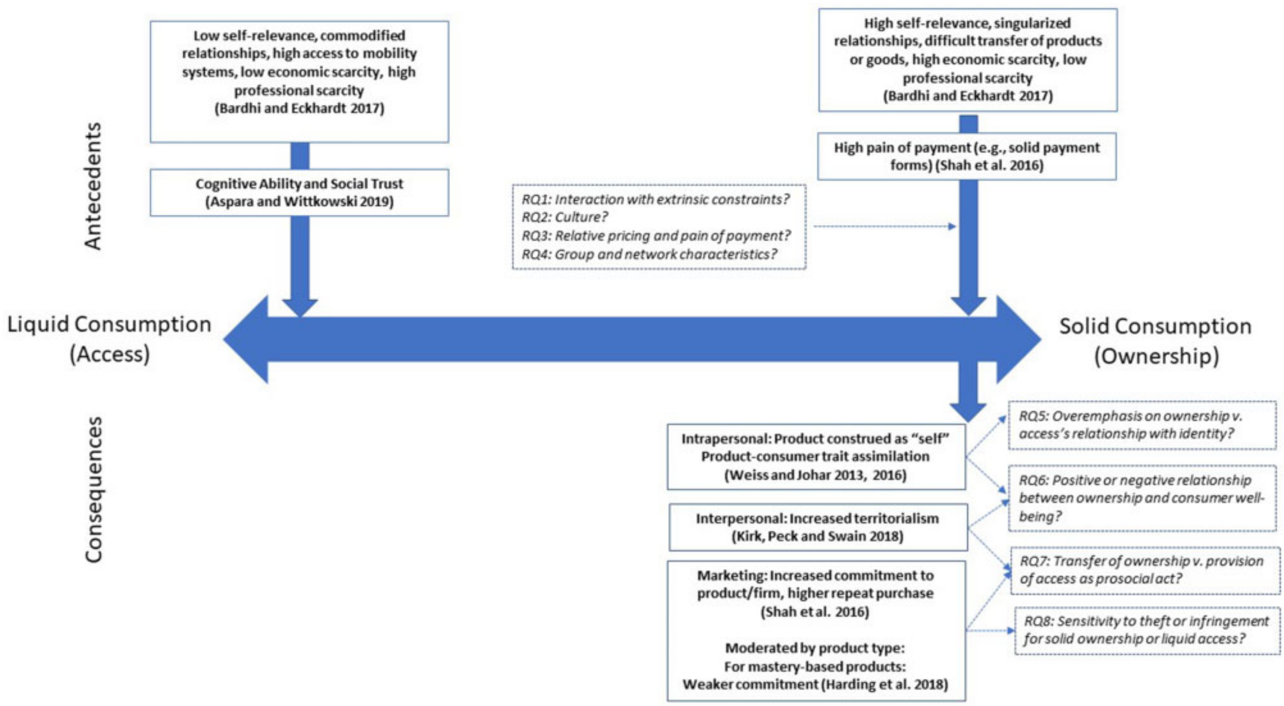
This curation was invited by editors J. Jeffrey Inman, Margaret C. Campbell, Amna Kirmani, and Linda L. Price.

Advance Access publication 27 May 2020

 • Vol. 47 • 2020
DOI: 10.1093/jcr/ucaa027

FIGURE 1

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR CURATED PAPERS AND PROPOSED RESEARCH AGENDA



will pay a monthly fee to maintain the use of the car. If this consumer has taken economics classes, they may see benefits from buying: owning the car allows greater control over the resource, a longer time horizon of use, the potential to make money through resale, the chance to gain goodwill through sharing with others, and the opportunity to transfer wealth to a friend or loved one through exchange. Accordingly, given the resources to do so, many would argue that buying should be more appealing.

However, Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017)[1] offer an account for why this rational economic perspective may no longer be suitable for understanding consumer preferences. They advance the notion that rather than being a single goal, ownership can be construed along a continuum anchored by "liquid consumption" at one end and "solid consumption" at the other end. Solid consumption carries the traditional connotations of ownership (i.e., enduring, private ownership of material goods). Conversely, liquid consumption is characterized by ephemerality, a reliance on access as opposed to ownership, and dematerialization. In addition, they note that acquisition modes and experiences can be more solid (e.g., cash) or liquid (e.g., mobile payments).

Critically, the solid–liquid framework proposed in Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017), hereafter referred to as BE, offers implications that run counter to many widely held assumptions about consumer behavior. In particular, it posits that some goods may be desirable to consumers specifically because they are ephemeral. It notes that traditional (i.e., solid) consumption carries baggage that does not burden liquid consumption (e.g., solid consumption can place profound constraints on our views of ourselves; for more on this, see Weiss and Johar 2016). Furthermore, the "dematerialization" of some products (e.g., books), facilitated by the emergence of digital and/or online only options (e.g., ebooks, audiobooks, streaming audiobook services) can offer consumers valued benefits unmatchable by more solid alternatives.

The authors also propose several product and consumer-related drivers of the preference for solid (vs. liquid) consumption. For example, consumers are more likely to prefer solid consumption when the product in question is highly self-relevant, when the consumer exists in a community of singularized as opposed to commoditized relationships, and where it is difficult to transfer goods among individuals. We depict these and other proposed

1 We recommend reading this paper together with Bardhi, Eckhard, and Arnould (2012). Together, these papers translate Zygmunt Bauman's concept of liquidity into the consumer realm.

antecedents of the preference for solid (vs. liquid) consumption identified in BE on the top right and left sectors of figure 1, respectively.

HOW DO INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AFFECT SOLID OWNERSHIP TENDENCIES?

As illustrated in figure 1, a portrait of the solid ownership-focused consumer begins to emerge from BE. This portrait is largely characterized in relational terms (e.g., in terms of consumers' relationships to each other or to the product), with less emphasis on the consumers' innate characteristics. However, recent research by Aspara and Wittkowski (2019) proposes that such considerations may be meaningful antecedents of tendencies toward solid ownership. In a paper published in the *Journal of Consumer Research* in 2019, these authors analyzed over 30,000 car registrations filed by Finnish men. They aligned that data with personal information collected by the Finnish government and, most centrally to their work, cognitive test results from the Finnish Defense Forces. Controlling for age, income, and car attributes, the authors found that cognitive test performance was positively associated with more liquid forms of consumption (i.e., co-owning and leasing).[2]

One possible explanation is that the link between cognitive test performance and propensities toward some forms of liquid consumption may be rooted in the nature of many commercial "sharing" systems, such as those involved in the study. To the extent that these systems represent a form of cooperation, participation may reflect an acceptance of complex ordering and social interaction that is more fluent for some consumers than others. It may also be that correlates of cognitive test performance are related to results: the authors also find that individuals who select co-ownership and leasing over sole ownership have higher trust in people, more robust trust in institutions, higher financial standing, and stronger propensity to save. In short, leasing or co-ownership in the Finnish market could be expected to be more popular among individuals with more ability to first get favorable credit terms, second be admitted to co-ownership systems, and last, absorb risks associated with the loss of control given up with ownership.

We may also ask precisely what cognitive tests of the type used in this paper actually capture. For example, the Raven Advanced Progressive Matrices have been widely criticized as suspect measures of "intelligence," per se, as have standardized intelligence quotient tests in general (Hampshire et al. 2012). Critics contend that these measures do not capture intelligence as a whole, but rather, ease of conformity to dominant Western thought modes. Given that social trust mediates the relationship between cognitive test performance and the preference for liquid consumption in Aspara and Wittkowski's (2019) paper, it may be that it is not intelligence in general that explains a lower tendency toward solid consumption (here, sole ownership), but rather, a comfort with the general rules and systems that are necessary to reduce risk in still-novel access arrangements. Though the exact constructs at play thus remain debatable, we depict these proposed characteristics of liquid owners as antecedents on the top left portion of figure 1 and will return to the types of research questions that this paper may prompt at the close of the curation.

DOES THE SOLIDITY OF THE CURRENCY USED FOR PURCHASE AFFECT THE PERCEIVED SOLIDITY OF OWNERSHIP?

Building on the discussion of one's decision to rent versus buy a car, could the relative solidity (vs. liquidity) of the funds used to make that purchase subsequently impact ownership perceptions? As a vast literature points out, ownership may be as much a psychological experience as an objective characteristic of consumption. From a consumer perspective, then, we can also ask about the factors that influence peoples' *sense* of a good as solidly owned. Shah et al. (2016) address this question by considering both (in BE terms) the solidity or liquidity of payment forms (i.e., cash is more solid, mobile, or credit payment more liquid) and the perceived solidity of post-transaction ownership as evidenced in emotional attachment, commitment to a firm, and repeat purchase. Taken together, increased pain of payment, as typically associated with cash rather than debit or credit card purchases, is shown to increase consumers' emotional ties to both their purchases and the organizations that provided them.

This finding warrants future inquiry on multiple perspectives. First, as the authors discuss, past research suggests that high pain of payment may decrease likelihood to acquire at all (Feinberg 1986; Raghubir and Srivastava 2008)—that is, solid transaction modes (e.g., cash payments) may decrease ownership tendencies. However, Shah et al.'s research suggests that focusing only on this initial effect may blind us to the longer-term benefits of comparatively solid, higher-pain payment modes. In short, while pain of payment may lower ownership likelihood for a given good, once overcome, the same pain may positively carryover to affect consumers' relationship to the organization; such that, if the payment mode is solid, the relationship with the organization may become more solid as well.

Second, as the authors note, there may be a connection between more liquid payment trends and more liquid

2 However, cognitive test performance was not significantly related to car borrowing, which would arguably represent the most liquid form of consumption.

goods, assortments, and relationships with firms. Thus, the more we rely on liquid payment, the more ephemeral our relationships with our goods and favored brands may become. Such an effect is of considerable theoretical importance, as it suggests a spreading effect of liquidity. In addition, it suggests an important caveat to recommendations that firms continually lower "friction" in the consumer experience (Chatterjee and Rose 2012). It is possible that pain-free payment is ideal for firms that continually offer novel assortments and/or have a steady supply of new consumers. However, it is also possible that a slightly more solid payment style could be better-aligned to firms with slower-moving goods and/or a greater reliance on repeat customers. By noting these possibilities, this paper identifies both an antecedent of solid ownership perceptions and a consequence of solid ownership. Accordingly, its implications are depicted in both the top and bottom of figure 1.

WHAT ARE THE INTRAPERSONAL CONSEQUENCES OF OWNERSHIP?

If the aforementioned car driver chose to rent (vs. buy) their vehicle, would they miss out on some valuable means of building their "extended self" (Belk 1988) by opting out of solid ownership? In fact, the answer may be no. Rather, choosing liquid consumption may offer distinct benefits for identity, as suggested by Weiss and Johar (2016). In a 2013 paper published in the *Journal of Consumer Research*, Weiss and Johar showed that individuals tend to categorize owned goods as part of the self, whereas they categorize unowned goods as "not-self," an effect they refer to as "egocentric categorization." As a result of egocentric categorization, items that consumers own are assimilated to their own traits. In their 2016 follow-up paper, Weiss and Johar explore the bidirectionality of this relationship. That is, they ask: do the products we own shape how we see ourselves, just as how we see ourselves shapes perceptions of the products we own? They find that yes, "consumers judge themselves in assimilation to traits and abilities of products they own, but in contrast from traits and abilities of products they are exposed to but do not own" (p. 916). For example, a clever experiment had participants interact with a coffee mug that was pretested to be either tall or short. Those given a new coffee mug and told they owned it (vs. they did not) subsequently felt taller if the coffee mug was "tall" and shorter if the coffee mug was "short."

Relevant to BE's framework, this effect emerged even when participants knew they would only own the coffee mug temporarily (i.e., in a liquid consumption format), as long as they experienced high levels of "felt ownership." Thus, Weiss and Johar (2016) illustrate one reason why even the mere feeling of solid ownership can create problematic personal consequences. Ownership contributes to our self-perception, and in so doing, constrains our ability to redefine ourselves. By contrast, more liquid forms of consumption may allow us some latitude in identity formation. In addition to the benefits noted in BE, consumers in the process of exploring various aspects of identity as they progress toward adulthood may be able to leverage liquid consumption to enjoy the developmental process of exploration without imposing identity constraints. We list these intrapersonal consequences of ownership on the figure's lower right and will also discuss the research questions that this paper cues further below.

WHAT ARE THE INTERPERSONAL CONSEQUENCES OF OWNERSHIP?

Drawing from the work noted above, one might contend that, although buying (vs. renting or sharing) a car may impose certain constraints on one's identity (Weiss and Johar 2016), these are consequences solely born by the driver, and likely of limited harm. However, research by Kirk, Peck, and Swain (2018) suggests that solid consumption may have further reaching, and potentially more precarious ramifications. These authors find that a strong sense that something is "mine" (i.e., psychological ownership) renders consumers more susceptible to concerns about others "infringing" on their "territory" (i.e., their property). As a result, they play defense. Territorial behaviors emerge, which can range from the defensive (e.g., pulling an item closer to the self) to the punitive (e.g., leaving smaller tips, direct retaliation, or the development of negative attitudes about the infringer). Individuals high in narcissism are particularly prone to believing they have "marked their territory" a priori, and thus, they are particularly prone to these negative interpersonal reactions. Interestingly, related work in organizational behavior finds a similar effect in the workplace, but also notes that territorialism is directly related to one's sense of positivity toward the psychologically owned good and that people who behave territorially are perceived as low in power and sub-par in performance (Brown and Zhu 2016). Translated to marketing, this suggests that the more desirable a good, the higher likelihood that its ownership may lead to interpersonal damage.

Taken together, these papers suggest that solid consumption may not only lock consumers in to a given identity, it may divide them. If this is the case, the erosion of consumers' preference for traditional ownership may bode well for consumers' relationships and communities. These consequences of ownership are also listed on the lower right of figure 1.

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF OWNERSHIP FOR MARKETERS?

Having cited research showing that traditional forms of ownership (i.e., solid consumption) can have negative consequences for the self and the broader social collective, a practical question becomes whether marketers should maintain their focus on driving customers toward ownership. As previously discussed, Shah et al. (2016) argue that perceptions of solid ownership, at least, can benefit marketers in the form of enhanced loyalty. By contrast, Harding et al. (2019) offer an explanation for why, perhaps, even marketers might consider pulling back on pushing consumers to buy.

Focusing specifically on the category of "skill-based goods," the authors show that those who buy (vs. rent) look to other product owners as a reference group when determining how to interact with their new product. As owners are generally seen as more-skilled than renters, owner–owner comparison raises expectations about the work necessary to master the new product. These daunting expectations lower commitment to use the product, generate weaker intentions to reacquire either the same or associated goods, and prompt less engagement on social media, relative to similar individuals who consume via rental and therefore base their expectations on the inferred expertise of other renters, which is presumed to be lower. For example, individuals told that they "owned" an online game for a month anticipated longer time to master the game, were less committed to playing the game, were less willing-to-pay to reacquire the game, and had marginally lower reacquisition intent than people told that they "rented" the same online game for a month.

If this is the case, when the focal product is skill based, marketers may need to undertake a major shift in their thinking. Prompting solid ownership may weaken commitment to engage with the product, whereas liquid forms of consumption (e.g., rental) leave consumers more open-minded and optimistic about the amount of learning they will need to do, promoting engagement and positive word of mouth. Thus, Harding et al. (2019) suggest a moderating effect for the Shah et al. (2016) finding: while solidity may benefit marketers of non-skill-based products, it may damage the efforts of those who market skill-based goods. We depict this interaction in the bottom portion of figure 1.

OPEN QUESTIONS FOR ADVANCING A RESEARCH AGENDA ON OWNERSHIP

As mentioned at the beginning of this curation, despite the fact that ownership has long been a part of consumer behavior research, these new papers open the door to a wide range of new research questions—many of which may, in turn, warrant further programs of qualitative, experimental, and methodological work. To inspire such efforts, we close with a discussion of research questions that arise with regard to the antecedents and consequences of ownership in the present economy, framed within the BE framework and inspired by the full set of curated papers. These research questions are shown in italics and enclosed in dotted-line boxes in figure 1, connected by dotted arrows to the curated papers on which they most directly build.

Antecedents

Research question 1: How do intrinsic and individual difference factors combine with external factors in predicting solid ownership tendencies? Many popular press reports anchor their explanation for the turn away from solid ownership in psychographics, arguing that Millennials and subsequent generations eschew ownership due to preferences or values, implicating factors like a drive for flexibility or strong present-bias (Maheshwari 2019; Reyes-Velarde 2017). We could first ask how Aspara and Wittkowski's (2019) work contributes to this conversation, which may be dependent on the extent that intelligence and social trust are correlated with other demographic and psychographic characteristics—what correlated constellations of intrinsic factors might be driving such tendencies? How variable are their effects? At the same time, we may see that anecdotal arguments highlight extrinsic forces that decrease solid ownership: a tight housing market, economic recession, uncertainty about the future, and the oppressive nature of student loan debt. More recently, concerns about widespread disease contagion, as experienced in the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis, might also complicate the relationship between individual differences and sharing or ownership behavior. Even if a person is highly intelligent and generally trusts others, will the fear of real contagion dissuade them from liquid consumption? Building on the work of Shah et al. (2016), we might also infer that to the extent that individuals rely more on credit and/or remote payment forms rather than high pain-of-payment methods (e.g., cash) during household or macro-economic crises, we might also see weakened senses of solid ownership over goods. Thus, we find a wide-open territory for research that builds on Aspara and Wittkowski (2019) as well as on Shah et al. (2016): how do extrinsic and intrinsic factors interact with one another in determining ownership (vs. access) tendencies and experiences?

Research question 2: How does culture shape experiences of ownership? Are some ideologies and cultures simply more (vs. less) ownership-focused than others, such that typical antecedents of ownership preferences lead individuals to behave differently? For example, individuals in more collectivistic cultures might feel more motivated to share a highly self-relevant good with others as a means of building relationships (Hofstede 2001), particularly if it were acquired via painful costs (Shah et al. 2016). This might in turn weaken their own sense of personal ownership. However, this effect would not be expected to emerge in cultures that value independence, where self-relevance is linked to a preference for solid ownership (BE). Alternately, cultures that tend to foster high levels of social trust may already take liquid consumption as a default (following Aspara and Wittkowski 2019). If true, what might induce them to shift toward solid ownership? How may ownership antecedents operate differently across cultures?

Research question 3: How does payment or product liquidity affect consumers' price perceptions? Should we be altering our measurements to "willingness to consume?" Consumer research has placed a great deal of stock in willingness to pay to acquire, which implies that consumers' interest in taking ownership of a good or selling a good to others is an accurate reflection of their marketplace behavior (Homburg, Koschate, and Hoyer 2005). The work by Shah et al. (2016) suggests that we may derive very different estimates both in terms of willingness to pay and willingness to accept depending on the solidity or liquidity of our payment or receipt mode. As more liquid, nonownership-based paths to consumption proliferate, we may be wise to increasingly consider nonownership-based willingness to pay. How do consumers estimate and respond to such prices? Should we be asking about consumers' willingness to pay to consume (regardless of ownership), rather than to buy—and if so, how will these metrics behave, what will they predict, and how can the best be employed by marketers?

Research question 4: What are the roles of group and network characteristics in moderating the effects of ownership tendency antecedents? The papers in this curation primarily focus on individuals as potential owners. However, research affirms strong dyadic and group-level influences on consumption choices (Ariely and Levav 2000; Gorlin and Dhar 2012) and the information systems' work has established the importance of network externalities in consumer sharing systems for liquid goods (Asvanund et al. 2004). Furthermore, consumer networks themselves can take on characteristics that are liquid as opposed to solid; while some networks are enduring and rooted in materiality, others are ephemeral and dematerialized (e.g., online communities). Thus, we may consider solidity and liquidity throughout groups and networks, not only with regard to product and consumption style but also in terms of the nature of network ties across multiple dimensions (e.g., time, materiality, and access). How should marketing models change to capture the solidity or liquidity of network effects and characteristics on ownership or access behaviors and experiences, and of consumers' roles in them?

Consequences

Research question 5: Are we overemphasizing the relationships between ownership and identity, theoretically and practically? BE notes that some have critiqued the relevance given to the assumption that people construct their identity via utility-maximizing consumption (Askegaard and Linnet 2011). These arguments suggest that the scaled measures, reliance on cognitive processing explanations and assumptions that consumption is goal-directed, typified in Weiss and Johar's (2013, 2016) work, force consumers to connect their identities to the focal product in ways they would not in their lived experience. These critics argue that consumer identity may be far more actively and playfully developed in relation to context, culture, communities or tribes, and practices. What, then, is the relative contribution of individual, goal-directed cognition in identity construction, particularly as related to ownership?

Furthermore, we may ask how practically valuable it is for marketers to promote ownership solidity and its resulting identify formation. There are, in fact, reasons that marketers may benefit from fluid identities: lower identity strength may create fewer identity-threat experiences, encourage variety-seeking, or create openness to change. In such cases, promoting liquidity may be optimal, but particularly for consumers undergoing life transitions or developmental phases, the firmer identity afforded by solid ownership [as discussed by Weiss and Johar (2016)] may be the bedrock of secure relationships with brands. How might our efforts to help consumers to build new identities during transitions affect the relationship between other antecedents of ownership preferences and consumers' choices?

Research question 6: On the whole, is ownership or access better for consumers? BE's framework suggests that the relationship between liquid consumption and (relative) financial stress may be both a blessing and a curse. While liquid consumption (e.g., renting a handbag) may make access possible that would be prohibitively expensive otherwise, repeatedly paying for such affordances may have long-term negative financial consequences and undermine wealth accumulation. Furthermore, Kirk et al.'s (2018) insights about territorialism suggest that ownership may eventually isolate consumers from each other, and Harding et al.'s (2019) work implies that ownership may lead us to feel disconnected from our products in some categories. Taken together, we might guess that owning would therefore have offsetting effects on overall well-being: decreasing financial scarcity in the long term and both increasing social scarcity and altering our connection to our goods. What is the relative net effect of ownership on well-being, in a world where other consumptions are available?

Research question 7: Will solid ownership become more or less integral in interpersonal prosocial acts? Research confirms that experiential purchases, which are often more liquid than solid, frequently make people happier, make for better gifts, and can signal luxury more effectively than their more traditional material counterparts (Van Boven and Gilovich 2003; Chan and Mogilner 2017; Eckhardt, Belk, and Wilson 2015). This suggests that access-based gifts may begin to take priority over ownership-based gifts. At the same time, BE argues for a link between liquidity and both commoditization and low self-relevance, neither of which are desirable in a gift-giving context. Further ownership can create interpersonal conflict (Kirk et al. 2018), suggesting that the transfer of ownership may also translate into an imposition of boundaries. These papers thus argue for the idea that meaningful interpersonal prosociality will lean on the transfer of ownership. Will the transfer of ownership still be prioritized in gifts and prosocial settings, or might liquid transfer create fewer negative consequences?

Research question 8: As consumption becomes more liquid, will we become more or less territorial? Recent work has shown that psychological ownership is weaker for digital (i.e., liquid) versus material (i.e., solid) goods (Atasoy and Morewedge 2018). Kirk et al.'s (2018) work suggests that if this is true, we should feel less territorial about goods we only access than those we own. By contrast, Harding et al. (2019) would suggest that we are less committed to our owned than our accessed goods, which might suggest higher levels of concern about infringement on accessed as opposed to owned products. This conflict should lead us to ask: are we are less likely to object to our neighbor's "poaching" of our goods in categories strongly associated with liquid consumption, such as music and movies, or does our stronger commitment to these easy, liquid forms of access make us even more defensive of our goods?

Though it may seem to some that the shift away from solid ownership was inevitable given technological and economic changes, when viewed through the lens of many widely held findings in consumer behavior, it is, in fact, quite a revolutionary idea. Indeed, for many, ownership will always constitute a primary goal of life. However, to the extent and in the ways that this may change, consumer researchers have both a strong basis of research and the appropriate tools and theories to take the lead in understanding this shift. We hope that this curation helps to spark enthusiasm, and drive shared ownership, of this endeavor.

REFERENCES

Aspara, Jaako and Kristina Wittkowski (2019), "Sharing-Dominant Logic? Quantifying the Association between Consumer Intelligence and Choice of Social Access Modes," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 46 (2), 201–22.

Asvanund, Atip, Karen Clay, Ramayya Krishnan, and Michael D. Smith (2004), "An Empirical Analysis of Network Externalities in Peer-to-Peer Music-Sharing Networks," *Information Systems Research*, 15 (2), 155–74.

Ariely, Dan and Jonathan Levav (2000), "Sequential Choice in Group Settings: Taking the Road Less Traveled and Less Enjoyed," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27 (3), 279–90.

Askegaard, Søren and Jeppe Linnet (2011), "Towards an epistemology of consumer culture theory Phenomenology and the context of context," *Marketing Theory,* 11, 381–404.

Atasoy, Ozgun and Carey K. Morewedge (2018), "Digital Goods Are Valued Less than Digital Goods," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 44 (6), 1343–57.

Bardhi, Fleura, Giana M. Eckhardt, J., and Eric Arnould (2012), "Liquid relationship to possessions," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39 (3) (10), 510–29.

Bardhi, Fleura and Giana M. Eckhardt (2017), "Liquid Consumption," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 44 (3), 582–97.

Belk, Russell (1988), "Possessions and the Extended Self," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15 (2), 139–68.

Boniface, Elisabeth Anne (2019), "The Changing Consumer behind Rent the Runway's Success," Commercenext.com, https://commercenext.com/the-changing-consumer-behind-rent-the-runways-success/.

Brown, Graham and Helena Zhu (2016), "My Workspace, Not Yours': The Impact of Psychological Ownership and Territoriality in Organizations," *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 48 (December), 54–64.

Chan, Cindy and Cassie Mogilner (2017), "Experiential Gifts Foster Stronger Social Relationships than Material Gifts," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 43 (6), 913–31.

Eckhardt, Giana M., Russell W. Belk, A. J., and Jonathan Wilson (2015), "The rise of inconspicuous consumption," *Journal of Marketing Management,* 31 (7-8), 807.

Chatterjee, Promothesh and Randall, L. Rose (2012), "Do Payment Mechanisms Change the Way Consumers Perceive Products?," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 38 (6), 1129–39.

Feinberg, Richard A. (1986), "Credit Cards as Spending Facilitating Stimuli: A Conditioning Interpretation," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13 (3), 348–80.

Gorlin, Margarita and Ravi Dhar (2012), "Bridging the Gap between Joint and Individual Decisions: Deconstructing Preferences in Relationships," *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 22 (3), 320–3.

Hampshire, Roger R., Beth L. Highfield, Beth L. Parkin, and Adrian M. Owen (2012), "Fractionating Human Intelligence," *Neuron*, 76 (6), 1225–37.

Harding, R., Diogo Hildebrand Dustin, Thomas Kramer, and Jannine D. Lasaleta (2019), "The Impact of Acquisition Mode on Expected Speed of Product Mastery and Subsequent Consumer Behavior," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 46 (1), 140–58.

Homburg, Christian, Nicole Koschate, and Wayne Hoyer (2005), "Do Satisfied Customers Really Pay More? A Study of the Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Willingness to Pay," *Journal of Marketing*, 69 (2), 84–96.

Hofstede, Geert (2001), *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, and Organizations across Nations*, 2nd edition, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Kirk, Colleen P., Joann Peck, and Scott D. Swain (2018), "Property Lines in the Mind: Consumers' Psychological Ownership and Their Territorial Responses," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 45 (1), 148–68.

Maheshwari, Sapna (2019), "They See It. They Like It. They Want It. They Rent It," *New York Times*, June 8, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/08/style/rent-subscription-clothing-furniture.html?searchResultPosition=2.

Morrin, Maureen and Jacob Jacoby (2015), *Consumer Psychology. International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences,* Vol. 4, Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Perzanowski, Aaron and Jason Schultz (2017), *The End of Ownership: Personal Property in the Digital Economy*, Boston: MIT Press.

Raghubir, Priya and Joydeep Srivastava (2008), "Monopoly money: The effect of payment coupling and form on

spending behavior," *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 14 (3), 213–25.
Reyes-Velarde, Alejandra (2017), "As Millennials Embrance Renting over Owning—Even Clothes—Stores are Taking Notice." *Los Angeles Times*, December 20, https://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-retail-rentals-20171220-story.html.
Shah, Avni M., Noah Eisenkraft, James R. Bettman, and Tanya L. Chartrand (2016), "Paper or Plastic?": How We Pay Influences Post-Transaction Connection," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 42 (5), 688–708.
Thomas, Dana (2019), *Fashionopolis: The Price of Fast Fashion and the Future of Clothes*, New York: Penguin.
Van Boven, Leaf and Thomas Gilovich (2003), "To do or to have? that is the question," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 85 (6) (12), 1193–202.
Weiss, Liad and Gita V. Johar (2013), "Egocentric Categorization and Product Judgment: Seeing Your Traits in What You Own (and Their opposite in What You Don't)," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40 (1), 185–201.
Weiss, Liad and Gita Venkataramani Johar (2016), "Products as Self-Evaluation Standards: When Owned and Unowned Products Have opposite Effects on Self-Judgment," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 42 (6), 915–30.
Weliver, David (2019), "Renting is Not Wasted Money: Why You Shouldn't Be in a Rush to Buy a Home," Moneyunder30, https://www.moneyunder30.com/renting-is-not-wasted-money.

ARTICLES IN CURATION

Liquid Consumption

Fleura Bardhi and Giana M. Eckhardt

DOI: 10.1093/jcr/ucx050
Volume 44, Issue 3, October 2017

This article introduces a new dimension of consumption as liquid or solid. Liquid consumption is defined as ephemeral, access based, and dematerialized, while solid consumption is defined as enduring, ownership based, and material. Liquid and solid consumption are conceptualized as existing on a spectrum, with four conditions leading to consumption being liquid, solid, or a combination of the two: relevance to the self, the nature of social relationships, accessibility to mobility networks, and type of precarity experienced. Liquid consumption is needed to explain behavior within digital contexts, in access-based consumption, and in conditions of global mobility. It highlights a consumption orientation around values of flexibility, adaptability, fluidity, lightness, detachment, and speed. Implications of liquid consumption are discussed for the domains of attachment and appropriation; the importance of use value; materialism; brand relationships and communities; identity; prosumption and the prosumer; and big data, quantification of the self, and surveillance. Lastly, managing the challenges of liquid consumption and its effect on consumer welfare are explored.

Sharing-Dominant Logic? Quantifying the Association between Consumer Intelligence and Choice of Social Access Modes

Jaakko Aspara and Kristina Wittkowski

DOI: 10.1093/jcr/ucy074
Volume 46, Issue 2, August 2019

With sharing economy and access-based consumption, consumers increasingly access goods through social access modes other than private ownership—such as co-ownership, leasing, or borrowing. Prior research focuses on consumers' attitudinal motivations and consumption-cultural use experiences pertaining to such social exchange–based access modes. In so doing, prior research has overlooked the influence that consumers' fundamental, even biologically shaped, cognitive traits may have on their choice of access modes. To fill this research gap, this study analyzes a data set of more than 30,000 new car registrations by male consumers in Finland, including cognitive test data from the Finnish Defense Forces and covariates from other governmental sources. The field data suggests that consumers' intelligence scores and their choice to co-own and lease their cars are positively associated. Econometric evidence further suggests that the association between intelligence and choice of social exchange–based access modes can be explained by intelligent consumers' higher social trust in people and institutions, as well as two circumstantial mechanisms: their financial standing and tendency to seek savings. The findings from the field data are supported by an additional survey study ($n = 460$). Implications for the evolution of markets and consumption, as well as human intelligence and cooperation, are discussed.

"Paper or Plastic?": How We Pay Influences Post-Transaction Connection

Avni M. Shah, Noah Eisenkraft, James R. Bettman, and Tanya L. Chartrand

DOI: 10.1093/jcr/ucv056
Volume 42, Issue 5, February 2016

Does the way that individuals pay for a good or service influence the amount of connection they feel after the purchase has occurred? Employing a multi-method approach across four studies, individuals who pay using a relatively more painful form of payment (e.g., cash or check) increase their post-transaction connection to the product they purchased and/or the organization their purchase supports in comparison to those who pay with less painful forms of payment (e.g., debit or credit card). Specifically, individuals who pay with more painful forms of payment increase their emotional attachment to a product, decrease their commitment to nonchosen alternatives, are more likely to publicly signal their commitment to an organization, and are more likely to make a repeat transaction. Moreover, the form of payment influences post-transaction connection even when the objective monetary cost remains constant and when the psychological cost is indirect (i.e., donating someone else's money). Increasing the psychological pain of payment appears to have beneficial consequences with respect to increasing downstream product and brand connection.

Products as Self-Evaluation Standards: When Owned and Unowned Products Have Opposite Effects on Self-Judgment

Liad Weiss and Gita Venkataramani Johar

DOI: 10.1093/jcr/ucv097
Volume 42, Issue 6, April 2016

Consumers frequently evaluate their own traits before making consumption decisions (e.g., "Am I thin enough for skinny jeans?"). The outcome of these self-evaluations depends on the standard consumers use and on whether they evaluate "self" in assimilation or contrast to that standard. Previous self-judgment research has focused on self-standards that arise from social aspects of the environment including people and groups. We propose that self-judgment is sometimes made relative to other standards that originate from different aspects of the environment, namely material objects, including products and goods. Two experiments demonstrate that consumers classify products they own as "self" and products they do not own as "not-self." Consequently, consumers judge their own physical and personal traits (e.g., height, sincerity) in assimilation to traits of products they own, but in contrast to traits of products they do not own, even following imposed ownership, when a person acquires an object they may not have chosen themselves. Extending this paradigm, experiment 3 shows that simply wearing products can evoke ephemeral felt ownership, leading to consumers taking on product traits. We discuss implications for modern consumers, who often acquire objects inadvertently through gifts and are frequently exposed to products they do not own through advertisements.

Property Lines in the Mind: Consumers' Psychological Ownership and Their Territorial Responses

Colleen P. Kirk, Joann Peck, and Scott D. Swain

DOI: 10.1093/jcr/ucx111
Volume 45, Issue 1, June 2018

Psychological ownership, or the feeling that something is *mine*, has garnered growing attention in marketing. While previous work focuses on the positive aspects of psychological ownership, this research draws attention to the darker side of psychological ownership—territorial behavior. Results of five experimental studies demonstrate that when consumers feel psychological ownership of a target, they are prone to perceptions of infringement and subsequent territorial responses when they infer that another individual feels ownership of the same target. Potential infringers are held less accountable when they acknowledge ownership prior to engaging in otherwise threatening behaviors, and when they could not be expected to know that a target is owned, as it was not clearly marked. In addition, high narcissists are subject to a psychological ownership metaperception bias, and are thus more apt than low narcissists to perceive infringement. A multitude of territorial responses are documented for both tangible (coffee, sweater, chair, pizza) and intangible (a design) targets of ownership. Further, consumers infer the psychological ownership of others from signals of the antecedents of psychological ownership: control, investment of self, and intimate knowledge. Theoretical implications for territoriality and psychological ownership are discussed, along with managerial implications and areas for future research.

The Impact of Acquisition Mode on Expected Speed of Product Mastery and Subsequent Consumer Behavior

R. Dustin Harding, Diogo Hildebrand, Thomas Kramer, and Jannine D. Lasaleta

DOI: 10.1093/jcr/ucy063
Volume 46, Issue 1, June 2019

Consumers can obtain skill-based products through a variety of acquisition modes, such as purchase or rental. Despite the rise of nonpurchase acquisition modes, surprisingly little research has explored the effects of differential acquisition modes on consumer behavior. This research begins to fill this gap in the literature by examining the effect of acquisition mode on the expected time necessary to master newly adopted skill-based products and the downstream consequences for consumers and marketers. Results of four experiments and a field study show that purchasing, versus renting, products requiring skill-based learning increases the amount of time consumers expect to be required to master them. Further, the differences in speed of product mastery, in turn, impact subsequent consumer behavior via differential levels of product use commitment.