

Consuming Technocultures: An Extended JCR Curation

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SIGNIFICANT TECHNOLOGIES AND WEBS

Almost 50 years ago, the American anthropologist [Geertz \(1973\)](#) famously described culture as the “webs of significance” in which human beings are suspended, and which we ourselves have spun (5). Today, these webs are worldwide and technological. Through cell phones and facial recognition software, credit ratings, on-line banking, e-government, and social media, these interwoven webs of social, institutional, and economic significance affect every aspect of our lives. We continue to spin technological webs into increasingly sophisticated forms, to weave devices of information and communication into every aspect of our lives, and to further entangle ourselves in their multifarious snares.

Consumer researchers have investigated technology consumption in its various manifestations—for example, looking at the multiple factors influencing whether or not consumers are ready to adopt technology ([Parasuraman 2000](#)). For these purposes, technology has often been defined as the complex, engineered contraptions that characterize so much of the consumption in our contemporary society—things like laptop computers, web applications, and mobile phones. Influential philosophers and scholars of technology such as [Heidegger \(1954\)](#), [Ellul \(1964\)](#), and [Mumford \(1967\)](#) have tended to associate technology with

the efficiency-driven techniques (or “techne”) and machines at work in a society. However, technology in its anthropological sense is much wider. Archaeologists find that human beings have been evolving along with our tools for at least the past 2.6 million years ([Semaw et al. 2003](#)). For this reason, it is almost impossible “to imagine human beings as pretechnological” ([Nye 2006](#), 5). From an anthropologist’s point of view, tool making and increasing technology development are and have long been an essential part of being hominid, and from our contemporary perspective they are certainly a key part of being a consumer. Making and using ever more sophisticated things and assemblages of symbol-things is a hallmark element of consumer culture and its consumers, respectively.

Yet something new is currently happening, something previously unseen and unforeseen. More and more, our technological creations are reflecting us, connecting us, shaped like us, shaping us, replacing us, controlling us. They are increasingly impacting so many different aspects of our existence that they seem, qualitatively, to be a new force in our lives, our cultures, and our world. Alongside the tools themselves, increasingly potent, diverse, persuasive, and commercial beliefs and practices suffuse our use of them. Beyond its interaction with their function as interactive objects, contemporary technology consumption also interacts with human experience on almost every level in a complex cultural embedding that further ensnarls us in more technology consumption. This embedding of technology results in experiences that scholars of cultural studies and science and technology studies have long been calling *technocultural* ([Penley and Ross 1991](#)).

TECHNOCULTURES DEFINED

Citing the cultural critic [Postman \(1992\)](#), [Mick and Fournier \(1998\)](#) assert that the impact of “technoculture is irrefutable and pervasive” (123). If we consider cultures to be the plenitudinous distinct and intersecting networks and structures of meaning-making and meaningful action in which our lives are suspended, it becomes readily apparent

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that human society is accompanying and accommodating these technologies with a multitude of different, overlapping, and sometimes even conflicting cultures. Consumer culture is not a singular or stable thing but a complex mosaic of “relations between ways of life and market-mediated resources” (Arnould and Thompson 2005, 869), and it includes and intersects with a variety of other relational forms aside from, but overlapping, technology. We can layer onto the rich, fast, and deep communications of technologies ethnic cultures (Askegaard, Arnould, and Kjeldgaard 2005), political cultures (Zhao and Belk 2008), shared social identities and leisure interests (Muniz and O’Guinn 2001), and many other cultural forms and foci. Like bacteria in swamp water, they constantly interact, merge, mate, and battle with each other as they play out on social stages ranging from the very large to the very small.

On these various stages, technologies are important actors, introducing into consumers’ contemporary life plots and devices thick with new meaning and action. The consumption of contemporary technologies such as those relating to information and communication is continually altering what people can do and how they can do it, constantly interacting with and impacting a range of other social forms to create what are, ostensibly, new forms of culture. This article defines technocultural consumption as follows. Technocultures are the various identities, practices, values, rituals, hierarchies, and other sources and structures of meanings that are influenced, created by, or expressed through technology consumption. Selfies, emojis, avatars, memes, GIFs, and augmented reality are contemporary sources of consumer meaning (Ge and Gretzel 2018; Li, Chan, and Kim 2019), as are message streaks, Facebook FOMO, Instafame, unfriending, and retweets. Technocultural consumption is the inflection of consumers’ experiences by technologies as well as the injection of consumer desire and intent into the development of sophisticated devices, their service logics, and their services. Technologies inspire dynamic new vocabularies, practices, self-presentations, and forms of connection. Our consumption is thus not limited merely to the material goods and services we associate with modern technology. When we rate an Amazon review, buy a weapon in the *Overwatch* video game, refuse to take our mobile phone on vacation, or bemusedly deign to answer the survey questions on an online dating site such as OkCupid, we are, inevitably, also consuming and co-creating technocultures.

UNDERSTANDING TECHNOCULTURAL CONSUMPTION

The five articles chosen for this curation represent only a local scraping off of an exciting intellectual subfield of technocultural exploration that ranges across the fields of history, psychology, communication, media studies, organization

science, education, science and technology studies, sociology, anthropology, the digital humanities, and a number of other fields. Because technology is changing so quickly, and these changes are in turn transforming so many different aspects of the human experience, it is unsurprising that almost every academic field has grown its own branch devoted to exploring them. In consumer research, there is a burgeoning literature stretching back over two decades and encompassing an impressive range of different authors and journals from around the world.

Although this narrative will focus on the five *Journal of Consumer Research* articles that constitute this curation, it also will attempt to convey some of the highlights of a range of other published and influential consumer research in the area. These mentions also tend to lean more heavily on work published in *JCR*, but I acknowledge from the outset that high-quality work in the area is distributed among many journals from around the world that also publish high-quality consumer research.

HISTORICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS

In the 1990s, consumer researchers joined their colleagues in the social sciences in recognizing the importance of the emerging revolutions in information and communication technologies. Extending Baudrillardian scholar Poster’s (1995) early and critical conceptions of “cyberdemocracy” into the realm of consumer culture, Firat and Venkatesh (1995) conceptualized the experiencing of new technologies as one in which media spectacles become intensified, power hierarchies become unraveled, cultural and social spaces fragment, and consumers are empowered in various ways (253). Although they modestly cast their postmodern insights as “speculative” (ibid.), those conceptions have nonetheless proven prophetic. Their powerful framing of technology consumption from critical, celebratory, and liberatory perspectives has also been extremely influential on the field. Without a doubt, Firat and Venkatesh (1995) set the stage for consumer researchers’ ongoing conceptual development and empirical exploration of technoculture.

Mick and Fournier’s (1998) “Paradoxes of Technology: Consumer Cognizance, Emotions, and Coping Strategies” (vol. 25, issue 2) was a watershed moment in our conception of technocultural consumption. Part of a wide-ranging MSI-sponsored research project, the article, included in this curation, presents us with an expansive theorization of technology consumption that cuts across fields of history, philosophy, psychology, and marketing science. The study draws together and extends classic and contemporary technology scholars in order to recognize the important role that technology has played in Western history and American society. Building on the long-standing cultural

disposition to see technologies as a combination of utopian and dystopian tendencies, and taking a cue from [Firat and Venkatesh's \(1995\)](#) combined critical-liberatory perspectives, [Mick and Fournier \(1998\)](#) proceed to conceptualize technology consumption as a “paradox” resulting from the lack of “faith in progress through science” and the “unintended consequences” of technological development in “a postmodern age” (124). They elaborate on the general notion that technology consumption is viewed as a “double-edged sword” (128) by detailing and illustrating eight specific paradoxes that imbue the contemporary consumption of technology, such as freedom/enslavement and control/chaos. As their figure 1 diagram illustrates, [Mick and Fournier \(1998\)](#) extend their cultural and historical theorizing into the world of psychology. The model invokes psychological “coping strategies” that individual consumers experience in relation to the stresses, ambivalences, and conflicts of contemporary technocultures (126). The article’s goal was to be able to explain consumer thought and action across diverse technology consumption situations and using multiple paradigms. It certainly succeeded in the latter.

Later, consumer researchers added detail to these important beginnings. In a study of the mythologies of the natural health market, [Thompson \(2004\)](#) unpacked the cultural and ideological bases of three natural health print advertisements. The article tracked the presence of a paradoxical cultural myth in which the battle between technology and culture was waged through a Romantic ethos that viewed technology as a source of “monstrous” and unnatural outcomes, and a Gnostic one that viewed it as a magical path to the attainment of a new “earthly paradise” (165).

Adding complexity to Mick and Fournier and Thompson’s notions, the idea of “technology/ideology” ([Kozinets 2008](#)) locates a contradiction-activated semiotic ideological structure underlying both the paradox notion of [Mick and Fournier \(1998\)](#) and the mythological binaries of [Thompson's \(2004\)](#) cultural analysis. The core elements of the ideological field of American technology consumption link them to particular “institutionalized nodal points” that include progress/utopia, work/economics, expression/hedonism, and resistance/nature (867). The dynamic interaction of these four underlying institutional nodes organize group discussion as well as technocultural consumer behavior at the dyadic and individual consumer level of thought, speech, and action.

PERVASIVE TECHNOCULTURES: CONSUMER SELF-REPRESENTATION, INFLUENCE, AND SOCIAL SOLIDITY

As technocultures with increasing intensity pervaded other forms of cultures and microcultures, they created a plethora of new sociocultural formations. Some of the most

intriguing works within consumer research have examined aspects of technology consumption and used the findings to conceptualize their powerful transformative effects not only on consumer culture, but on wider society as well. This work has revealed the early precursors to the influencer economy, various effects on self-presentation and self-concept, assemblage-enabled extension of the capacity for consumption passions and their extremes, and the growing presence and import of nonhuman consumers and consumption systems. A sampling of those perspectives form the remainder of this curation.

[Schau and Gilly's \(2003\)](#) “We Are What We Post? Self-Presentation in Personal Web Space” (vol. 30, issue 3) is the first of these. [Schau and Gilly \(2003\)](#) conceptualize the complex network of effects resulting from the construction and maintenance of a personal web page. The study finds that keeping a personal web page is a dynamic and evolving process that changes a range of other behaviors in consumers’ lives, such as their appearance, technical skills, language use, brand use, and endorsements. The act of keeping a web page, the early form of a blog, metamorphizes these consumers into deliberate and strategic creators of online content. They become what we can recognize now as the precursors of contemporary “influencers”—using their online involvement to engage in personal and professional self-promotion, to showcase product and brand use, to observe others’ social media presence, and to adjust to audience feedback. They become content creators who try to build the reach of large audiences with positive engagement. As [Belk \(2013\)](#) later describes, technology has dramatic effects on consumers’ notions of the self.

[Bardhi and Eckhardt's \(2017\)](#) article “Liquid Consumption” (vol. 44, issue 3) is a more recent and more macroscopic conceptual exploration of the dynamic and dissolving effects of technology on consumer culture. The article is grounded in the premise that “new media technologies,” alongside other forces, have accelerated cultural life, transforming the technological and economic factors into cultural ones by increasing “the pace of the social and the everyday” ([Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017](#), 583). From this premise we learn of the revolutionary, and not entirely positive, cultural changes wrought by new technologies. Digital contexts, those that involve the consumption of information and communication technologies, produce conditions that lead to a condition of “liquid consumption”—consumption that is ephemeral, access-based, and dematerialized rather than enduring, based in ownership, and material. The article examines a wide range of social phenomena and effects, from call centers, gay marriage, and ride sharing to luxury and brand relationships. A compelling application is in using liquid consumption ideas to explain the “surveillance economy” ([Zuboff 2015](#)) in which data is used to produce “new markets of [consumer-oriented] behavioral prediction and modification” (75). As well, liquid consumption helps explain the quantification

of the self (Etkin 2016) as a form of “self-surveillance and self-profiling” that results from consumers’ “desire to lift themselves out of invisibility in an alienated world” (592). Examining a variety of cases, Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) demonstrate how, and explain why, our increasing involvement with information and communications technologies is having such profound and potentially deleterious effects on many areas of consumption and culture.

The notion that “inauthentic” technocultures threaten, replace, and even destroy existing “natural” ways of life is an essential component of the Western ideology of technology (Kozinets 2008, 868), and one that is increasingly subject to research investigation. For example, in response to one of the precepts of the liquid consumption perspective, Husemann and Eckhardt (2019) examine how people can shift from the accelerated time sense of contemporary technoculture to one in which they temporally, and temporarily, decelerate as a form of technocultural resistance.

TECHNOCULTURES’ EFFECTS ON CONSUMER DESIRE AND EXPERIENCE

In a rapidly evolving ecosystem of cultural effects, extant activities are transformed by technology consumption just as new ones are created by it. In “Networks of Desire: How Technology Increases Our Passion to Consume” (vol. 43, issue 5), Kozinets, Patterson, and Ashman (2017) examine the network of structures embedding and enabling consumers engaged in the food image sharing practices colloquially known as “food porn.” Their investigation identifies sociocultural and technical structures surrounding three layers of technocultural activity. More intimate and familiar personal acts of food image sharing coexist and sometimes evolve into more deliberate and polished public and professional behaviors aimed at gathering influencer-like levels of social media attention and the various benefits that accrue from it. Moreover, the article finds that the energy of consumer desire is intensified as humans, objects, and machines interconnect. Technology is a desire amplifier. Joined into assemblages, people and their devices exhibit a new capacity for consumption passion and culinary/photographic creativity, pushing their desire and ability to consume things such as food, gourmet visuals, and desire for food to new limits. Kozinets et al. (2017) explain that the attention-grabbing and desire-magnifying effects of social media are also creating “political positions” that are “more polarized,” beliefs that “are more extreme,” and consumer activities that are more passionately devoted (678). The article portrays technology and social media consumption as an electrifying force of desire that energetically drives cultures and societies to previously unimagined extremes.

This curation also includes Donna Hoffman and Tom Novak’s (2018) deployment of assemblage theory and

object-oriented ontology to consider the revolutionary impact of the Internet of Things (IoT) on the world of consumer experience. Beginning with a realistic but fictionalized scenario of consumers and objects interacting in a contemporary smart home, the authors pose a series of questions about the types of experiences created by the IoT assemblage. In “Consumer and Object Experience in the Internet of Things: An Assemblage Theory Approach” (vol. 44, issue 6), Hoffman and Novak (2018) explain that, during their interaction, consumers and smart objects create “paired capacities” (1181) consisting of new abilities, and from this important point they proceed to conceptualize three levels of consumer experience: basic, aware, and conscious. Consumer experience can then be redefined as “the properties, capacities, and expressive roles of the consumer experience assemblage” (1185). Using this novel conception, not only do functioning smart homes have their own consumer experiences, but so too do consumers in smart home assemblages and smart objects themselves. These experiences can be self-extending, self-expanding, self-restricting, and self-reducing. Even though smart objects do not (yet) have conscious consumer experiences, Hoffman and Novak (2018) draw us to the compelling conclusion that they do have basic and aware forms of consumer experience. From a technocultural perspective, this realization is a game-changer. The work opens the door for technocultural consumer research to delve into “the secret life of objects” (1195), particularly smart, technological objects, and to also pursue research techniques such as object-oriented ethnography (Arnold et al. 2016) and ontography (Bogost 2012) in which we begin to understand that objects can not only be consumers, but also can “have desires to be used” (Hoffman and Novak 2018, 1195).

IMPACTFUL FUTURE RESEARCH AREAS

This short curation provides a small taste of the exciting work that is being done, not only in marketing but also in many other fields, on the rise and impact of technocultures. As we consider the future work that this extant literature might ignite, it is important to realize that technocultures are composed not merely of solid objects, states, or places, but rather of flows. The anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (1990) theorized these radical disjunctures as key aspects of the global cultural economy, conceptualizing them as a range of effervescing technical and expressive social media-inflected “technoscapes.” These technoscapes now flow effortlessly and continuously into the mediascapes of popular culture, the finanscapes of Silicon Valley financing, and the ideoscapes of utopian industrial technopolitical ideologies, forming and changing social and cultural life just as they are changed by it. These intermingling flows shape fundamental alterations of social exchange systems (Giesler 2006), the utopian progressive ideologies of technology enthusiasts

(Kozinets 2008), the social and traditional media discussions that link into popular culture brand assemblages (Parmentier and Fischer 2015), the liquifying tendencies of surveillance systems (Bardhi and Eckhardt 2017), and the political extremes of social media expression (Kozinets et al. 2017). But the work is just beginning.

We need more detailed mappings of the many ways these scapes interrelate and interact. Bardhi and Eckhardt (2017) emphasize acceleration, and explain how the rising use of technologies leads to a technoculture that is more ephemeral, dematerialized, surveilled, and quantified. Kozinets et al. (2017) portray the various levels, structures, and energy-flow dynamics of a technoculture founded in the biobasic need to both eat and feed others. But how are consumption elements such as surveillance and biobasic urges engineered so that they feed into the needs of Silicon Valley venture capitalists? What roles do technology-infused neoliberal politics and utopian imaginings play in the life projects consumers now choose? What are the wider social, cultural, political, and ecological impacts of the many technocultural changes whose actions we see play out at individual, smaller group, and corporate levels?

The social sciences will benefit from additional theorizing and grounded consumer research that broadens and deepens our understanding of these still-evolving sociocultural formations and their various transformations. In Firat and Venkatesh (1995) and Mick and Fournier (1998), we see the conceptual impact that accompanies linking technology consumption with cultural, historical, and societal factors. Schau and Gilly (2003) open the door to recognizing the seismic changes that internet culture is having on social interaction, presaging the global rise of a culture that turned customers into social media content consumers and creators, forecast the rise of a culture of self-branding, and predicted “the sudden status change of influencers” (Kozinets et al. 2010, 79; McQuarrie, Miller, and Phillips 2013). More recently, Hoffman and Novak (2018) conceptually render some of the excitingly new technocultural effects of consumer experience, including the expanded capacities of consumption assemblages such as smart homes, device-enabled consumers, and the ability of smart objects themselves to experience and to be qualitatively different kinds of consumers with potentially different kinds of consumer cultures. Will their work augur a deemphasis on human consumers, and the rise of a new, smart object-based consumer research? We don’t know, because we are still a long way from having a continuous or extensive sense of these developments historically, psychologically, economically, politically, or culturally. Influencers, social media, mobile phone use, and smart homes are highly dynamic and interrelated phenomena, and we are taking occasional snapshots of parts of them, rather than carefully charting their development, overlap, and impact.

We need more studies that combine sharp theorizing with embedded observations of the collective behaviors

revolutionized by technology’s ability to connect through communication. Social technologies are changing consumption on dyadic, small group, and larger group levels as well, facilitating the formation of online fan groups (Kozinets 1999), brand communities (Muniz and O’Guinn 2001), consumer tribes (Cova, Kozinets, and Shankar 2007), and brand publics (Arvidsson and Caliandro 2016). They provide a “megaphone” to content-creating consumers (McQuarrie et al. 2013) and spur a DIY entrepreneurship “autopreneur” culture (Ashman, Patterson, and Brown 2018). On the other hand, they are also contributing to massive polarization and hostility as a variety of conflictual phenomena, including “oppositional brand loyalty” (Muniz and O’Guinn 2001), play out on technocultural stages. Our work has barely scratched the surface of these massive technocultural changes in the genus and species of contemporary consumers and their forms of consumption.

Much more work is needed to understand the impacts that technocultures are having, for instance, on our work lives, our concern for tradition and nature, our religious beliefs, our sense of truth and reality, our creativity, and our sense of play. Every day, the world confronts us with new and unprecedented levels of machine development and adoption. Alongside the physical changes in our material circumstances are even more dramatic alterations of our social and cultural ways of being. Where are the holistic and naturalistic studies of consumers experiencing an endless parade of automation service culture, at home and in their work cultures? Where are the grounded new studies of the selling and adoption of particular new cell phones, computational devices, robots, and apps to consume—and the expanding consumer measurement metrics that businesses and researchers use to understand them? In our lives as researchers and teachers, we encounter and must continually adapt to disruptive news ways of doing business and science—and of pedagogy. All of these changes are grist for the technocultural research mill. As consumer researchers, we are increasingly tasked with understanding the particular and ever-changing codes, acts, relations, and resources (which must include both the symbolic and material resources of the technologies themselves) that are associated with the cultures that accompany and adapt our rapidly developing technical systems and social worlds. Every day brings a brand new world of technocultural change. Not only are the opportunities endless, but the topics—surveillance, influence, connection, collectivities, polarization, power, acceleration, quantification, system change—are among the most imperative of our time.

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ARTICLES IN CURATION

Paradoxes of Technology: Consumer Cognizance, Emotions, and Coping Strategies
(Vol. 25, Issue 2)

David Glen Mick and
Susan Fournier

Although technological products are unavoidable in contemporary life, studies focusing on them in the consumer behavior field have been few and narrow. In this article, we investigate consumers' perspectives, meanings, and experiences in relation to a range of technological products, emphasizing lengthy and repeated interviews with 29 households, including a set of first-time owners. We draw on literatures spanning from technology, paradox, and postmodernism to clinical and social psychology, and combine them with data collection and analysis in the spirit of grounded theory. The outcome is a new conceptual framework on the paradoxes of technological products and their influences on emotional reactions and behavioral coping strategies. We discuss the findings in terms of implications for theories of technology, innovation diffusion, and human coping, and an expanded role for the paradox construct in consumer research.

We Are What We Post? Self-Presentation in Personal Web Space
(Vol. 30, Issue 3)

Hope Jensen Schau and
Mary C. Gilly

This article examines personal Web sites as a conspicuous form of consumer self-presentation. Using theories of self-presentation, possessions, and computer-mediated environments (CMEs), we investigate the ways in which consumers construct identities by digitally associating themselves with signs, symbols, material objects, and places. Specifically, the issues of interest include why consumers create personal Web sites, what consumers want to communicate, what strategies they devise to achieve their goal of self-presentation, and how those Web space strategies compare to the self-presentation strategies of real life (RL). The data reveal insights into the strategies behind constructing a digital self, projecting a digital likeness, digitally associating as a new form of possession, and reorganizing linear narrative structures

Liquid Consumption
(Vol. 44, Issue 3)

Fleura Bardhi and
Giana M. Eckhardt

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.

Networks of Desire: How Technology Increases Our Passion to Consume
(Vol. 43, Issue 5)

Robert Kozinets,
Anthony Patterson, and
Rachel Ashman

How is consumer desire transformed by contemporary technology? Most extant theory holds that technology rationalizes and reduces passion. In our investigation of networks of desire—complex open systems of machines, consumers, energy, and objects—we find technology increasing the passion to consume. Effects depend upon participation in the network, which can be private, public, or professional. Private participation tends to discipline passion into interests reflecting established cultural categories. Public and professional participation build new connections between extant desires and a wider network, decentering ties and deterritorializing flows that limit hungers to emplaced bodies. Public and professional participation drive consumption passion to transgressive extremes. We use ethnography and netnography to study online food image sharing, a broad field that includes everything from friend networks to food bloggers. Using and extending Deleuze and Guattari's desire theory, we conceptualize desire as energetic, connective, systemic, and innovative. Critically examining the role of technocapitalism in the realm of consumption passion, we question the emancipatory possibilities of unfettered desire. Networks of desire create a passionate new universe of technologically enhanced desire, one that challenges the way we think about consumer collectives, capitalism, emancipation, and post-human consumption.

Consumer and Object Experience in the Internet of Things: An Assemblage Theory Approach
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The consumer Internet of Things (IoT) has the potential to revolutionize consumer experience. Because consumers can actively interact with smart objects, the traditional, human-centric conceptualization of consumer experience as consumers' internal subjective responses to branded objects may not be sufficient to conceptualize consumer experience in the IoT. Smart objects possess their own

unique capacities and their own kinds of experiences in interaction with the consumer and each other. A conceptual framework based on assemblage theory and object-oriented ontology details how consumer experience *and* object experience emerge in the IoT. This conceptualization is anchored in the context of consumer-object assemblages, and defines consumer experience by its emergent properties, capacities, and agentic and communal roles expressed in interaction. Four specific consumer experience assemblages emerge: enabling experiences,

comprising agentic self-extension and communal self-expansion, and constraining experiences, comprising agentic self-restriction and communal self-reduction. A parallel conceptualization of the construct of object experience argues that it can be accessed by consumers through object-oriented anthropomorphism, a nonhuman-centric approach to evaluating the expressive roles objects play in interaction. Directions for future research are derived, and consumer researchers are invited to join a dialogue about the important themes underlying our framework.