

Productivity Orientation and the Consumption of Collectable Experiences

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This research examines why consumers desire unusual and novel consumption experiences and voluntarily choose leisure activities, vacations, and celebrations that are predicted to be less pleasurable. For example, consumers sometimes choose to stay at freezing ice hotels and to eat at restaurants serving peculiar foods, such as bacon ice cream. We propose that such choices are driven by consumers' continual striving to use time productively, make progress, and reach accomplishments (i.e., a productivity orientation). We argue that choices of collectable (unusual, novel, extreme) experiences lead consumers to feel productive even when they are engaging in leisure activities as they "check off" items on an "experiential check list" and build their "experiential CV." A series of laboratory and field studies shows that the consumption of collectable experiences is driven and intensified by a (chronic or situational) productivity orientation.

Man is so made that he can only find relaxation from one kind of labor by taking up another. (Anatole France)

Finally, a to-do list you'll really want to do. (Advertisement for Mohegan Sun Hotel, Casino, and Spa)

Recent marketing trends suggest that many consumers are attracted to unusual and novel consumption experiences and choose vacations, leisure activities, and celebrations that are predicted to be less pleasurable and enjoyable. A fascinating example is the increasing popularity of ice hotels, where visitors sleep on beds made of ice in a frigid temperature of 25° F. A similar trend is observed in consumers' dining preferences: many restaurants are trying to attract consumers by offering unusual entrées and desserts. Such gastronomic innovations include tequila-mustard sorbet, bacon-flavored ice cream, and chocolate truffles with vinegar and anchovies.

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We propose that consumers are attracted to these activities and products because they view them as opportunities to collect new experiences and build their "experiential CV." We explain this phenomenon by the continual striving of many consumers to use time efficiently and productively. This desire to accomplish more in less time is so powerful that it not only affects consumers' performances in vocational (or "production") settings but can influence their leisure preferences and consumption choices as well. By expanding their collection of diverse experiences, consumers obtain a sense of accomplishment and progress.

Consistent with this proposition, a series of laboratory and field studies show that the consumption of collectable experiences is driven (and intensified) by a "productivity orientation." The studies demonstrate that consumers with a chronic productivity orientation are more likely to desire collectable experiences. Such consumers measure their own worth in terms of productivity and accomplishment and are inclined to see most situations (including consumption and leisure choices) as opportunities to be productive and to build their "experiential CV." We also show that priming a productivity orientation, or creating a desire to correct for unproductive usage of time, enhances the preference for unusual and collectable experiences.

We demonstrate the preference for collectable experiences in a variety of contexts and domains, examining diverse populations, including revelers celebrating New Year's Eve in New York's Times Square, AARP members attending a con-

ference on retirement and aging, park visitors, train and airport travelers, and consumers who are trying to visit all 50 states. The studies examine consumers' preference ratings and open-ended responses, as well as real choices and behaviors.

The article is organized as follows. We first introduce the concept of "productivity orientation" and discuss its impact on nonvocational consumption activities. We then introduce the concept of "collectable experiences" and propose that the need for productivity drives consumers to choose collectable experiences and intentionally create special memories. Next, a series of lab and field studies are reported; these studies highlight consumers' preferences for collectable experiences and examine the relationship between such preferences and productivity orientation. Finally, we explore similarities between collecting physical objects and collecting experiences and discuss the theoretical and practical implications of the findings.

PRODUCTIVITY ORIENTATION

Productivity and time efficiency have become major concerns among consumers in modern Western societies (Rifkin 1987). The accelerated pace of life accompanying industrialization and the puritan work ethic, which discourages frivolous use of time, foster the perception of time as "the ultimate scarcity" (Gross 1987; Lewis and Weigert 1981; Weber 1930). Western society has been transformed from one with time to fill and time to spare to one that views time as a valuable resource (Liu and Aaker 2008; Mogilner and Aaker 2009; Zaubermaier and Lynch 2005) and as a thing to guard, hoard, and protect (Gleick 2000). The United States, in particular, is characterized as a "nation of clock watchers" (Bell 1976). In addition, since today's life styles offer more options, consumers are striving to "have it all" and aspire for achievements in multiple domains.

As a result of these technological and cultural trends, consumers are constantly concerned with being productive, making progress, and accomplishing more in less time—a tendency that we label "productivity orientation." This tendency is consistent with recent research on "hyperopia" (excessive farsightedness and overcontrol), which demonstrates that consumers tend to overemphasize work and production at the expense of pleasure and consumption (Keinan and Kivetz 2008; Kivetz and Keinan 2006; Kivetz and Simonson 2002).

This continual striving to use time efficiently and productively is also evident in the proliferation of time-saving products and services (e.g., labor-saving appliances, multitasking products, express lanes in fast-food restaurants) and time management books. The book *Getting Things Done*, for example, was a national bestseller. An audio version of the book is available for consumers who want to get other things done while learning "the art of productivity." Moreover, Gleick (2000, 11) argues: "Companies like FedEx and McDonald's have created whole new segments of the economy by understanding, capitalizing on—and then in their own ways fostering—our haste."

Satisfying the need to be productive has important consequences for well-being and self-worth. Economic analysis

of the "psychic cost" of unemployment finds that (controlling for other factors like loss of income) being unemployed dramatically reduces well-being, self-esteem, and mental health (Clack and Oswald 1994; Feather 1990). Similarly, one of the emotional challenges that accompany chronic pain and illness is the frustration of feeling unproductive (Pratt 2005). Consistent with these findings, the West Point Military Academy views unproductive use of time as a powerful form of punishment. Cadets at West Point are punished by walking aimlessly for hours; spending time in such an unproductive manner is seen as more painful and frustrating than alternative forms of punishments.

Research on the quality of work and leisure experiences finds that positive experiences in people's lives come more frequently from work than from leisure settings (Csikszentmihalyi and LeFevre 1989). The authors further suggest that people could improve the overall quality of their lives with a more conscious and more active use of leisure. Relatedly, Carver and Scheier (1990) propose that progress toward a goal generates positive affect, and Kivetz, Urminsky, and Zheng (2006) find that consumers are even motivated by "illusionary goal progress."

The psychological benefits from engaging in productive and purposeful activities can explain why many people who can afford to comfortably retire prefer to continue working. Since productivity is a central value in Western societies, many consumers tend to define their identity and measure their own worth in terms of productivity and accomplishment. According to Rapaille (2006, 116), "Americans very strongly believe that they are what they do in their jobs . . . they believe that if they are 'doing' nothing, then they are nobodies."

We argue that the need for productivity is so powerful that it not only drives consumers to allocate more time to work and production but also affects the kind of activities consumers pursue during the small amount of time they allocate to leisure and vacation. We propose that consumers who measure their self-worth in terms of productivity and accomplishment tend to be in "production mode" even when consuming. Such consumers do not take a break from self-evaluation even when doing so is appropriate (e.g., when engaging in nonvocational activities), and they see all situations (including leisure and consumption activities) as opportunities to be productive and accomplished. As we discuss next, one way in which consumers can feel productive and accomplished is by consuming collectable experiences.

Collecting as a Productive Activity

The hobby of collecting is a widespread phenomenon that is viewed as a constructive and fulfilling pastime activity, one which "provides collectors with a noble sense of purpose" (Belk 1995). Nearly one in every three people in North America collects something (O'Brien 1981; Pearce 1994). Since collecting is seen as "serious leisure" (Stebbins 1982), it can make consumers feel productive and provide them with a sense of progress. Consistent with this view of collecting as an act of production as well as consumption, collecting was

recommended to unemployed individuals during the great depression to enhance their sense of accomplishment and self-worth (Gelber 1991).

We propose that, just as the need for productivity and self-enhancement drives consumers to collect physical (tangible) objects, it can also motivate consumers to collect memorable (intangible) experiences. Similar to the psychological benefits of collecting physical items, consumers derive utility from collecting new experiences and “checking off” items on their “experiential check list” (or “experiential CV”). By expanding their collection of diverse experiences, consumers obtain a sense of accomplishment and progress.

Collectable Experience

What makes a consumption experience collectable? Building on Belk's (1995) definition of collecting, we define the collection of experiences as the process of actively and selectively acquiring memorable experiences as a part of a set of nonidentical experiences. Following the principle of “no two alike” (Danet and Katriel 1989), despite sharing something in common with other objects in the collection, the items making up the collection must not be identical. That is, consumers who go through experiences for the sake of collecting memories would obtain low utility from repeating the same experience.

Kenseth (1991) offers a typology for the characteristics of collectable items (natural and artificial physical objects). These dimensions, characterizing the traditional collection of objects, can be applied to the domain of collecting experiences. Table 1 lists the dimensions of collectable items and their equivalent or application in the domain of experience.

For example, the “novelty and rarity” characteristic suggests that experiences that represent rare opportunities would be more collectable. In study 2, we report a qualitative analysis that further examines the similarity between collecting objects and collecting experiences.

To conclude, we propose that a productivity orientation drives consumers to seek a sense of progress and accomplishment even when they engage in leisure activities. Moreover, we argue that consuming collectable (unusual, extreme) experiences can make consumers feel productive as they check off items on an experiential check list and build their experiential CV. A series of laboratory and field studies was conducted to test our proposed conceptualization and the notion that a productivity orientation motivates the consumption of collectable experiences. We begin by introducing and establishing the phenomenon of collecting experiences. Two studies demonstrate consumers' preference for collectable experiences: (1) a pilot study demonstrating that consumers choose collectable experiences that they predict to be less pleasurable and (2) a field study conducted on New Year's Eve in New York City's Times Square. Then two qualitative analyses explore the process of collecting experiences and examine parallels between the collection of physical items and the collection of experiences. Next, five studies demonstrate the relationship between productivity orientation and the preference for collectable experiences in a variety of consumption contexts and domains. The reported studies use different methods to measure and manipulate productivity orientation; we measure productivity orientation using self-reports (study 4), open-ended responses (study 5), and observational measures (study 6). In addition, we manipulate a

TABLE 1
DIMENSIONS OF COLLECTABLE EXPERIENCES

Dimensions of collectable objects (Kenseth 1991)	Application to collectable and memorable experiences
Novelty and rarity	Once-in-a-lifetime opportunities, activities that can only be done at a certain place or time, not available forever or not available to everyone
The foreign and exotic, strange and bizarre	Exotic food and vacation destinations. Doing things in an unconventional way, unusual celebrations
Variety (cumulative effect of diverse objects)	Accumulating diverse experiences (systematically visiting states or countries, surfing famous beaches, playing famous golf courses, bird-watching, train spotting, aircraft spotting)
The unusually large and the unusually small	Extreme experiences: extreme sports, experiencing extreme weather, extreme flavors (very spicy food), extreme emotions
Demonstration of supreme technical skill or virtuosity, triumph over difficult problems and the achievement of the seemingly impossible	Overcoming human limitations/adventurous and risky experiences (running a marathon, race car driving, high hang gliding, riding a hot air balloon, bungee jumping)
Vividness and verisimilitude	Live and authentic events. Being there (rather than watching it on TV) or watching it live (Mandel and Nowlis 2008; Vosgerau, Wertenbroch, and Carmon 2006): nature events (erupting volcano, solar and lunar eclipses, storms), media events (Olympics, concerts, celebrations, political demonstrations)
The transcendent and sublime	Visiting famous places, meeting famous people, participating in famous and important events, viewing breathtaking scenery/art performances
The surprising and unexpected	Unexpected experiences (surprise party)
The principle of “no two alike”: items making up the collection must not be identical	Once is enough: repeating an experience does not expand the collection

productivity orientation using a priming manipulation (study 7) and by creating a need to correct for unproductive use of time (study 8).

CONSUMER PREFERENCES FOR COLLECTABLE EXPERIENCES

Pilot Study: Choosing the Less Pleasurable Experience

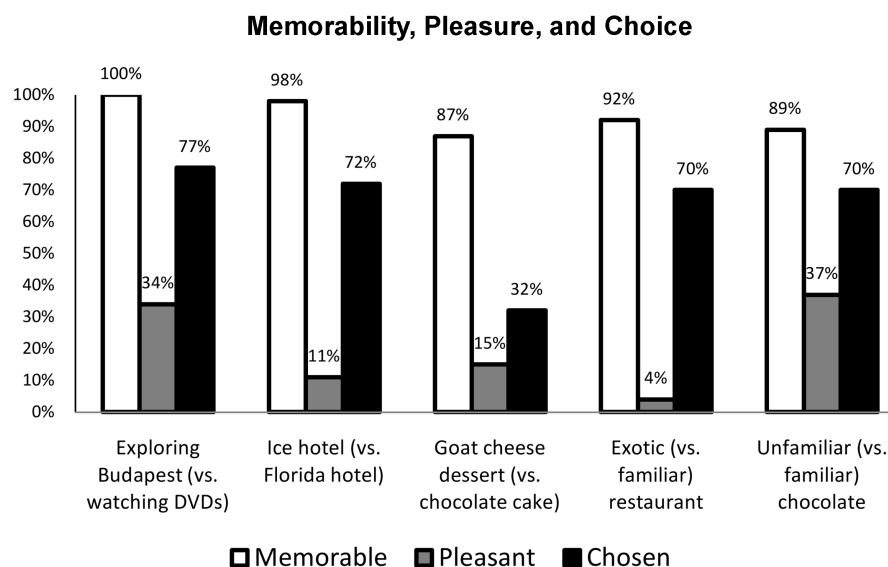
A common assumption in discussions of utility is that people generally desire and choose that which they predict to enjoy, especially in the context of leisure, nonvocational, and hedonic consumption (e.g., when choosing a vacation or a dessert). However, since collectable experiences are often extreme, unusual, and unconventional, they might be uncomfortable, less pleasurable than familiar options, and even aversive. Consumers who choose such collectable experiences are willing to trade off enjoyment for the utility derived from producing special memories. The following pilot study demonstrates that many consumers choose experiences that they predict to be less pleasurable. This pilot study also provides initial evidence that such choices are driven by a motivation to collect memorable experiences.

Method. The pilot study examined five choices in the context of leisure, nonvocational, and hedonic consumption. In each choice task participants had to choose between two alternatives. One of the alternatives was more collectable and contained several “collectability dimensions” (e.g., once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, unusual, extreme, or exotic). The other alternative was more familiar and comfortable. In the *Budapest choice*, participants were asked how they would like

to spend a 6-hour layover in the Budapest airport: either stay at the airport and watch DVDs on their laptop computer or explore the city in extremely cold weather. In the *vacation choice*, participants were asked to choose between staying at the Marriott Florida hotel and staying at a Quebec ice hotel. In the *dessert choice*, participants had to choose between a chocolate cake and a goat cheese dessert. In the restaurant choice, participants chose between a familiar and an exotic restaurant. Finally, in the *chocolate choice*, participants chose between a familiar chocolate (Ferrero Rocher) and an unfamiliar treat (“Krembo”). For each of these choices, 48 participants were asked: (1) “Which would be more memorable?” (2) “Which would be more pleasant?” and (3) “Which would you choose?”

Results. As summarized in figure 1, participants chose what they perceived as less pleasurable. In each of the five choices, the alternative that was perceived to be more memorable was also perceived to be less pleasant. But despite being less pleasurable these alternatives were chosen by the majority of participants (except for the dessert choice). For example, 77% of respondents chose exploring Budapest in extremely cold weather even though the majority (66%) predicted that staying at the airport and watching DVDs would be more pleasurable. These findings suggest that many consumers are willing to trade off pleasure for the sake of collecting memorable experiences. As suggested by the Roman philosopher Seneca, “Things that were hard to bear are sweet to remember.” In this pilot study participants were explicitly asked about the pleasure and memorability of the experience. In a study reported in the subsequent section, participants are first asked to indicate their choice. We then analyzed their

FIGURE 1
CHOOSING THE LESS PLEASURABLE EXPERIENCE (PILOT STUDY RESULTS)



open-ended responses to examine whether they spontaneously describe these experiences as pleasurable or memorable.

Study 1: The New Year's Eve Field Experiment

Study 1 examines the effect of manipulating the perceived collectability of the experience. The study explores "Spending New Year's Eve at Times Square in New York City," an experience that contains many dimensions of collectable experiences and that is rated as a popular goal on 43things.com—a Web site for listing personal goals and experiences. Interestingly, the majority of members of the 43things.com Web site who have participated in this celebration wholeheartedly indicate that it was "worth doing," but at the same time they decisively specify that "once is enough." For example, these bloggers indicate that spending New Year's Eve at Times Square "is just one of those things you *need* to do, once"; "It is totally worth doing once, but you'll want to die afterwards"; and "It is a once-in-a-lifetime kind of experience; having done it once I don't think I would ever see the need to fight the crowds and security, etc. to do it again." These comments are consistent with the principle of "no two alike," suggesting that items making up the collection must not be identical. In addition, the bloggers' comments demonstrate that consumers seek such experiences not for pleasure but rather for the opportunity to add an (often aversive) experience to their experiential CV.

On December 31, 2005, more than 750,000 people went to Times Square to watch the famous New Year's Eve ball descend from the flagpole at midnight. Revelers arrived at Times Square early in the day and stood outdoors for hours in extremely cold weather, waiting for midnight. It was predicted to snow that evening, and a pretest (confirming the obvious) indicated that snow is perceived to be an aversive experience when standing outdoors for hours in freezing weather. The main study examined whether increasing the collectability of the snow occasion or making the future utility from experiencing this event more salient can increase the preference for snow (over a clear sky).

Method. The study was conducted at Times Square on New Year's Eve. Participants were 82 revelers who were waiting for midnight and who had already been standing outdoors for several hours in extremely cold weather. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions in a 2 (utility salience: immediate vs. future) \times 2 (collectability level: high vs. normal) between-subjects design. The questionnaire first manipulated the salience of future utility. In the "immediate utility" salience condition, participants were asked: "Are you happy right now about your choice to come to Times Square tonight?" In the "future utility" salience condition, participants were asked: "Ten years from now, when you will look back at your choice to come to Times Square tonight, do you think you will be happy about your choice to come to Times Square?" The purpose of the question was to remind revelers that they are there to create a special memory, something they will remember 10 years from now when they will look back at the 2006 New Year's

Eve. Next, participants in all conditions were told: "Tonight it is expected to snow in New York." To manipulate the collectability of the event, participants in the "high collectability" condition were also told: "This would be the first time in the last 15 years that it would be snowing on New Year's Eve, in New York, at Midnight." The dependent variable was preference for snow: all participants were asked to indicate whether they hoped the sky would be clear at midnight or rather they hoped that it would snow.

Results. As summarized in figure 2, both manipulations increased the preference for snow (rather than a clear sky), and the interaction between these two manipulations was significant. A *z*-test for proportions indicated that revelers in the future utility salience condition were significantly more likely to prefer snow compared to revelers considering their immediate utility from the experience (80% vs. 54%, $z = 2.6$, $p < .05$). In addition, revelers in the high collectability condition were significantly more likely to prefer snow over a clear sky, compared to participants in the normal collectability condition (74% vs. 56%, $z = 1.7$, $p < .05$).

The interaction between the utility salience manipulation and the collectability manipulation was significant ($z = 2.5$, $p < .05$). An analysis of simple effects indicated that while revelers in the future utility salience condition preferred snow in either of the collectability conditions (76% vs. 83%, NS), revelers in the immediate utility condition were significantly more likely to prefer the snow when the snow event was perceived as a more collectable experience (73% vs. 33%, $z = 2.8$, $p < .01$).

Overall, study 1 demonstrates that consumers are attracted to less pleasurable experiences when these events are perceived to be collectable experiences and when the future utility from the experience is more salient. Next, two qualitative analyses demonstrate the consumption of collectable experiences and explore the process of collecting them.

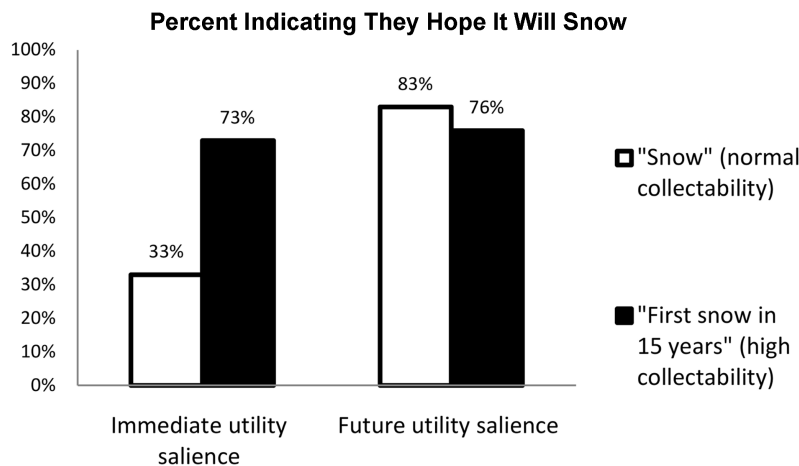
UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS OF COLLECTING EXPERIENCES

The qualitative analyses summarized below investigate the consumption of collectable experiences in the context of vacation preferences. The first analysis qualitatively examines comments of consumers who collect experiences and report their progress. The analysis explores parallels between collecting physical items and collecting experiences. The second analysis examines consumers' considerations in choosing vacation destinations and compares the consumption of collectable versus pleasurable experiences.

Study 2: Netnographic Analysis of the Process of Collecting Experiences

To gain further insight into the process of collecting experiences, we use netnography, the observational study and analysis of consumer behavior embedded in an online community (Kozinets 2002). We analyze online comments on 43things.com, a Web site that allows members to list their

FIGURE 2
THE NEW YEAR'S EVE FIELD EXPERIMENT (STUDY 1 RESULTS)



goals and report their progress. The goal "Visit all 50 States" was rated as one of the top 50 "all time most popular goals" on the Web site; more than 7,000 members identified themselves as collecting visits to states. Below we summarize and discuss the comments of these members regarding their goal to visit all 50 states.

Creating Memorable Experiences. A central issue that came up in many of the comments is defining the requirements for including an experience in the collection. Each collector creates his own rules about what experiences qualify for inclusion in the collection. Most collectors make a conscious and deliberate effort to create special experiences and memories in the states they visit:

The visit has to be more than a drive-through or a layover. I have to experience something in each state and talk to someone who lives there.

Have to spend the night in the state or at least see something unique there.

Just driving through seems like cheating.

[I] count visiting as having done something interesting and interacting with a resident.

I decided I would count them if I went somewhere memorable. I'm not crediting any states that I have flown through on layovers, or trips I don't remember as a baby. I want to remember visiting each state.

Documenting and Preserving the Experience. Collectors use different methods to keep track of the experiences they have collected. Most collectors make a list of the states they visited and keep adding states to that list, or they make a

list that keeps track of both the states they visited and the states they still need to visit: "xx down, xx to go." Many collectors use a map or an online virtual map to create a visual representation of the states they have visited.

In addition to making lists and creating maps, collectors document their experiences by collecting souvenirs, taking pictures, and writing diaries or blogs:

I collect a state-shaped magnet from each state, so then I can put them all together on my fridge.

I need to show proof that I have been there, and I can do this by posting an entry that features a picture of me with the welcome sign of whichever state I am visiting.

So far I've visited and collected a box full of postcards from 48 states.

I collect cloth patches for my jackets, caps and so forth.

Collectors also reported disappointment when they were not able to document the experience:

One thing I did notice is that while Tennessee and other states had postcards available at most truck stops, Mississippi didn't. That was disappointing.

Repeating the Experience Is Unproductive. Collectors are thrilled about every opportunity to collect more states and update their map/list, as expressed in their comments:

Vacation! I get to expand my list.

This knocks off five states I need in this 2,500 mile adventure.

Consequently, some collectors feel that returning to a state they have already visited is wasteful and unproductive:

I'm going home again for a long weekend. I can't wait to surprise my mom for her birthday, but I can't help feeling I wish I didn't have to spend money going someplace I've been before. Maybe soon I'll mark off another state but not this time around.

Last year I was upset that every time I traveled, I was going someplace I had already been.

Starting a New Collection upon Completion. The completion of a collection typically involves mixed feelings; as one collector indicated:

I'm a little sad that I can never step foot in a new state, but I love that I've done this!

Completing a collection provides a feeling of accomplishment, but it is also feared because the quest is then through (Belk 1988). This may explain why some members who reported visiting all 50 states indicated that upon completion of this collection they decided to start a new one:

Now I'm trying to do all of Europe. . . . It doesn't help that new countries keep on being created.

When I was 50 years old I visited my 50th state so it took me an average of one new state per year. That was 14 years ago. Since then I have been going back to fill in the blanks in an effort to visit each of the 3,142 counties or county equivalents in the USA.

The analysis above demonstrates one context in which consumers intentionally create and collect experiences. The behavior of these consumers who desire to visit all 50 states and the emotions associated with this process are consistent with the definition of collecting physical objects; these consumers actively and purposefully try to build their experiential CV and are very meticulous about keeping track of their progress and documenting the experiences they collect. While adding a new experience to the list provides a sense of progress and accomplishment, repeating an already collected experience, or not being able to document a new experience, leads to disappointment and frustration.

Study 3: The Consumption of Collectable versus Pleasurable Experiences

To further explore how the consumption of collectable experiences is different from consuming pleasurable experiences, we examine consumers' considerations for selecting a vacation destination. One hundred and forty-one online participants were asked to make a choice between a weekend vacation in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and a weekend vacation at an ice hotel in Quebec. After indicating their preference, all participants were asked to explain their choice. To control for variations in response format and length, all participants were asked to explain their vacation choice by completing the following sentence: "The experience of staying in that hotel would be more ____." Sixty-seven percent

of participants chose the ice hotel over the Florida hotel. The following analysis compares the explanations of participants choosing the ice hotel with the responses of participants selecting the Florida vacation.

Creating Memorable Experiences. According to our conceptualization, collectable experiences are chosen not for the immediate pleasure from the experience but rather because they provide additional utility from acquiring a new experience. While the choice of the Florida vacation was mostly motivated by pleasure seeking, many participants who chose the ice hotel viewed this vacation as an opportunity to create new and memorable experiences. Only 8% of participants who selected the ice hotel mentioned words related to immediate pleasure from the experience ("fun," "enjoyable," or "pleasant"). By contrast, 41% of participants who selected the Florida vacation specifically used the words "fun," "enjoyable," or "pleasant" ($z = 4.2, p < .01$). For example, participants described the Florida vacation as more "enjoyable because of the weather," "fun because I could go outside without getting frostbite," and "enjoyable because I adore the beach."

Moreover, while none of the participants who chose the Florida vacation indicated the experience would be memorable (0%), 27% of participants choosing the ice hotel viewed this vacation as an opportunity to purposely acquire memorable experiences and stories or described this vacation as a "memory maker" or a memorable experience ($z = 6.0, p < .01$). For example, participants described the ice hotel experience as "challenging but still a memory maker" and as "cold, new, and memorable." Another participant also mentioned that he had "been wanting to stay at one forever" since the ice hotel was on his "bucket list" (the term was coined in the movie *The Bucket List* to describe a wish list of things to do before "kicking the bucket").

Once Is Enough (The Principle of "No Two Alike"). According to our conceptualization and the principle of "no two alike" discussed in the collecting literature (Danet and Katriel 1989), consumers who go through experiences for the sake of collecting memories would obtain low utility from repeating the same experience. Consistent with this perspective, many participants who selected the ice hotel reported a preference for collecting a new experience rather than repeating what they had already experienced (even if the experience was pleasurable). Twenty-six percent of participants choosing the ice hotel indicated they chose it because they had not been there before or because they wanted to experience something new/novel/different. Only 4% of participants who chose the Florida vacation indicated that they chose it because they wanted a new experience ($z = 4.1, p < .01$).

Still more interesting, participants who had already been to the ice hotel did not see additional utility in repeating an experience they had already collected, and they chose the Florida vacation: "I have already stayed at the ice hotel, and although it was a good experience, I see no need to repeat it"; "I have never been to Ft. Lauderdale before but I have

been to the Ice Hotel.” Participants who had not been to the ice hotel also indicated that visiting it once was enough: “I would only want to go to the Ice Hotel once just to see it”; “The Ice Hotel seems to be something to do once in a lifetime.”

In conclusion, the analyses of comments by consumers collecting visits to all 50 states and consumers selecting an ice hotel vacation over a Florida vacation demonstrate that many consumers consciously and deliberately create new and special experiences in their lives. Consumers seek these novel experiences not for the immediate pleasure from the consumption but rather for the utility of creating and collecting memorable experiences. Moreover, the analyses demonstrate that, consistent with the principle of “no two alike,” repeating the experience does not expand one’s collection or experiential CV, and thus going through the experience once is enough.

Next, five studies examine when, and which, consumers are more likely to seek collectable experiences. According to our conceptualization, chronic (or situational) productivity orientation will drive consumers to select a collectable experience rather than a pleasurable experience.

THE EFFECT OF PRODUCTIVITY ORIENTATION ON THE CONSUMPTION OF COLLECTABLE EXPERIENCES

We examine the relationship between productivity orientation and the preference for collectable experiences in a variety of consumption contexts and domains, using different methods to measure and manipulate productivity orientation. Productivity orientation is measured using self-reports (study 4), open-ended responses (study 5), and observational measures (study 6). In addition, we create a productivity mind-set through priming productivity (study 7) and creating a need to correct unproductive use of time (study 8).

Study 4: Framing Experiences as Collectable or Pleasurable

The New Year’s Eve experiment examined a truly collectable once-in-a-lifetime event. By contrast, the next study explores the effect of framing a consumption experience (eating a chocolate truffle) as either a collectable or a pleasurable experience. We examine which consumers are more likely to select products that are framed as collectable experiences and predict that high productivity orientation consumers will be more responsive to product descriptions that emphasize the collectability of an experience rather than the immediate pleasure from consumption.

Method. One hundred and one students were asked to make a choice between two gourmet chocolate truffles: a chocolate truffle with caramel and a chocolate truffle with flowers and spices. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two (between-subjects) conditions, manipulating the description of the chocolate truffle with flowers and spices. In the “collectable experience” condition, the flowers-and-spices truffle was described as “unique and exotic.” In the

“pleasurable experience” condition, the same truffle was described as “tasty and delicious.”

To assess participants’ chronic productivity orientation, after responding to a series of additional unrelated studies, all participants responded to a measure examining their concerns with being productive (i.e., making progress and accomplishing more in less time). Items included in this individual differences measure were: “I get restless and annoyed when I feel I am wasting time”; “Getting on in life is important to me”; “I am an ambitious person”; and “I have always worked hard in order to be among the best in my own line.”¹

To test the validity of our productivity orientation measure, a pretest with 229 participants demonstrated that the measure is significantly correlated with a variety of self-reported behaviors and tendencies reflecting productivity orientation ($p < .05$ for all correlations). The pretest examined the following behaviors: using time productively while waiting/commuting, bringing something to do while waiting for appointments, setting a watch/clock to be a few minutes faster, pushing the “door close” button when using the elevator, finding it difficult to take a vacation without doing at least a little work while away, and having the tendency to use free time for catching up on work/household chores. These behaviors and tendencies were also significantly correlated with each other ($p > .05$ for all correlations). In studies 6A and 6B, rather than relying on self-reports, we explicitly examine these tendencies by observing respondents’ actual behavior.

Results. As predicted, there was a significant interaction between chronic productivity orientation and product description on the likelihood of selecting the product. A logistic regression was performed on choice of chocolate truffle (coded as zero for choosing the caramel truffle and one for choosing the flowers-and-spices truffle) with the following independent variables: (a) chronic productivity orientation, measured on a 1–7 scale; (b) a dummy variable for whether the product was described as pleasurable (coded as zero) or collectable (coded as one); and (c) their interaction (model fit: $\chi^2(3) = 11.2$, $p < .05$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .14$). The results showed a significant two-way interaction between chronic productivity orientation and whether the product was described as a pleasurable or a collectable experience (Wald = 5.5, $p < .05$).

To explore this interaction, we ran additional logistic regressions and performed spotlight analyses at one and two standard deviations above and below the mean of chronic productivity orientation. A spotlight analysis at two standard deviations above the mean showed a significant difference such that high productivity orientation consumers were more

¹ Items were taken from Ray’s (1984) achievement motivation (AM) scale and selected based on the AM literature and factor analyses. Our measure includes items that specifically assess respondents’ concerns with being productive (making progress and accomplishing more in less time). Consistent with the AM literature, we found that the AM scale comprises several factors. Our analysis yielded a factor measuring comparison to others, a factor measuring planning behavior, and a factor comprising the productivity orientation items listed above.

likely to choose the flowers-and-spices truffle when it was described as a collectable rather than a pleasurable experience (the coefficient for the product description dummy variable was positive and significant: $B = 2.75$, Wald = 5.8, $p < .05$). In contrast, a similar spotlight analysis at two standard deviations below the mean of productivity orientation showed that low chronic productivity orientation consumers were more likely to choose the flowers-and-spices truffle when it was described as a pleasurable rather than a collectable experience (the coefficient for the product description dummy variable was negative: $B = -2.02$, Wald = 3.6, $p < .06$). Similar results were found at one standard deviation above and below the mean. A spotlight analysis at one standard deviation above the mean showed a significant difference such that high productivity orientation consumers were more likely to choose the flowers-and-spices truffle when it was described as a collectable rather than a pleasurable experience (the coefficient for the product description dummy variable was positive and significant: $B = 1.52$, Wald = 4.9, $p < .05$). At one standard deviation below the mean, low chronic productivity orientation consumers were more likely to choose the flowers-and-spices truffle when it was described as a pleasurable rather than a collectable experience (the coefficient for the product description dummy variable was negative: $B = -.80$, Wald = 1.6, NS). Thus, the findings demonstrate that high chronic productivity orientation drives consumers to choose collectable experiences over experiences described as pleasurable. For these consumers, highlighting the collectability of the experience is more effective than emphasizing the pleasure that could be derived from the experience.

Study 5: The Retirement Study

Study 5 demonstrates the relationship between productivity orientation and the consumption of collectable experiences using a different experimental methodology (open-ended answers) and a different decision context (retirement). Studying retirement preferences is important for both theoretical and practical reasons. First, retirement is an interesting context in which to demonstrate the notion of a productivity orientation. Retirement is a period in consumers' lives in which it is both socially acceptable and financially feasible to be unproductive. However, consumers who are used to defining their identity and measuring their self-worth in terms of productivity and accomplishment would continue to seek purposeful and fulfilling activities during retirement. Dosaman et al. (2006) argue that, counter to common beliefs, many people want to remain engaged in productive activities even as they move out of the labor force. We predict that consumers who want to feel productive after they retire will pursue postretirement activities that enable them to collect experiences.

Understanding the influence of productivity orientation in retirement decisions also has important implications for marketers. Retired baby boomers (the largest, fastest-growing, and most affluent demographic group in the United States) spend large amounts of time and money on collectable experiences (e.g., adventure trips, unusual learning experiences, and educational vacations), purchase 80% of luxury

travel, and eat out more than three times a week (AARP [American Association of Retired Persons] survey 2005; boomersgroups.com 2006). Marketers can target retired consumers who seek alternative ways to satisfy their need for productivity and offer them fulfilling experiences.

Method. Respondents were 65 participants at the annual AARP conference, a national event for people ages 50 and over that offers members advice on retirement planning and a variety of ageing issues. To examine whether participants spontaneously mention a desire to feel productive after retirement, we used an open-ended question. Participants were asked to think of the kind of activities they might want to do after they retire and to indicate their preferences by completing the following sentence: "After I retire I want to do things that would make me feel ____." Next, two questions examined participants' preference for collectable experiences. Participants were asked to indicate their choice between the following postretirement activities on a 1–7 scale: "Spend vacations at luxurious resorts" (1) or "Travel and see as many places as possible" (7). Participants were then asked whether they prefer to "Experience familiar things I know I like" (1) or "Experience new things" (7). Finally, to assess the connection between collecting and documenting experiences observed in the qualitative analysis, we examined participants' tendency to document the experiences they collect. All participants were asked to indicate their agreement with the following statement on a 1–7 scale: "I like to collect souvenirs from places that I visit."

Results. To examine whether participants spontaneously mentioned a desire to feel productive after retirement, we coded their open-ended completions of the following sentence: "After I retire I want to do things that would make me feel ____." Participants' answers were coded based on whether or not they explicitly included the following adjectives: "productive," "useful," "accomplished," "fulfilled," "helpful," and "worthwhile." Twenty-four participants (37%) explicitly mentioned a desire to feel productive. The remaining 41 participants (63%) did not mention words related to feeling productive and accomplished and instead indicated that they want to feel happy, healthy, and/or relaxed. As predicted, these productivity-oriented participants were more likely to indicate that they wanted to travel and see as many places as possible rather than vacation at luxurious resorts (6.3 vs. 5.4; $t(63) = 2.4$, $p < .05$) and experience new rather than familiar things (6.0 vs. 5.1; $t(63) = 2.8$, $p < .05$). Productivity-oriented participants also reported a higher tendency to collect souvenirs from places that they visit (4.6 vs. 3.6; $t(63) = 2.3$, $p < .05$).

This study demonstrates the relationship between the need to feel productive and the preference for collectable experiences using a different methodology and consumption context. The study also demonstrates that productivity-oriented consumers like to document the experiences they collect. This finding is consistent with our netnographic analysis demonstrating the variety of ways in which consumers document their collected experiences. Next, we demonstrate the relationship between productivity orientation and the consump-

tion of collectable experiences using an alternative (observational) measure.

Study 6: Observational Measures of Productivity Orientation

The individual differences measured so far were based on participants' self-reports. Studies 6A and 6B examine more "objective" measures of productivity orientation by directly observing participants' behaviors. One manifestation of productivity orientation is the desire to use one's waiting time efficiently. According to Rifkin (1987), since efficiency has become the hallmark and trademark of contemporary culture, we tend to "loathe the very idea of idleness" during "wait states" (a term borrowed from computer science) and attempt to use waiting time in the most economical manner possible. Customers waiting for service or travelers waiting for a delayed train may feel that they are expending a scarce resource—their valuable time (Carmon, Shanthikumar, and Carmon 1995). Consequently such consumers may try to use their waiting time productively. The desire to be productive while waiting is so prevalent that CNN.com (2006) has published suggestions for airport travelers to prevent them from "idling away at the airport" and to help travelers "keep themselves occupied." Study 6A examines travelers' attempts to use their waiting time productively while sitting in a major train station's waiting area.

Study 6B examines another manifestation of productivity orientation, namely, consumers' tendency to set their watches faster than the accurate time. We conjecture that setting a watch faster reflects farsighted and planned behavior as well as a general concern with time, making progress, and "getting ahead." We predict that consumers who tend to set their watches faster or try to use their waiting time productively will be more likely to choose consumption experiences that are collectable (e.g., will prefer memorable vacations, exotic restaurants, and unusual birthday celebrations). We also predict a positive correlation between the tendency to use waiting time productively and the tendency to wear a faster watch since both are manifestations of a concern with time and, more generally, of a chronic productivity orientation.

Study 6A: Productive Waiting Time Study

Method. Participants were 57 train travelers sitting at a waiting area in a large train station in a major East Coast city. The study examined how travelers chose to spend their time while waiting for their train. The experimenter sampled only travelers who were traveling alone and wearing a watch. Before approaching each participant, the experimenter observed whether the traveler was trying to do something productive rather than sitting idle. In particular, travelers who were reading, writing, using a laptop or other electronic devices, or looking at their map/travel book were classified as "attempting to spend waiting time productively." Conversely, participants who were sitting doing nothing were classified as "not attempting to use waiting time productively."

To examine the preference for collectable experiences,

each participant was asked to make two choices. The first choice was between two vacation options: a week in Maui, Hawaii, or a week in Costa Rica. The Hawaiian vacation was described as a pleasurable experience ("Relax at a luxurious resort. Enjoy perfect weather and beautiful beaches"), while the Costa Rica vacation was described as more collectable ("Explore the authentic culture, rainforests, volcanoes, and wildlife adventures"). The second choice examined participants' preference for their birthday celebration. Participants were asked which of the following options they would prefer for celebrating their birthday: doing something enjoyable (e.g., going to a familiar restaurant) or doing something unusual and memorable (e.g., going to an exotic restaurant). After completing the survey, participants were asked to show the experimenter their watches and to indicate the exact time on the watch. The time on the participant's watch was compared to an accurate watch to examine whether the participant's watch was slow, accurate, or fast.

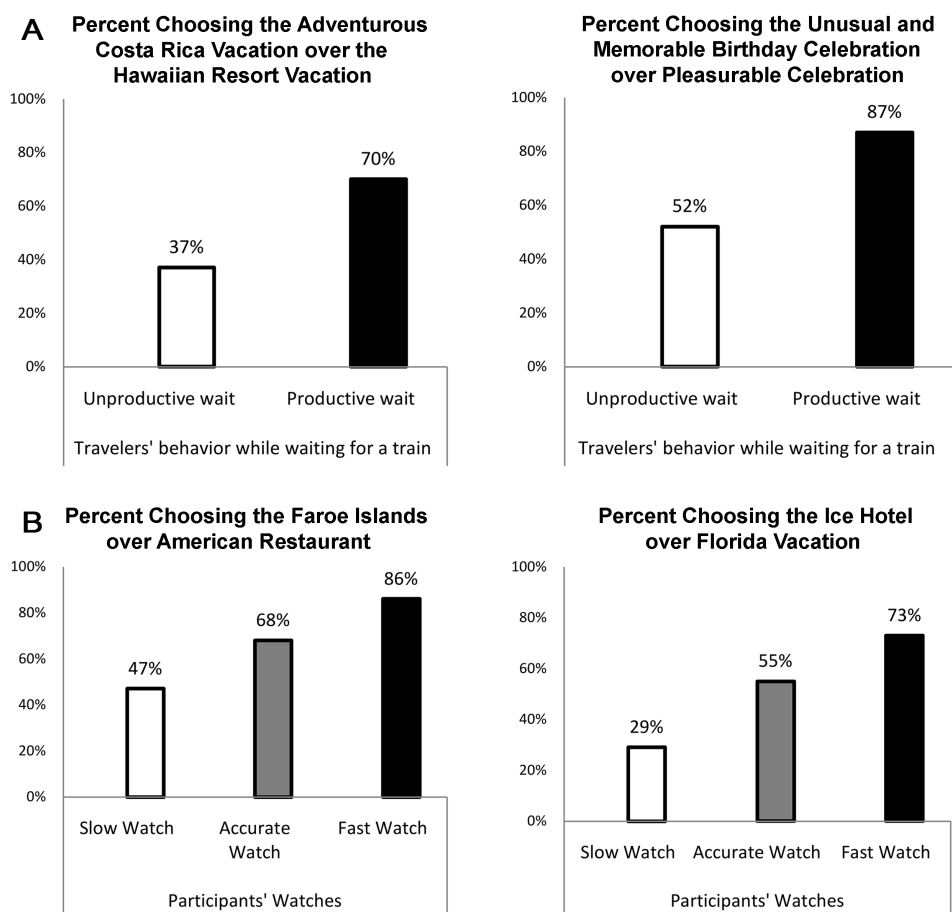
Results. As seen in figure 3 (upper panel), the differences in choice shares between the "productive" and "unproductive" participants were statistically significant and in the hypothesized direction ($z = 2.6$ for the vacation choice and $z = 3.0$ for the birthday celebration choice; $p < .05$ for both choices). Consistent with the proposed conceptualization, participants who were trying to do something productive while waiting for the train were more likely to choose the collectable experiences (70% chose the authentic and adventurous Costa Rica vacation over the Hawaiian resort vacation, and 87% chose the unusual and memorable birthday celebration over the enjoyable celebration). By contrast, participants who were not trying to use their time productively were significantly less likely to choose collectable experiences (only 37% chose the Costa Rica vacation, and only 52% chose the unusual celebration).

Moreover, the two observational measures of chronic productivity orientation were significantly correlated ($z = 2.9$, $p < .05$). In particular, while 57% of the productive travelers had a fast watch, only 22% of the travelers who were not trying to use their time productively had a fast watch. Next, we describe study 6B. This study further demonstrates that consumers who tend to set their watches faster are more likely to choose collectable experiences.

Study 6B: Fast Watch Study

Method. Participants were 61 park visitors in a major East Coast city who were wearing a watch. To examine the preference for collectable experiences, each participant was asked to make two choices. The first choice was between two restaurant options: American cuisine and Faroe Islands cuisine. The Faroe Islands restaurant was described as serving exotic and unusual food. In addition, we conducted a pretest for the Faroe Islands restaurant and found that none of the participants had ever been to the Faroe Islands or knew where it was located, and none were familiar with Faroe Islands cuisine. The second choice examined participants' preferences between two vacation destinations: a Florida vacation versus an Alaskan ice hotel

FIGURE 3

OBSERVATIONAL MEASURES FOR PRODUCTIVITY ORIENTATIONS
(3A, RESULTS FROM STUDY 6A; 3B, RESULTS FROM STUDY 6B)

vacation. After completing the survey, participants were asked to show the experimenter their watches and to indicate the exact time on the watch. The time on the participant's watch was compared to an accurate watch to determine whether the participant's watch was slow, accurate, or fast.

Results. As seen in figure 3 (lower panel), participants who set their watches faster (than the real time) were significantly more likely to choose the collectable experiences (86% chose the Faroe Islands restaurant over the American restaurant, and 73% chose the ice hotel over the Florida vacation), compared to participants who had a slow watch (47% chose the Faroe Islands restaurant, and only 29% chose the ice hotel vacation; $z = 2.8$ for the restaurant choice; $z = 3.0$ for the vacation choice; both p 's < .05). The choice shares of participants who had an accurate watch fell in-between the choice shares of participants who had either a slow or a fast watch. More specifically, among participants with an accurate watch, 68% chose the Faroe Islands restaurant and 55% chose the ice hotel vacation. The differences between these choice

shares and the choice shares of participants with either a fast or a slow watch were marginally significant.

Overall, studies 6A and 6B highlight the relationship between productivity orientation and the preference for collectable experiences using observational measures. Although these observational measures are open to alternative interpretations, they provide converging evidence for our conceptualization using a more objective measure (than self-reports) for productivity orientation.

Study 7: Priming the Benefits versus Detriments of Productivity

To further demonstrate the relationship between productivity orientation and the consumption of collectable experiences, study 7 examines the effect of activating a productivity mind-set. Consistent with our conceptualization, we predict that priming participants with the benefits of productivity will enhance the preference for unusual and

collectable experiences, compared to priming participants with the detriments of productivity. The study also examines the effect of individual difference in chronic productivity orientation.

Method. The participants were 165 students. They completed a series of (supposedly) unrelated online studies. They were randomly assigned to one of three (between-subjects) conditions. In all conditions, participants first completed a priming task, which was presented as a reading comprehension study. Participants were given a book excerpt that emphasized either the benefits of focusing on productivity (prosperity and self-fulfillment) or the detriments of focusing on productivity (stress and anxiety). In the third condition, participants were given a book excerpt that emphasized the benefits of focusing on happiness (optimism and harmony). The format of the book excerpt was identical in all conditions, and the text was kept as similar as possible.

After reading the excerpt, participants in the “benefits of productivity” condition were asked: “What do you think can be done to increase people’s focus on productivity and efficiency?” Examples of participants’ suggestions included: “Lessen time spent watching TV”; “Decrease useless meeting times in business”; “Wages based on productivity, reward those who do more with their time”; and “Make people aware of the potential they have.” In the “detriments of productivity” condition, participants were asked: “What do you think can be done to reduce people’s obsession with productivity and efficiency?” Examples of participants’ suggestions included: “Learn to take it easy and be laid back, there has to be a balance, if not you burn out”; “I’d suggest moving to the West Coast or Europe”; and “Easing the focus on having bigger, better, newer things, thus reducing the need to work obsessively to earn those things.” In the third condition (benefits of happiness), participants were asked, “What do you think can be done to increase people’s focus on happiness and joy?” Examples of participants’ suggestions included: “Encourage people to meet others in the communities around them”; “Encourage emphasis on empathy and tolerance”; and “[Have] media coverage of more good in the world than bad.”

Following the priming tasks, participants received a (supposedly) unrelated study that examined their preference for collectable experiences. Participants were asked whether they would prefer to celebrate their birthday by doing “something pleasurable and enjoyable” or “something unusual and memorable.” Participants indicated their birthday celebration preference using a 7-point scale anchored at “pleasurable” (1) and “unusual” (7).

After responding to a series of additional unrelated studies, participants completed the productivity orientation measure. At the conclusion of the study participants were probed for suspicion and asked to indicate what they thought was the purpose of the various studies. None suspected that the priming tasks were intended to influence their subsequent choices, and none guessed the actual purpose of the research or articulated the hypotheses being tested.

Results. As predicted, the main effect of priming the benefits (vs. detriments) of productivity and the main effect of chronic productivity orientation were both positive and significant. The interaction between the variables was not significant. A regression analysis was performed on consumers’ preference for the unusual and memorable celebration using the following independent variables: chronic productivity orientation (measured on a 1–7 scale) and two dummy variables for the three priming manipulations: a dummy variable for the productivity priming (coded as one for priming the benefits of productivity and zero for other priming) and a dummy variable for the happiness priming (coded as one for the happiness priming and zero for other priming). The productivity priming had a significant effect on the (supposedly) unrelated choices between a pleasurable and an unusual celebration. The dummy variable for productivity was positive and significant ($B = .88, t = 2.2, p < .05$), indicating that participants in the “benefits of productivity” condition were significantly more likely to choose the unusual and memorable celebration, compared to participants in the “detriments of productivity” condition. The preference of participants in the happiness priming fell in-between but was not significantly different from the other two priming conditions. In addition, consistent with the results of studies 4–6, participants with high chronic productivity orientation were significantly more likely to select the unusual and memorable celebration (coefficient of productivity orientation $B = .49, t = 2.5, p < .05$).

The findings suggest that both a chronic state of productivity orientation (measured using an individual difference scale) and a situational state of productivity mind-set (manipulated using a “benefits vs. detriments of productivity” prime) can enhance the preference for collectable experiences. These findings suggest that there is something purposeful and productive in the preferences for unusual celebrations and experiences. Next, study 8 examines the effect on real choices of creating a need to correct an unproductive (past) usage of time.

Study 8: Correcting Unproductive Use of Time

We argue that engaging in activities that expand one’s experiential CV provides consumers with a sense of progress and satisfies their need to feel productive. Accordingly, consumers who feel unproductive (e.g., consumers who do not obtain a sense of progress and accomplishment in their vocational activities or consumers who are unemployed or retired) may be more likely to seek “nonvocational accomplishments” and collectable experiences. In study 8, some consumers were made to feel unproductive using a manipulation that reminded them of a recent situation in which they wasted time. We predicted that causing participants to feel unproductive would enhance their (real) choices of a collectable experience over a familiar and pleasurable experience.

Method. The participants were 105 train travelers who were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: (a) feeling unproductive, (b) control, and (c) feeling excessively

productive. In the “feeling unproductive” condition, participants read the following instructions: “Please describe a specific situation from last week in which you used your time inefficiently. That is, describe a situation in which you wasted time and did not use your time productively.” The purpose of the task was to create a need to correct an unproductive use of time. In the “feeling excessively productive” condition, participants read the following instructions: “Please describe a specific situation from last week in which you were too concerned about using your time efficiently. That is, describe a situation in which you were too focused on using your time productively and did not ‘stop to smell the roses’ and enjoy yourself.” The purpose of this task was to create an excuse to focus on consumption rather than on productivity. In the “control” condition, participants were given a task unrelated to feelings of productivity. Specifically, control participants read the following instructions: “Please describe a specific situation from last week in which you had to choose between using a disposable product and a non-disposable product, and you chose to use the disposable product.”

Participants in all conditions were next offered a real choice between two lottery prizes. They were instructed to tear off the bottom half of the lottery form and keep it as a receipt. This lottery receipt had a number on it and a Web site address on which participants could subsequently check whether they had won. The two prizes, representing a familiar experience and a collectable experience were, respectively, (a) “Dinner at Carmine’s” and (b) “Dinner at Loft.” The familiar restaurant, Carmine’s, was (truthfully) described as “one of the most popular Italian restaurants in New York. Serves delicious and freshly made Italian-American classics and hard-to-resist desserts.” The exotic restaurant, Loft, was (truthfully) described as “the winner of the TimeOut 2006 Eat Out Award for Most Innovative Use of Exotic Spices. Serves a truly unusual assortment of bizarre entrees and inventive desserts.” To control for location preferences, the description indicated that both restaurants were located in the upper west side of Manhattan. At the end of the study, all participants completed the productivity orientation measure.

Results. As predicted, both the feeling unproductive manipulation and participants’ chronic productivity orientation had a significant effect on the (supposedly) unrelated choice of restaurant. The interaction was not significant. A logistic regression analysis was performed on participants’ real choices of a restaurant voucher (coded as zero for Carmine’s and one for Loft) with the following independent variables: chronic productivity orientation and two dummy variables for the three priming manipulations, a dummy variable for the “feeling unproductive” condition (coded as one, and zero for other conditions) and a dummy variable for the control condition, coded as one, and zero for other conditions (model fit: $\chi^2(3) = 8.5$, $p < .05$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .1$).

Participants in the “feeling unproductive” condition were more likely to choose the collectable experience (exotic rather than familiar restaurant) compared to participants in the feel-

ing excessively productive condition, as indicated by the coefficient of the dummy variable for the feeling unproductive condition ($B = .94$, Wald = 3.5, $p = .06$). The choice of participants in the control condition fell in-between but was not significantly different from the other two conditions. In addition, participants with high chronic productivity orientation were significantly more likely to choose the exotic restaurant (coefficient for productivity orientation $B = .45$, Wald = 4.2, $p < .05$).

Consistent with studies 4–7, the results of study 8 suggest that the consumption of collectable experiences is perceived to be more productive and purposeful than the consumption of familiar and pleasurable experiences. In particular, having dinner at an exotic rather than a familiar restaurant provides an opportunity to produce a memorable experience and build one’s experiential CV.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present research introduced two concepts that capture recent trends in time allocation and consumption preferences. We first introduced the concept of *productivity orientation*—a continual striving to use time efficiently and productively—and argued that this desire to accomplish more in less time can also influence consumption and leisure preferences. We then discussed *the consumption of collectable experiences* and proposed that consumers choose and consume experiences with the intention to add items to their experiential CV.

A series of laboratory and field studies demonstrated the relationship between productivity orientation and the consumption of collectable experiences in a variety of contexts and domains, examining preference ratings, open-ended responses, and real choices and behaviors. Our studies use different methods to measure chronic productivity orientation and to prime such a productivity orientation. The studies show that choices of unusual and novel experiences are driven (and intensified) by a need for productivity. Further, we examine the process of collecting experiences and its similarity to collecting physical items. Next, we discuss how our findings relate to the sensation seeking and variety seeking literatures.

According to the sensation seeking literature, consumers seek unusual experiences because they provide “an intrinsic pleasure from sensation” (Zuckerman 1994, 66). Building on this perspective, Andrade and Cohen (2007) show that some consumers experience positive feelings while watching horror movies. The vast sensation seeking literature is premised on the notion that the consumption of unusual and novel experiences reflects myopic, impulsive, and spontaneous tendencies and individuals (Barratt and Patton 1983; Zuckerman 1994). In contrast, studies 4–8 showed that productivity-oriented consumers were actually the ones who were more likely to choose such experiences and that priming productivity rather than pleasure enhanced the preference for unusual experiences. Study 1 also demonstrated that considering a longer term perspective increased rather than decreased the preference for unusual and collectable experiences. Our pilot study and study 3 further demonstrate that consumers knowingly

choose (collectable) experience that they predict to be less pleasurable. Taken together, these studies demonstrate that consumers choose novel experiences not for the sake of immediate pleasure but rather for the opportunity to add experiences to their experiential CV.

Like the sensation seeking literature, the variety seeking literature derives from research on the optimal level of stimulation (Berlyne 1960). Variety seeking has traditionally been explained by satiation (e.g., Menon and Kahn 1995) and more recently by preference uncertainty (Kahn and Lehmann 1991; Simonson 1990), interpersonal factors (Ratner and Kahn 2002), and evaluations of overall experience (Ratner, Kahn, and Kahneman 1999). The present research advances another antecedent of variety seeking, namely, the desire to collect diverse experiences. However, variety seeking is just one of various behaviors and tendencies that are motivated by the need to collect experiences. Many intriguing consumption phenomena cannot be explained by variety seeking but are clearly driven by the need to collect experiences. For example, some people decide to take a detour while traveling just so they can drive through another state and add it to the list of states they have visited.

Theoretical Implications and Future Research

Building on recent work by Zauberaman, Ratner, and Kim (2009) and our qualitative analysis of collectors' comments, the collection of memorable experiences can be seen as a part of a broader phenomenon that we label *memory management*. The active and farsighted management of memorable experiences could be divided into three stages: first, *creating* and *collecting* experiences; second, during the consumption experience, *documenting* and "*tangibilizing*" the experience; and finally, after the consumption experience, *preserving* (Zauberaman et al. 2009), *editing*, and *sharing* the memories. Future research could investigate the phenomenon of memory management among different populations and demographic groups. For example, consistent with research on age-related differences (Carstensen and Turk-Charles 1994; Williams and Drolet 2005), we predict that younger consumers would be more concerned with collecting new experiences and documenting ("memorizing") them, while older consumers would more concerned with preserving ("remembering") existing memories. Similarly, Olson (1985) found that young couples' favorite possessions are those that relate to their future plans and goals but that older couples' favorite objects are those that relate to their past experiences.

Relatedly, it would be interesting to further examine the relationship between collecting physical objects and collecting intangible experiences. Collectors of objects see the items in their collections "not as objects occupying a cell in taxonomy, but as a package of memories" (Belk 1995). Similarly, as seen in our qualitative analysis, consumers who accumulate memorable experiences tangibilize these by collecting souvenirs and memorabilia.

Collecting physical objects or experiences satisfies a variety of conscious and nonconscious motivations and needs.

These include a sense of progress and accomplishment, purpose and self-worth, pride and self enhancement, and a desire for status and self-expression (Baekeland 1981; Belk 1988, 1995). It would be interesting to further examine how these different motivations, and other individual differences such as social comparison and materialism, affect the type of experiences consumers choose to collect, and their individual collecting processes.

Research in sociology and anthropology has observed variations across cultures in concerns with time efficiency. Industrialized societies tend to be future oriented and tend to perceive time as a valuable resource. Members of such future-oriented societies often view present activities as means to ends rather than ends in themselves; time spent in the past that did not contribute to a desirable present state is viewed as wasted. In contrast, members of nonindustrialized or developing societies tend to be oriented to the present or past (maximizing present rather than future utility) and tend to experience time as relatively abundant (e.g., Graham 1981). Future research can examine the relationship between culture, productivity orientation, and the consumption of collectable experiences. For example, it would be interesting to explore whether countries in which the "pace of life" is faster (e.g., Japan and the United States; Levine 1990) are also countries in which collecting is more pervasive and where there is a higher tendency to spend time, money, and energy on documenting experiences (e.g., taking pictures).

Our studies examine the effect of productivity orientation on the consumption of experiences; future research can examine how productivity orientation affects purchase and consumption in other contexts, including preference for, and consumption of, tangible products. Further, it would be interesting to examine other theoretical constructs besides productivity orientation that reduce or intensify the consumption of collectable experiences. For example, future research can explore connections to the meaning in life (e.g., Steger et al. 2006) and mortality salience (e.g., Ferraro, Shiv, and Bettman 2005) literatures and examine whether such constructs motivate consumers to collect as many experiences as possible.

Marketing Implications

Traditional consumer research has focused on studying objects, not experiences. In recent years, however, there has been growing interest in the consumption and marketing of experiences (e.g., Deighton 1992; Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Mandel and Nowlis 2008; Ofir and Simonson 2007; Schmitt 2003; Shiv and Nowlis 2004; Vosgerau, Wertenbroch, and Carmon 2006). In addition to offering unusual and collectable experiences, an increasing number of products and services provide consumers with tools and advice on how to collect such experiences. Life-list books, such as *1,000 Places to Visit Before You Die* (New York Times #1 best seller) and *1,001 Foods You Must Taste before You Die*, and various Web sites help consumers check off the things they have done and create lists of experiences they want to collect in the future. The need to constantly feel productive may explain

why diddit.com, a Web site for collecting experiences, was rated as one of the “top Web sites to visit when you are laid off,” potentially offering unemployed members a sense of fulfillment and achievement.

The tendency to see experiences as a part of a set or collection of nonidentical experiences provides both challenges and opportunities for marketers. Since collectable experiences are, by definition, the kind of experiences consumers want to go through only once, it may be difficult for marketers of such experiences to achieve high customer loyalty and retention. To address this challenge and encourage repurchase, marketers can frame each service encounter as a nonidentical experience that is a part of a set of collectable experiences. For example, The Crazy Horse Bar in Bloomington, Indiana, has a loyalty program titled “Around the World in 80 Beers.” Instead of a single experience, this bar offers a set of 80 nonidentical experiences to collect. Customers of the Crazy Horse Bar receive a card with a checklist of 80 domestic and imported beers and get their card punched every time they try a new beer. Such loyalty programs that motivate customers to collect diverse experiences may be more effective than traditional loyalty programs in capturing the loyalty of “butterfly consumers.” In such programs, the consumption is seen as an opportunity to form and complete a collection. Similarly, Hard Rock Cafe positions each of its restaurants as a different experience and encourages customers to visit all Hard Rock Cafe locations.

As discussed earlier, documenting is an integral part of collecting memorable experiences. Providing customers with the opportunity to tangibilize the experience can both increase the attractiveness of the collectable experience and provide an additional source of revenue for the experience provider. The aforementioned bar, for example, provides an opportunity to document the collection of beer experiences by providing customers with a checklist of the 80 beers, a souvenir T-shirt, and a plaque upon completion of the list. Moreover, memorabilia are usually sold at a premium. The value consumers place on such souvenirs is the value of, or the utility from, remembering the experience.

Our findings suggest that marketers of unusual consumption experiences and innovative products should target consumers who are concerned with being productive (and collecting experiences). The retirement study further suggests that marketers should target the 80 million baby boomers who will retire over the next decade and seek fulfilling activities and collectable experiences. In addition, marketers could target consumers who are reaching significant milestones in their lives (e.g., graduating, celebrating significant birthdays or anniversaries). Such milestones are often viewed as deadlines for personal checklists. These are times when consumers tend to take stock of their achievements and experiences and question whether they have “made the most out of their lives.” For many consumers feeling that “they lived” means having accumulated diverse experiences. As Jean Jacques Rousseau once said, “The person who has lived the most is not the one with the most years but the one with the richest experiences.”

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