Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the *Journal of Consumer Research*: A Curation and Research Agenda

ZEYNEP ARSEL
DAVID CROCKETT
MAURA L. SCOTT

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) has become ubiquitous in public and academic discourse. This is despite ongoing contests over definitions and the lack of a clear consensus about the relative importance (and even the appropriate order) of each component. For our purposes, diversity refers broadly to real or perceived physical or socio-cultural differences attributed to people and the representation of these differences in research, market spaces, and organizations. Equity refers to fairness in the treatment of people in terms of both opportunity and outcome. Inclusion refers to creating a culture that fosters belonging and incorporation of diverse groups and is usually operationalized as opposition to exclusion or marginalization. Taken together, DEI is typically accompanied by an axiological orientation toward procedural and distributive justice in organizations and institutions.

In this curation, we highlight representative research published in the *Journal of Consumer Research* that directly and indirectly explores DEI issues primarily along the following axes of difference illustrated in figure 1: gender, age, and body; race and ethnicity; social class and social status; and religion and cultural identity. These, in many respects, define the visible contours of everyday life. They are at least representative and may not be exhaustive. In the figure, we depict them as distinct but connected "stations" where subjectivities and structures collide and cluster intersectionally, rather than as flat positions of longitude and latitude situated in Euclidian space. We also illustrate two overlapping lenses that focus attention on specific features of DEI's ontology. Each promotes a situated perspective on the axes, with the "Marketplace structure, stigma, and consumer vulnerability" lens calibrated to structural issues associated with disparity and fairness in the marketplace. The "Consumer identity and agency, mobilization, and autonomy" lens is calibrated to agentic issues associated with identity and practice in everyday life. Although each lens promotes a situated perspective, what they bring into view is neither predetermined nor fixed. Either can bring into view a marketplace premised on equality that promotes well-being or one premised on inequality that promotes oppression.

A research curation necessarily involves imposing order on a disciplinary literature. But we begin by underlining our intent not to single out the small handful of articles we include as exclusive markers of quality. Rather, among the many that have contributed to a rich conversation in the journal, we highlight a representative set that exemplifies and draws the reader's attention to certain features of each axis in figure 1. Given limited space, we provide a more comprehensive listing of representative work in the journal that touches on DEI issues in table 1. In addition, the reader will note that many articles we highlight are situated along multiple axes simultaneously, even when our

Zeynep Arsel (zeynep.arsel@concordia.ca) is a Concordia University Research Chair in Consumption, Markets, and Society at Concordia University, 1455 De Maisonneuve Blvd. West, Montreal, QC H3G 1M8, Canada. David Crockett (dcrockett@moore.sc.edu) is a Professor of Marketing and a Moore Research Fellow at the Moore School of Business, University of South Carolina, 1014 Greene St., Columbia, SC 29209, USA. Maura L. Scott (maura.scott@fsu.edu) is the Persis E. Rockwood Professor of Marketing at the Florida State University, 821 Academic Way, Tallahassee, FL 32305, USA. Please address correspondence to Zeynep Arsel. The authors greatly appreciate the help, guidance, and involvement of June Cotte and the support of the entire JCR Editorial Team. Author names are listed alphabetically, and all authors contributed to this curation equally. The authors thank the journal's editors Bernd Schmitt, June Cotte, Markus Giesler, Andrew Stephen, and Stacy Wood for granting the opportunity to write this curation.

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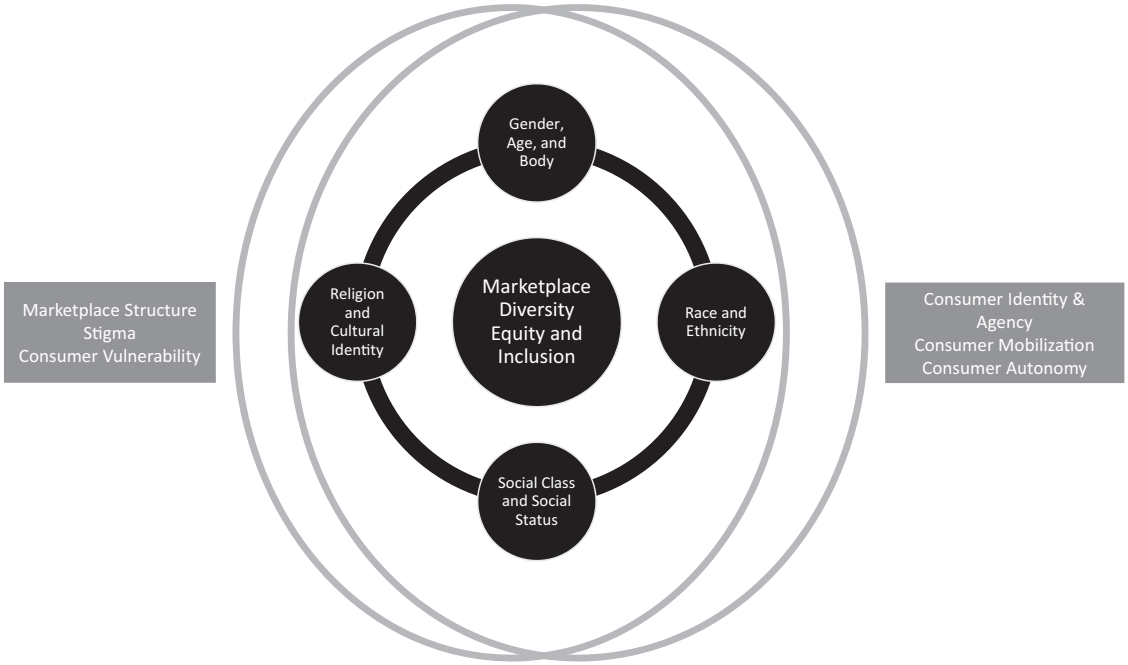
FIGURE 1

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN CONSUMER RESEARCH



discussion focuses on only one. We trust that upon reading this curation, the potential and generativity of existing DEI-oriented consumer research in the journal will be evident, as will be the need for consumer researchers to continue breaking new ground. Given its importance and seemingly natural connection to consumption and market systems, more research that cuts across numerous intersecting axes of difference and intentionally brings DEI implications to the fore is welcome and needed.

GENDER, AGE, AND BODY

We begin by highlighting Scaraboto and Fischer's (2013) work on Fatshionistas, which takes an inclusive axiological position in understanding the relationship between gender, body size, and consumption. Instead of problematizing women with heavier bodies as lesser consumers whose bodies need to be remedied by weight loss or dietary changes to participate in the market, the authors start with the premise that the market provides inadequate offerings for underserved consumers. They demonstrate how the stigmatization of body weight—exacerbated by beauty norms, fashion systems, and medicalized discourses that exclusively pathologize high body mass—contributes to the underserving of larger-sized women in fashion markets.

The Fatshionistas' market-changing project is notable because underserved consumers routinely choose not to pursue further market inclusion, due in part to internalized stigma and attenuated access to empowering cultural resources or strategies. But rather than accept inadequate market offerings and limit themselves to the "plus-size" niche, the participants in this study utilize their cultural and social capital to mobilize a collective identity and appropriate logics from adjacent fields such as the Fat Acceptance Movement to transform mainstream market offerings into something they could accept. Of course, such a remedy will not be available to every underserved consumer who is potentially stigmatized on any number of bases. The Fatshionistas seek to transform markets based on relative social advantages that exist in contradistinction to their stigmatized bodies.

Barnhart and Peñaloza (2013) explore age as a relatively neglected identity that is often invisible in research and practice, despite increasingly older populations around the world. They show that consumption is never a solitary pursuit for people with diminished physical capabilities (due to aging, disability, or both). They investigate the role of what is often an ensemble of family members, service providers, and friends in providing support to aging adults as they lose independence. The ensemble shapes and coproduces aged consumer identities and inscribes and affirms consumption meanings. The authors show how this

TABLE 1

EXAMPLES OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) RESEARCH IN THE *JOURNAL OF CONSUMER RESEARCH*

Article	Axes examined	Major findings relating to DEI
Amatulli et al. (2018)	• Age	Older consumers feel older or younger based on the social cues surrounding them, and their own mindset. Younger social cues create identity threat among older consumers; whereas younger consumers are unaffected by age-cues.
Appau et al. (2020)	• Religion	In many places outside North America and Western Europe, personhood is conceptualized dividual (rather than individual), which is a microcosm of social relationships, a site where they all meet. Ghanaian Pentecostals experience the transition from secular to "born again" as a never-ending state of being an unfinished dividual, caught between a desired and an undesired in/dividuality.
Barnhart and Peñaloza (2013)	• Age • Body	The authors identify an elderly consumption ensemble as a support system to facilitate consumption for older consumers who need assistance to continue to consume independently. The elderly negotiate their independence and identity as real and perceived shifts in their capabilities evolve.
Bone et al. (2014)	• Race • Ethnicity	Financial service providers treat minority (Black, Hispanic) customers more poorly than White customers. This negative treatment contributes to minority consumers' feelings of restriction. Minority consumers' self-concept is harmed, including their sense of autonomy and self-esteem.
Briley, Rudd, and Aaker (2017)	• Body	In the case of people who have health challenges such as chronic illness or traumatic injury, optimism can be activated by culturally appropriate frames. The authors then discuss how these frames can be leveraged in promotional and policy communication to better encourage positive health outcomes when consumers are faced with health-related adversity.
Brough et al. (2016)	• Gender	Authors present evidence of a prevalent stereotype about "green" consumption that ties it to femininity. Both self and others perceive green consumption as more feminine. Further, men are more (less) willing to engage green consumption when it affirms (threatens) their masculinity.
Cole and Balasubramanian (1993)	• Age	In this research on differences in information processing based on age, older (60+ years old) and younger consumers showed no difference in the ability to use nutrition label information in a lab-based study. However, in a supermarket context, older (vs. younger) consumers' information search behavior was less intensive.
Coskuner-Balli and Thompson (2013)	• Gender • Status	Middle class heterosexual men who chose to be stay at home fathers and adopt egalitarian gender norms frequently face identity threat due to ideologically shaped stereotypes about masculinity and domestic work. Stay at home fathers avert stigmas and marginalization of their identity through legitimation strategies.
Crockett (2017)	• Race • Culture • Status	Middle-class Blacks in the U.S. manage racial stigma using two prevalent micropolitical strategies that operate as counternarratives: (1) "discern and avoid," which seeks distance from whatever is stigmatized, and (2) "destigmatize," which uses Black culture as a source of high status.
Crockett (2021)	• Race	Introduces Racial Formation Theory (RFT) as a useful theoretical approach for addressing whether and how organizational and institutional actors in market systems allocate resources in ways that challenge (or reinforce) ethnic and racial oppression.
Deshpande, Hoyer, and Donthu (1986)	• Ethnicity	This research examines differences in ethnic identification among Hispanic consumers. This work underscores the heterogeneity among Hispanic consumers, along a continuum of ethnic identity, and relative to Anglo consumers.
Durante et al. (2015)	• Gender	Poor economic conditions lead people to favor more resource allocation to their daughters instead of their sons, reflected in wills, enrollment in beneficial programs, and gifts.
Gaeth and Heath (1987)	• Age	Senior citizens (vs. younger) consumers have greater difficulty discerning misleading and non-misleading advertising claims. Training can reduce susceptibility toward misleading ads among older and younger consumers.
Gilly and Zeithaml (1985)	• Age	Elderly (vs. younger) consumers were less likely to try and adopt consumer technologies (e.g., ATMs, phone technologies, groceries with scanners).
Izberk-Bilgin (2012)	• Religion • Social class	Religious ideology and social class intersect to frame global brands as threats in pursuit for an Islamist market society. Low-income Turkish Muslim consumers use various discursive strategies to moralize their consumption and condemn modernity and globalization
John and Cole (1986)	• Age	This research underscores the distinct processing challenges experienced by the elderly and the young, and the factors that magnify those difficulties (e.g., information volume, presentation).

TABLE 1 (*CONTINUED*)

Article	Axes examined	Major findings relating to DEI
Kates (2002)	• Sexual orientation	Examines the consumption practices of gay male consumers, and how these practices define gay sub-culture membership. Due in part to the stigma experienced by gay men, consumption practices defining membership are more ambiguous and emphasize individuality.
Kates (2004)	• Sexual orientation	Studies brand authenticity and legitimacy through the experiences of gay male consumers. Various factors signal legitimacy (e.g., duration of support toward the community and its key issues). Gay consumers reward legitimate brands and punish illegitimate (e.g., perceived homophobic) ones.
Law, Hawkins, and Craik (1998)	• Health • Age	Studies interventions to help overcome memory and recognition deficits among elderly consumers. Environmentally based interventions can reduce the truth effect among the elderly.
Li, Haws, and Griskevicius (2019)	• Gender	The authors show that parenting motivation activates gender-specific familial stereotypes about parenting roles where men are future-focused and women are present-focused. Adoption of these stereotypes influences inter-temporal preferences for small immediate rewards versus larger future rewards.
Luedicke (2015)	• Race • Ethnicity	The author conceptualizes consumer acculturation as a relational and interactive process, where indigenes interpret and adjust to immigrant consumption practices. Those interpretations form the basis of mutual adaptation and conflict.
Luna, Lerman, and Peracchio (2005)	• Ethnicity • Culture	The authors examine the effectiveness of bilingual communication in advertising and the effects of information process on such communications.
Luna and Peracchio (2005)	• Ethnicity • Culture	In a study of Spanish–English fluent bilinguals, this research examines the effects of code-switching on bi-lingual consumers. It finds that when advertising messages switch from the majority to minority language (e.g., English to Spanish) this results in lower levels of product evaluations, as compared to minority to majority (e.g., Spanish to English). This effect is moderated by the extent to which the consumer has a favorable attitude toward the minority language (e.g., Spanish).
Maciel and Wallendorf (2021)	• Gender	Through politicized identity projects, consumers with marginalized and devalued identities use private, semipublic, and public space as resource to reclaim, assert, and valorize their identities and subvert identity hierarchies.
Maciel and Wallendorf (2016)	• Gender • Status	The authors explore taste-centered consumption in the context of US craft beer enthusiasts seeking to become aficionados. They detail how taste evaluation systems that can grant legitimate aficionado status are built. They highlight the central role of cooperation (rather than competition) in building consensus around inherently ambiguous esthetic experiences.
McAlexander et al. (2014)	• Religion	People who resign from marketized or detraditionalized religions face a collapse of their identities. To resolve this, they embark on reflexive transgression of religious consumption codes and pursue identity investments in fields outside their former religion.
Mittal and Griskevicius (2016)	• Age • Social class	Authors show that people who experienced resource-poor childhoods are less interested in health coverage than those who had wealthy childhoods, independent of current SES. They also show that this effect reverses with information about the likelihood of experiencing illness, such that those with resource-poor childhood are more interested in health coverage.
Mittal, Griskevicius, and Haws (2020)	• Age • Social class	Authors show that people who experienced resource-poor childhoods have lower subjective life expectancy than those who did not, which influences a wide array of consumer decisions (e.g., life insurance, long-term care).
Moisio and Beruchashvili (2010)	• Body	The authors show how support groups that facilitate well-being goals related to overconsumption in the United States (such as Weight Watchers) follow a spiritual-therapeutic model that is built on shared vulnerabilities and therapeutic rituals.
Nikolova and Lamberton (2016)	• Gender	The authors show that in decision dyads, male-male pairs show extreme aversion to compromise options because the dyad triggers gender dichotomization that is not present in all-female or mixed gender pairs. But when men are able to signal masculinity prior to the decision-making event their preference for compromise options is similar to other dyads.
Oswald (1999)	• Culture	Examines culture swapping (i.e., using products to navigate between cultures). Haitian immigrants in the United States strategically use products to convey varied identities (e.g., Haitian, American).
Peñaloza (1994)	• Ethnicity • Cultural identity	Examines immigrant identity through the lens of consumption. Mexican immigrants in the United States use consumption to adapt to their context. Consumption is linked to identity, and outcomes to assimilate, maintain, resist, or segregate relative to the US setting and identity.

TABLE 1 (*CONTINUED*)

Article	Axes examined	Major findings relating to DEI
Price, Arnould, and Curasi (2000)	• Age	Among the elderly, special possessions carry significant meaning and social function. This research identifies how the elderly determine how to bequeath such possessions to others, or otherwise dispose of them.
Rodas et al. (2021)	• Social class	The authors propose that bicultural (vs. monocultural) consumers will find "paradox brands," which reflect contradictory meanings (e.g., rugged and sophisticated), more appealing. The preference is driven by an increase in cognitive flexibility and cultural identity integration found readily among bicultural consumers.
Saatcioglu and Ozanne (2013)	• Social class • Status	The authors uncover five status groups localized among residents of a mobile-home park organized around a distinct set of embodied moral dispositions that help create and reinforce identity in the park, which is heavily stigmatized for low social status.
Sandikci and Ger (2010)	• Religion	The authors show how through routinization and estheticization of a stigmatized practice (Islamic veiling), coupled with shifts in macro level political climate and market changes transforms it into fashionable and legitimated choice.
Scaraboto and Fischer (2013)	• Body	Underserved consumers, such as women with high body mass seeking fashionable clothing, work to seek further inclusion by a mobilizing their collective identity and appropriating logics from adjacent fields to transform mainstream market offerings to be more accessible.
Schau, Gilly, and Wolfinbarger (2009)	• Age	This research examines the role of consumption during retirement, and its role in (re-)defining identity in this stage in the consumer's lifecycle.
Skurnik et al. (2005)	• Age	Elderly (vs. younger) consumers were vulnerable to the "illusion of truth" effect (i.e., elderly were told that a claim was false were more likely to later accept it as true).
Stayman and Deshpande (1989)	• Ethnicity	Examines the malleable relationship between ethnic identification and product choice. Consumers with Chinese and Mexican ethnic identification selected more ethnically-consistent food when in an ethnic (e.g., with parents) versus non-ethnic social context.
Tepper (1994)	• Age	This research examines the age groups within the senior citizen community. Anticipated stigmatization and self-devaluation reduce relatively younger senior citizens' willingness to use otherwise potentially advantageous promotions.
Thompson, Henry, and Bardhi (2018)	• Gender • Social class	Authors introduce "reactive reflexivity" as alternative conceptualization of the relationship between agency, social structure, and identity. Based on a sample of divorced women displaced from the middle-class, they show how their response to estrangement from pre-divorce lifestyles led to practices meant to insulate those tastes and esthetics as they sought to regain middle-class status and identity.
Tian et al. (2014)	• Body	The authors show how technology-enhanced narratives enable a community based, liberating, and less marginalizing approach in providing care to people living with chronic illness.
Üstüner and Holt (2007)	• Social class	The authors show a model of consumer acculturation in which low socioeconomic status migrant consumers face barriers to participate in dominant consumer culture, from which they are excluded from and chose to self-exclude.
Üstüner and Thompson (2012)	• Social class • Gender	Upper class women clients hold significant power over the service performances of rural migrant male service workers free from the patriarchal norms they abide elsewhere. In return, men who work as service providers leverage their coveted profession in their own social milieu for gendered power and status.
Varman and Belk (2009)	• Cultural identity	The authors explore nationalism (ideology) in a contemporary Indian anti-consumption movement that emerged in response to colonialism, modernity, and globalization.
Veresiu and Giesler (2018)	• Ethnicity • Cultural identity	The authors introduce the concept of "market-mediated multiculturation," an institutional mechanism for attenuating ethnic group conflicts, where immigrant-receiving cultures fetishize immigrants and commodify difference as a way of obscuring inequality.
Vikas, Varman and Belk (2015)	• Social status • Cultural identity	This research examines the interplay between cultural status hierarchy and social mobility.
Wallendorf and Reilly (1983)	• Ethnicity	This research examines the consumption behavior of Mexican-American consumers, relative to White-Americans and Mexican people living in Mexico. It identifies distinct consumption patterns among Mexican-American consumers relative to the other groups.
Weinberger (2015)	• Religion	Non-celebrants of dominant consumption rituals simultaneously need to protect their identities while also maintaining their relationship with celebrators. Presumed over-inclusivity of dominant rituals put non-celebrants into a

TABLE 1 (*CONTINUED*)

Article	Axes examined	Major findings relating to DEI
		position where they have to manage the group power dynamics and their in-group relations through physical, cognitive, and emotional work.
Weinberger, Zavisca, and Silva (2017)	• Social class	The authors describe socialization differences between middle class emerging adults and working-class emerging adults about their future. The dominant orientation of collecting and strategically deploying exploratory experiences as cultural capital not only is shaped by the unique class habitus but also perpetuates the social advantages of middle class over working-class emerging adults.
Williams and Drolet (2005)	• Age	Using the lens of time horizon, the research finds that older (vs. younger) consumers prefer and recall ads with an emotional (rational) appeal. Younger (older) consumers can behave like older (younger) ones by inducing a limited (expanded) time horizon.
Yan et al. (2021)	• Social class • Social status	This research finds that middle class consumers are more motivated to engage in green consumption (relative to lower- and upper-class consumers)/
Yoon and Kim (2018)	• Social class • Social status	This research uncovers the effects of economic mobility and socioeconomic status on consumers' desire to engage in variety seeking.

NOTE.— This table provides a representative listing of a selection of *JCR* articles since 1983, exhibiting some connections to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Axes discussed in this article. This is not intended to be a complete or systematic review of *JCR* or the consumer behavior literature.

co-production of aged identity is fraught with contest and negotiation, based on tensions between aging consumers and their care ensemble, as well as misalignments between old age as a subject position and aging as an identity project shaped by dominant cultural discourses and understandings about "getting old." They show that despite a cultural shift toward seeing aging more positively, the marketplace still largely constructs it as a stigmatized identity. They also highlight the ways that care can appear to enable aged consumers while actually repressing or discouraging them and stripping them of agency. They discuss ways co-consumers (and co-producers) of care ensembles can generate supportive, dignified, and positive meanings while providing assistance. In understanding the practices of consumers who may frequently need interpersonal or market-based assistance, one should include and acknowledge joint consumption and intersubjective production of consumer identities.

In sum, this research finds that consumers' gender, body type, or age may be treated as stigmatizing attributes that influence their marketplace experiences. Women in particular face unique and often magnified challenges based on body type norms. Furthermore, personal characteristics like disability or elderly status can diminish an individual's transformative capacity by rendering them not merely less apt to be respected but also dependent on others' resources to participate in the marketplace.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

A prominent perspective on race and ethnicity in DEI-oriented consumer research examines it through the lens of disadvantage or vulnerability. In that vein, Bone, Christensen, and Williams (2014) identify marketplace restrictions experienced by Black and Hispanic consumers seeking financial services. The authors lay bare the "systemic, chronic, and uncontrollable" restrictions on options these consumers confront based on service providers' race and ethnic bias and the corresponding downstream impact on well-being and judgments about the marketplace. They employ a multi-method approach to uncovering insights into the experiences of Black and Hispanic consumers, who are not widely represented in consumer behavior research. This includes an innovative "mystery shopper" field study approach, where a multi-racial and multi-ethnic group of study confederates visit banks as loan seekers. They find that non-White (vs. White) loan seekers are treated more poorly by loan officers in objective terms. They were asked to provide more documentation and offered less information in response to their queries, acts of discretion with direct implications for the potential outcomes of the loan application process. They reveal the psychological impact of such restrictions on consumers through a series of depth interviews, in which non-White (vs. White) consumers correctly perceive a subordinated position that limits their ability to pursue self-directed goals and whatever freedoms the market might provide. They conduct an experiment to identify the underlying psychological mechanisms of this perception, namely diminished self-esteem and autonomy. That is, when Black and Hispanic consumers experience racial and ethnic discrimination in financial services, they liken the loan seeking experience to a hopeless battle. As decades of research have demonstrated, this harms their financial prospects and well-being. We note that discrimination in financial services also has the potential to harm the bank's brand.

Cultural identity is another perspective on DEI in consumer research. Using that lens, Rodas, John, and Torelli (2021) examine the perception of bicultural consumers, who internalize two cultural identities (e.g., Hispanic-American, Asian-American). The authors propose that bicultural (vs. monocultural) consumers will find "paradox

brands," which reflect contradictory meanings (e.g., a brand personality that is both rugged and sophisticated), relatively more appealing. In a series of experiments, including a field study of Latino and White participants in their respective community markets, they find that bicultural consumers tend to favor paradox brands. This preference for paradox brands is driven by cognitive flexibility. That is, bicultural consumers can be more or less cognitively flexible (with more or less integration among their multiple identities). As cognitive flexibility and cultural identity integration increase for bicultural consumers, so does their preference for paradox brands. For monocultural consumers (e.g., non-Hispanic White), priming cognitive flexibility also increases their favorability toward paradox brands. The underlying process provides important insights into how the lived experiences of bicultural consumers shape their perceptions of marketplace offerings. That is, bicultural consumers, based on internalizing multiple (sometimes contradictory) cultural identities, value and appreciate brands with multiple identities.

SOCIAL CLASS AND SOCIAL STATUS

Social class position is in part created and maintained by consumption practices that vary across groups and cluster within groups based on similar assumptions about how consumption generates value. Consumer research on social class and status has largely operated as part of two distinct but overlapping traditions. One focuses on the generation, maintenance, and expression of social class boundaries in consumption, typically operationalized as status. The other focuses on the social psychological and behavioral implications of social class groupings, typically operationalized as clusters of similar perceptions and attitudes. Both traditions incorporate direct (e.g., income and wealth) and indirect (e.g., postal codes, education level, and occupational status) measures of social rank.

Saatcioglu and Ozanne (2013) explore the generation and maintenance of social class boundaries in everyday life through the habitus, a set of mostly embodied dispositions that functions similarly to a milieu. They uncover five status groups localized among residents of a mobile-home park organized around a distinct set of largely embodied moral dispositions (i.e., Nesters, Homesteaders, and Community Builders; Reluctant Emigrants and Outcasts). These dispositions adopted by park residents, taken together, constitute the habitus, which helps create and reinforce moral identity in the park and in the community immediately outside it. The mobile-home park, perhaps the quintessential residential marker of working-class poverty in the United States, is widely stigmatized as low status. Each moral disposition serves as field-dependent capital at the park, marking distinctions between those who are otherwise stigmatized. Unlike others, field-dependent capital is not convertible to economic, social, or other types of capital when transferred to other settings. Instead, its purpose is to help people navigate social life in a specific setting. Its value to the bearer is, in this instance, confined to the park. And it shapes and is shaped by residents' mostly home-focused consumption practices. They construct and affirm moral identities by engaging in social comparisons of field-dependent capital with neighbors in the park and the surrounding community. The authors remind us that the relationship between consumption and social class (or status group) is not deterministic. Rather, consumption and social class are mutually constituting.

The literature does, of course, at times, demonstrate regularities in consumption behavior by social class group. For instance, Yan, Keh, and Chen (2021) demonstrate that demand for utilitarian "green" products (e.g., energy efficient light bulbs) is highest among the middle class. They reveal an underlying connection between social class and demand driven by a tension between need for differentiation and need for assimilation. Notably, that tension only emerges when neither need is dominant, and this occurs most prevalently among the middle class. By contrast, a single need tends to dominate among the so-called upper and lower classes. Consumers classified as upper class, whose need for differentiation is dominant, find green consumption too assimilating. Consumers classified as lower class, whose need for assimilation is dominant, find it too differentiating. A dominant need attenuates demand for green products. It is only among members of the middle class, where no single need is dominant, that a legitimate tension emerges that generates a dual motivation to satisfy both needs that green consumption satisfies.

RELIGION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Consumer researchers have long studied the nexus of consumption, markets, and religion. We highlight Appau, Ozanne, and Klein's (2020) study of Ghanaian converts to Pentecostalism, as an exemplar of research situated at that nexus. The Ghanaian context is especially well-suited to generate insights into this phenomenon because it is both a highly marketized and an exceptionally competitive religious consumptionscape. It also operates with very different notions of personhood than the fully-agentic, utility-maximizing consumer who is largely taken for granted in marketing and consumer research set in North America and Western Europe. In many places outside those settings, personhood is conceptualized in dividual rather than individual terms. The dividual is a microcosm of social relationships, a site where they all meet. The authors use the dividual to explain the permanence among Ghanaian Pentecostal converts of what is generally thought to be a transitional phase—from secular to "born again" life. They

conceptually unpack the paradoxical notion of "permanent liminality" among converts, which they experience as a state of being an unfinished dividual, caught between a desired and an undesired in/dividuality.

BREAKING NEW GROUND IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN CONSUMER RESEARCH

Although it is obvious to the point of trite to state that the *Journal of Consumer Research* needs additional research on DEI, it is not our intent in this curation to frame this entirely as a problem to be solved. Rather, it is to show, by dimensionalizing and highlighting well-regarded, recently published *JCR*, that DEI-oriented consumer research has taken institutional root at the journal and to point to opportunities to continue its cultivation. In table 2, we present opportunities at each axis in the form of potential gaps in current knowledge, which shapes a collection of corresponding sample research questions that might guide future work. We note straightaway that some important consumption domains remain all but entirely absent in the journal. For example, more research is needed on human sexuality, and there is opportunity for more work on disability and diminished physical capacity. We need to know much more about a diverse range of consumption-oriented identity projects as people navigate the marketplace. In addition, consumer research needs deeper exploration of subject positions at various intersections, some of which exacerbate marketplace challenges and some of which consolidate privilege (see Güliz Ger's curation on intersectionality published in 2018). Nevertheless, we remain excited about the potential for emergent DEI research to transform the field. To generate discussion, ideas, and future research streams, we propose a selection of key topics at each axis where additional research could address significant gaps in current knowledge about consumers and consumption and point readers to a more extensive treatment in table 2.

GENDER, AGE, AND THE BODY: GAPS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this historical moment, everyone is grappling with the profound challenges to the discourses on gender expression and the body that has emerged in socio-cultural life. Contested alterations to taken for granted aspects of gender and the body are intensely multi-polar, far too complex and liquid for traditional dyadic notions of the masculine and feminine. They are as subversive as non-gendered pronouns and as radical as gender reassignment. Consumers' aging journey is fluid in other ways, and they navigate changes to health, financial and social status, and balancing their corresponding needs (e.g., reduced stigma, increased dignity, using technological resources to support these needs and continue to make meaningful contributions to society). The implications of these challenges for consumers and consumption, for marketers, for policy makers, and every other possible market systems stakeholder are widely acknowledged to be profound but are at present scarcely theorized. Research questions that would explore these implications should not be hard to craft, but we would point to classic research questions around role portrayal and representation in media and popular culture as being of immediate importance.

RACE AND ETHNICITY: GAPS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As many scholars have noted, products and brands commonly draw signifying power from the socio-cultural world that can help draw attention and gain mindshare. They embed themselves in various consumer collectives (e.g., brand communities, subcultures of consumption, tribes) in ways that can grant them an aura of authenticity. At moments, consumers and other actors oppose and resist their extraction of socio-cultural value through what they justly describe as cultural appropriation. It is not uncommon, however, for accusations of appropriation to operate as a derogatory term rather than a concept with analytical power. We believe that important theoretical and conceptual work remains to be done on cultural appropriation as a phenomenon. What does it mean? What are its boundaries? More importantly, through what processes and practices does it occur?

SOCIAL CLASS AND SOCIAL STATUS: GAPS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Marketplace inclusion has long stood as a taken for granted objective for vulnerable and so-called bottom-of-the-pyramid consumers. Since the consumer disadvantage studies of the 1970s and 1980s, increased marketplace literacy in various forms (economic, financial, technological, and literal) has been widely touted as the foundation upon which any other interventions intended to remediate vulnerability and disadvantage must build. Our intent is certainly not to disparage any such efforts. Rather, it is to add that prevailing levels of social class inequality in many parts of the world simply demand more focused attention on the inequality-generating actions of businesses and elites. Where that has traditionally been the province of scholars interested in what happens on the factory floor, the marketplace has long been an independent site of inequality production. In the neoliberal era, defined in no small part by financial sector dominance over the state,

TABLE 2

EXAMPLES OF POTENTIAL FUTURE RESEARCH QUESTIONS RELATING TO CONSUMER RESEARCH AND DEI

Axis	Gaps	Potential research questions
Gender, age, and body	• Gender expression and body	• How does broader awareness of diversity of gender self-expression influence consumers' vulnerabilities to media cues relating to body norms (e.g., such as the established effects of unrealistic media images on self-esteem)?
	• Sexual orientation and marketplace	• How does increased representation of LGBTQA+ people in media and popular culture shape markets such as marketplace inclusion of LGBTQA+ consumers, providing a framework for conversation and acceptance in the marketplace, and serving as cultural resource for brand identities?
	• Age and creativity	• How might a consumer's relatively more advanced age be leveraged in the creativity process? What aspects of their longer duration of life experiences contribute to creative processes? Are older consumers' potential contributions undervalued?
	• Aging and healthcare	• What is the role of technology in creating a dignified and independent experience for consumers as they age? For instance, as older consumers experience limited mobility, in what ways can technology help satisfy basic human needs?
	• Disabilities and technology	• How do consumers with disabilities experience stigma and exclusion in the marketplace? How do they mobilize around their distinct medical needs and experiences to seek greater dignity and inclusion? How can marketers use new technologies to create more inclusive spaces for the disabled?
Race and ethnicity	• Racial ambiguity, bi- and multi-racial consumers	• How do racially ambiguous consumers use consumption to define their identities to observers? to themselves? How is such consumption embodied to de-/emphasize aspects of the self? What is the long-term impact on a consumer's well-being?
	• Interplay of race and ethnicity	• How can distinctions between race (e.g., Black, White) and ethnicity (e.g., Hispanic), and their interactions, uncover novel perspectives on our existing theoretical understanding?
	• Colorism and consumption	• What are the contextual factors that perpetuate the harmful practice of colorism in the marketplace [i.e., more favorable treatment toward people of color with lighter (vs. darker) skin tones]? When and why does marketplace colorism occur? When and why do non-group members seek more or less ethnic representation? What are the underlying motives, and how can the behaviors and motives be reconciled to promote societal well-being?
	• Cultural appropriation	• How can consumers identify and intervene against cultural appropriation in the marketplace?
	• Race and technology	• How do technologies such as DNA sequencing shape consumers ideas about race and racism? For example, if a White (Black) consumer may learn that they have African (Caucasian) DNA heritage, how does this shift the consumer's attitudes about race, and what does this mean for their marketplace behaviors (e.g., shopping preferences, interactions with others)?
Social class and social status	• New formations of economic precarity	• How does recently rising precarity due to gig economy shape everyday consumption experiences of people who live with this precarity?
	• Contradictory class positions	• How do consumers with contradictory class positions (e.g., those with parents with different classes, those who experienced recent mobility) navigate different social spheres?
	• Class and predatory marketing	• How can inclusion (e.g., in financial services) be designed to promote positive (and not predatory) practices toward lower social class consumers?
Religion and cultural identity	• Religion, marketing, and radicalization	• How do hate groups leverage marketing and religion to radicalize vulnerable youth? How can this be prevented and overcome?
	• Nationalism and consumer identities	• Do nationalistic movements restrict consumers' cultural expression? If so, how is consumption used to defy and overcome the restriction of cultural expression?
	• Refugee consumers	• Which marketplace consumption experiences (e.g., products, services) are refugees and displaced individuals seeking to help reinforce their identity, dignity, and self-reliance as they adjust to their new location? What role can the marketplace play in promoting acceptance of displaced people?

TABLE 2 (*CONTINUED*)

Axis	Gaps	Potential research questions
Axis intersections	• Stigma and intersectionality	• How can a shared potentially stigmatized attribute (e.g., low SES) create understanding and solidarity among groups that otherwise have differences in terms of distinct characteristics (e.g., low SES Black consumers and low SES White consumers)? How can marketplace structures facilitate such understanding?
	• Stigma and harmful consumption	• Many diverse aspects of a consumer are potentially stigmatized. In such cases, how do consumers perceive harmful products designed to minimize those attributes (e.g., anti-aging products, skin whiteners, elective cosmetic surgeries)? What types of interventions can help consumers move away from harmful consumption and toward self-acceptance and self-love?
	• Social justice and social change	• What factors help move consumers and society toward embracing and celebrating differences?
	• Axis fluidity	• A theme across the various axes the focus on fluidity (as opposed to dichotomization) of these concepts, such as gender, race, health status, and even age. How and why are such aspects of a consumer contextually dependent, and how does this dynamism unfold in the marketplace?
	• DEI and esthetics	• How has the evolution of diverse images in the media and marketplace shifted esthetic norms and definitions of beauty?
	• DEI and essential services	• Financial and healthcare services are critical to consumers' quality of life. Where are the gaps in equity and inclusion in these fundamental contexts, and how can the gaps be reduced to heighten consumer (financial and health) well-being?

consumers are commonly made vulnerable or disadvantaged by structural features of their communities and the predatory actions of marketers rather than by their limited stores of knowledge. We believe research that explores the inequality-generating and reducing practices of marketers and public policy makers remains as relevant today as ever.

RELIGION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY: GAPS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

During the COVID-19 global pandemic, some evidence from the United States suggests that the lines separating religious theology and nationalism are blurred. Their intersection and interaction typically reduce the inclusion of the vulnerable and underrepresented. For instance, religious extremism is associated with negative attitudes toward equity in healthcare and education. Ideological resistance to equity and inclusion raises more general questions about the connection between ideology, religious identity, nationalism, and consumption. Namely, what is the relationship between contemporary nationalistic and religious extremist movements and self—or cultural—expression via consumption? That is, what role does consumption play for movement organizations and adherents, respectively, as a problem whose resolution mobilizes resources and action versus a means of submission or subversion?

ASKING PRESSING QUESTIONS AT INTERSECTIONS AND BEYOND

Lastly, we ask scholars to tackle big picture questions that rest on the intersections of the four themes above and deal with macro issues and society as a whole. We note that the fluidity across all these axes must be addressed in future research. As more discussions about DEI takes place in academia, policy spaces, and boardrooms, how can scholarly work develop frameworks and tools to help society be more inclusive? How can media representations of diversity translate into inclusion and equity, and combat harmful stigmas around skin color, body size, and aging? How can we transform beauty and fashion industries? How can we provide dignified and accessible essential services to all members of society without predatory design?

We end the curation on an emancipatory note. We hope that researchers and practitioners will be mindful of our contributions to marketplace exclusion and stigma in practice. Too often we problematize identities that fall outside societal norms and offer consumption-oriented remedies that purport to "solve" already marginalized identities. These can push consumers toward risky (or harmful) products such as weight loss remedies, skin lightening and "age defying" creams, conversion therapy, plastic surgery. We can strive to conceptualize and construct a marketplace that is a celebratory and empowering space. This requires a more

egalitarian and pluralist approach to understanding and serving consumers who are ascribed minority status, more participatory forms of research and data collection, and ensuring that amongst researchers and practitioners we also strive for representation, equity, and inclusion.

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ARTICLES IN CURATION

Frustrated Fatshionistas: An Institutional Theory Perspective on Consumer Quests for Greater Choice in Mainstream Markets

Daiane Scaraboto and Eileen Fischer

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Volume 39, Issue 6, April 2013

Why and how do marginalized consumers mobilize to seek greater inclusion in and more choice from mainstream markets? We develop answers to these questions drawing on institutional theory and a qualitative investigation of Fatshionistas, plus-sized consumers who want more options from mainstream fashion marketers. Three triggers for mobilization are posited: development of a collective identity, identification of inspiring institutional entrepreneurs, and access to mobilizing institutional logics from adjacent fields. Several change strategies that reinforce institutional logics while unsettling specific institutionalized practices are identified. Our discussion highlights diverse market change dynamics that are likely when consumers are more versus less legitimate in the eyes of mainstream marketers and in instances where the changes consumers seek are more versus less consistent with prevailing institutions and logics.

Who Are You Calling Old? Negotiating Old Age Identity in the Elderly Consumption Ensemble

Michelle Barnhart and Lisa Peñaloza

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As the elderly population increases, more family, friends, and paid service providers assist them with consumption activities in a group that the authors conceptualize as the elderly consumption ensemble (ECE). Interviews with members of eight ECEs demonstrate consumption in advanced age as a group phenomenon rather than an individual one, provide an account of how the practices and discourses of the ECE's division of consumption serve as a means of knowing someone is old and positioning him/her as an old subject, and detail strategies through which older consumers negotiate their age identity when it conflicts with this positioning. This research (1) illuminates ways in which consumer agency in identity construction is constrained in interpersonal interactions, (2) demonstrates old identity as implicated in consumption in relation to and distinction from physiological ability and old subject position, and (3) updates the final stages of the Family Life Cycle model.

Rejected, Shackled, and Alone: The Impact of Systemic Restricted Choice on Minority Consumers' Construction of Self

Sterling A. Bone, Glenn L. Christensen, and Jerome D. Williams

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This research investigates the experience of systemic restricted choice and its impact on self-concept among racial and ethnic minority consumers seeking financing. Choosing loans is an involved consumer choice journey, and encountering systemic, chronic, and uncontrollable restrictions on choice at any level of the goal/choice hierarchy limits and even prohibits minorities' ability to make desired choices. Across a multimethod investigation, these three studies demonstrate that minorities experiencing systemic restricted choice endure deleterious impacts to self-concept, including framing the self as fettered, alone, discriminated, and subservient, as well as marked reductions in self-esteem, self-autonomy, and self-efficacy. Minority consumers also frame themselves as striving in a world of limited resources and fighting uphill, often losing battles. Juxtaposing the experiences of racial/ethnic minorities against the choice journeys of educationally and economically similar white consumers puts those minority experiences in sharp relief. The theoretical and transformative consumer research implications of these findings are discussed.

Building Brands for the Emerging Bicultural Market: The Appeal of Paradox Brands

Maria A Rodas, Deborah Roedder John, and Carlos J. Torelli

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Bicultural consumers now represent a third of the US population and are the fastest growing demographic group in the United States. This shift in consumer markets presents a challenge for marketers as they try to design brand strategies to serve this important group. In this article, the authors show that certain types of brands, specifically paradox brands that incorporate contradictory brand meanings, are particularly appealing to bicultural consumers. Results from seven studies reveal that bicultural consumers evaluate paradox brands more favorably and choose paradox brands more than traditional brands without contradictions. Furthermore, bicultural consumers exhibit more favorable evaluations and greater choice of paradox brands than do monocultural consumers. These cultural differences are attributable to greater cognitive flexibility found among biculturals, particularly those who adopt an acculturation strategy of integrating their different cultural identities. Greater cognitive flexibility, in turn, prompts stronger engagement with a paradox brand, which contributes to more favorable brand evaluations and choice. Contributions of this research for understanding bicultural consumers, marketing to bicultural consumers, and directions for future research are discussed.

Moral Habitus and Status Negotiation in a Marginalized Working-Class Neighborhood

Bige Saatcioglu and Julie L. Ozanne

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Examinations of the moral and ethical dimensions in identity construction are scant in consumer research. This ethnography of a trailer-park neighborhood investigates how different moral dispositions shape low-income, working-class residents' consumption practices and status negotiations. Drawing from Bourdieu's conceptualization of habitus and cultural capital, the authors extend this theory by foregrounding the moral aspects of habitus and demonstrate how morally oriented worldviews are enacted through consumption practices and social evaluations within everyday communities. The study reveals five moral identities that shape the residents' social construction of status within the microcultural context of a trailer park.

These findings point to the multiplicity and richness of social-class-based dispositions as well as the importance of studying micro-level contexts to better understand macrodynamics.

Assimilating and Differentiating: The Curvilinear Effect of Social Class on Green Consumption

Li Yan, Hean Tat Keh, and Jiemiao Chen

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Building on optimal distinctiveness theory, this research examines the effects of social class on green consumption. Across six studies, we find a curvilinear effect of social class on green consumption, with the middle class having greater propensity for green consumption compared to the lower and upper classes. This effect can be explained by tension between need for assimilation (NFA) and need for differentiation (NFD) that varies among the three social classes in establishing their optimally distinctive identities. The lower class has a dominant NFA, the upper class has a dominant NFD, and the middle class has dual motivation for assimilation and differentiation. Concomitantly, green consumption has the dual function of assimilation and differentiation. The middle class perceives green consumption as simultaneously assimilating and differentiating, which satisfies their dual motivation and enhances their propensity for green consumption. By contrast, the lower class perceives the differentiation function of green consumption as contradicting their dominant NFA, and the upper class perceives the assimilation function as contradicting their dominant NFD, which lower both their propensities for green consumption. Furthermore, these effects are moderated by consumers' power distance belief. These novel findings have significant theoretical and practical implications on building a more sustainable society.

Understanding Difficult Consumer Transitions: The In/Dividual Consumer in Permanent Liminality

Samuelson Appau, Julie L. Ozanne, and Jill G. Klein

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Some life transitions are difficult and prolonged, such as becoming an independent adult, forming a family, or adopting healthy consumption habits. Permanent liminality describes transitions that can span years and even a lifetime with no anticipated end. To understand how consumers are caught in permanent liminality, we examine how Pentecostal converts consume religious services in their difficult transition from the secular "world" to Pentecostalism. We draw on the concept of in/dividual personhood to explain how the Pentecostal dividual is coconstituted in an endless movement between the undesired "worldly" in/dividual and the contiguous incorporation into the desired Pentecostal in/dividual and structure. Pentecostals' permanent liminality thus involves ongoing cycles of separation and incorporation within zones of indeterminacy, in which neither separation nor incorporation is ever completed. This theoretical framework explains the unfinished transition of Pentecostal converts as contested dividuals. We extend this theoretical explanation for future research on liquid modernity and consumers caught in permanent liminality.