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<div align="center">The Anthropology of Business Marketing</div>

1. Introduction

The objective of this review is to explore the research surrounding anthropologists work

in business marketing. Seemingly everywhere, anthropology is applied to business marketing,

because anthropologists understand consumer behavior more explicitly and delve deeper than

business marketers without the background in anthropology. An anthropologists understanding

of culture bridges a gap between firms and consumers as they are interpreted through a different

lens and a stronger bond is developed. I seek to review the anthropology of business marketing

through the four sections of benefits of business anthropologists, the issues that are revealed

through anthropology in corporation, the heighted understanding of consumer behavior, and

lastly, the effects of business anthropology on society.

2. Benefits

The application of anthropology to the marketing research of businesses creates endless

benefits from our society as an entirety down to the individual consumer. With the assistance of

an anthropologists research for a company, a deeper interest in the subject erupts and complex

connections arise. Given that an anthropologists research delves deeper than what is asked of

them, clients become interested in the data relating to "cultural or geographical contexts" that the

anthropologist was able to provide through their analysis of the entire issue. Desjeux finds that

most clients interests will extend well beyond the originally assigned anthropological

investigation (Desjeux 2016, 76). Anthropological literature sparked intense interest in consumer

research that highlights the cultural and social complexities of consumption (Desjeux 2016, 76).

Joy and Li (2012) provide the contextual, symbolic, and experiential aspects of consumption as it

unfolds through an anthropological lens of the consumption cycle. (Desjeux 2016, 76) also

concludes that consumer consumption through anthropology creates "a distributed view of

society." Moreover, publishing empirical investigations benefits society through the formation of

links between academic knowledge and the world of companies (Desjeux 2016, 70). This keeps

brands educated and in tune with the needs and wants of society. Desjeux also details what

anthropology shows, when applied to consumption, is that the brand does not have much

meaningful value with relation to the usage and purchase of a product." He finds that the

purchase is the result of a collective activity, which can be found at the microsocial level, but

also at the tensions surrounding the regulation of the game of consumption" (Desjeux 2016, 71).

Malefyt expands on this idea of a society as a whole as he finds that when anthropologist

integrate internal objectives of the clients brand with larger insights about cultural conceptions of

health and wellness, then they are informing the client as to how they shape values and beliefs

towards their product (Malefyt 2017, 96). Anthropologists paved the path for companies to brand

products in a manner which benefits society as a whole.

In the 80s and 90s, large scale corporations aimed at mass consumption believed that the

brand, brand loyalty, and the territory of the brand its assets were the key explanatory factors for

its purchase by consumers. This made it complicated to sell anthropology to mass corporations

as it proposes that social actors of a society are the key to a brand, not the brand name itself.

With this being said, the immersion of anthropology within businesses began with private companies as it allowed them to solve their problems better, and approach problems in a more efficient manner than marketing or from management consultants (Desjeux, 2016). Desjeux states that for anthropology to be accepted into a company, "its results must be reinterpreted and transformed by actors who are seeking to develop a new good, a new service, more economic consumption, or aid for the poorest" (Desjeux, 2016 75). Once companies realized anthropologists contributed to innovation and keeping the products current, the use of anthropologists became more frequent. Anthropologists are "equipped to understand, assess, and translate across organizational, occupational, and national-culture boundaries, as well as the designer- user and producer-customer interfaces" (Graffman). Additionally, anthropologists provide a reminder that if a company wishes to innovate, it must constantly take into account unresolved problems in the daily lives of users, something companies often tend to forget, as they focus instead on the brand and the internal logic which it functions (Desjeux, 2016 75). Anthropology for companies provides not only a vision of society but also an analysis of the field of forces within a company is aligned with. Malefyt suggests that every company in the future will need a cultural anthropologist, someone who carries the anthropological way of thinking into the "heart of the company" and makes it part of its strategic thinking. Hopefully, with time, anthropological knowledge and theories will in the future be regarded as of strategic importance for business rather than merely as another tool for market research.

Lastly, the consumer reaps the benefits of anthropologists involvement to corporations the greatest, as culture and value is brought to the products and services developed. Dejeux highlights the respect to social usages of anthropology by companies, "is that the anthropological

tool provides a real contribution with respect to knowledge of the final user—whether it be a consumer, a company, or a department within a company, which orders the anthropological investigation." (Desjeux 2016, 75) Anthropologists taught marketers to embrace routine behavior, and make the brand more sensorially engaging and personally fulfilling by adding their own refinements and by developing their own skills; which made the brand more meaningful emotionally with their own symbolic references (Malefyt 2015, 13). Malefyt's story about consumers shows businesses creating products aimed at 'avoiding' problems in life and would be most relevant in communicating the cultural and social values of society as each society differs in issues. In this way, anthropologists integrated ideas from their factual observations with larger cultural perspectives about the way healthy foods in Malefyt's research expressed a positive disposition and avoided problems in the consumers life, blending both material and lifestyle into a framed narrative about the consumer that reflected ideas for a positive advertising campaign (Malefyt 2017, 97). Anthropologists investigations throughout companies created "relationship-building forms part of the knowledge and power base of the organization" and can encompass the negotiations that happen between a business and its clients which often leads to a future made of mutually beneficial collaborations (Peluso 2017, 15). The trends of interconnectedness between consumers and businesses creates a society constructed of high levels of understanding and significance.

    2. Issues

    As anthropology is categorized as a liberal art, its unorthodox background made it hard to sell to large businesses and corporations. Graffman explains that "the notion of culture was poorly defined [in the business industry] and thus regarded as fuzzy: '*they* want facts and

figures'" (Graffman 2013, 145). The structures of the businessworld creates challenges for anthropologists to develop ways to communicate their ideas to numerical based businessmen. Desjeux demonstrates this challenge as he remarks the biggest weakness of anthropology for business is that [he does] not seek to enchant reality, which is often something that is asked for by the client. Instead, I seek to show the world as it is—with its resistances, its power relations, and its consumers as autonomous actors, with problems to resolve and, today above all, with the ability to oppose what is imposed on them by companies." (Desjeux 2016, 72) An anthropologists raw and straightforward interpretations conflict with the sugarcoated projections of the business industry.

Another conclusion is that anthropology only represents part of the solution. The constraints of production related to the machines which manufacture the products, the constraints of financing which limit or promote investment in favour of an innovation, and the modes of management, which may or may not promote flexibility within companies, all often have an influence which is greater than the knowledge provided by anthropology. (Desjeux 2016, 72) Presenting the result in a way which is relevant to the business and makes sense to the client are important elements anthropologists must master if they want to succeed in the businessworld. When working in business, anthropologists must learn to make the most plausible conclusion while taking into account the facts that are surrounding the issue presented.

Through anthropologists work in the corporate field, it has been revealed that unethical business practices have been masked by marketing tactics. Kaba's work in a plantation labeled as "Fair Trade" which consists of biological and biodynamic farming and he debunks the idea that "Fair Trade" work creates better work environments for workers. Through his ethnography of the

plantation, he notes the Fair Trade institutions allow the planter to market the product as a socially responsible tea. Kaba reveals that the institutions are not keen on the idea of supporting any efficient corporation representing the labor force interests or rights. (Kaba 2016, 32). He provides research on how Fair Trade actually fuels a system which results in the disempowerment of workers as social actors. Kaba exposes the unethical practices that go on behind corporate doors and reveal marketing tactics that are culturally praised. He concludes his research as it, "Finally, it seem clear that the labeling organizations who supply this tea in the Western world by labelling it "Fair Trade" have, probably unintentionally, allowed for the marketing of more expensive tea while sacrificing workers' empowerment. Fueling the system with the extra money collected, the plantation has benefited from the Fair Trade system, but undermined its workers' ability to demand and receive more and better labor rights" (Kaba 2016, 37). Morais and Malefyt support this claim of unethical behavior as they discovered that not all marketers consult with their customers or have their customers' best interests in mind, and some marketing and advertising points consumers toward specific brands in a way that benefits the manufacturer more than consumers. They also concluded their investigations with the understanding that some marketing agendas are "ethically grey" (Morais and Malefyt 2014, 8). Anthropologists now must make conscious decisions of how to help company's brand wisly while maintaining ethical integrity as corporations tend to lack empathy and the understanding of real life consequences.

3. Consumer Behavior

When looking at why consumers make decisions in the marketplace, conservatives determine that the molding of consumers tastes and preferences by the advertising and

high-pressure sales efforts of corporate business is nothing but a fallacy, because in the long run no amount of persuasion and no ingenuity of commercials "can change 'human nature,' and can force upon the consumer what he does not want" (Wilk and Arnold 2016, 8). Continuing with this conservative notion, "the consumer's revealed preferences have nothing in common with the traditional notion of consumer choice, that the power of the giant corporations is such as to mold consumers tastes and preferences for the benefit of corporate interests, and that all of this has a deleterious effect on both our economy and our society" (Wilk and Arnold 2016, 8-9). This theory of marketing builds on the idea that businesses construct consumers tastes and preferences for their benefit yet, cannot fully change the human nature that is present. Anthropologists debate on this interpretation of consumer behavior as a liberal approach puts the consumers at blame. The liberal approach examines the the consumers preferences, and how these preferences seem to be the source of "societies irrational allocation of resources" (Wilk and Arnold 2016, 9). Wilk and Arnold support this by Baran's theory that "human desires are insatiable [which] gives rise to constant discontent in the human mind and a weariness of the things they possess" (Wilk and Arnold 2016, 9).

The conservative approach is heavily supported by anthropologists as they find consumption has the ability to shape and produce culture in the marketplace. Garth and Powell's ethnography of the retail store, Alba, in Los Angeles described how it was not merely access to necessities and daily needs, the store also has the potential to shape behavior and produce culture (Garth & Powell 2017, 193). This is supported by Joy and Li (2012) as they found that "since consumers take pleasure in, and partially craft their identities through, their consumption," it gives corporations the power to mold wants and desires (Joy & Li 2012, 157). The conclusions

of the store Alba defined 'retail brand' as "a conceptual project—whether located in a physical space or online, but always also a site for cultural imagination—that seeks to guide shoppers toward the sale of a particular combination of goods for use, consumption, or gifting." (Garth & Powell 2017, 176). While many forms of a brand are involved in cultural production, the retail brand plays a simultaneous role as a cultural producer and mediator, with unique opportunities to shape habits and expectations of consumerism.(Garth & Powell 2017, 176). This is also explored through advertising by Malefyt as it "produces associative relationships between ideas and things, various groups, institutions and individual people, within varying circumstances and changes in the political, economic and social milieu" (Malefyt 2017, 91). This relates to Garth and Powell's investigation of the way in which a retail space is crafted establishes clear links between brand strategies and cultural production. This aids the building of identity of a space that people interact with in particular ways, which reveals individuality or the emergence of collective identities (Garth & Powell 2017, 193). Anthropologists note in which the ways humans attend to what is cued by culture, rather than hold that humans perceive and understand universally. In particular, Malefyt notes how anthropologists seek to learn culturally specific concepts and practices of experience that shapes people's everyday interactions and discover what is meaningful in life based on the individual and culture (Malefyt 2015, 8).

In contrast, many studies on the link between consumer behavior and sensory experiences support the liberal approach of humans paving the structures of consumerism. Joy and Li use a cultural approach in discussing consumption as an extraordinary experience filled with "the emotional luxury of delight, novel sensations, and intellectual insight," showing that consumption is habitual, addictive, and even ritualistic (Joy & Li 2012, 158). Wilk and Arnold

describe a major motivation was the Cuna desire to mimic the dress and behavior of the foreign groups which they most admired. They concluded that these desire were "largely unconscious" as they found identity through "imitation and emulation" of the English speaking whites which was interpreted as an outcome of "free selection" (Wilk and Arnold 2016, 11). Marcoux, in particular shows how consumers use the market to free themselves from "the straitjacket of social expectations and the sense of indebtedness" (Joy & Li 2012, 144) which can also lead to the rediscovery of identity. Malefyt's research of the senses in anthropological and marketing research supports the theory that humans desires are the reason for the way consumer consumption is shaped. He explains that "senses as biologically determined and universally fixed, to more interactive, adaptable and fluid concepts of the senses that are continuously shaped by culture, geography and history" (Malefyt 2015, 5). Furthermore, he details that senses are a form of social patterning within a specific culture, and reveals that senses are linked to emotion, memory and experience (Malefyt 2015, 7). Garth and Powell made similar discoveries about the importance of senses as they "discovered new ways to deliver distinctive and memorable proprietary experiences, as well as encouraging certain types of behaviors or ways of thinking and making sense of the world." (Garth & Powell 2017, 193). They link the concept of sensory experiences to how consumers make sense of the world, therefore influencing consumer behavior. Malefyt delves deeper into the way business marketers increasingly explore the senses and consumer's sensory response to brands in order to create a deeper, more personal experience with their products and services. He makes the differentiation that anthropologists view the senses as a form of social interaction, while marketers seek to maximize consumer brand relations by targeting specific sensory responses to consumption (Malefyt 2015, 6).Malefyt

concludes that "as we sense we also make sense" further supporting consumers understanding of the world through sensory in consumption (Malefyt 2015, 7).

4. Effect of Business Anthropology on Society

Anthropology leaves a greater impact on our consumer world through the meaningfulness of consumer goods produced. These anthropological investigations of holistic relations among consumers, brands, and everyday ritual practices communicate "the rich sensorial world of pleasure about us that centers our lives and those of consumers" (Malefyt 2015, 24). Without the help of anthropologists, the intensely pleasurable and desired world we live in today, would not exist. Anthropologists discovered that "the retail medium may emerge as a powerful mediator, potentially shaping shopping behaviors and influencing consumer culture, as well as negotiating relationships between local communities and globalized corporate and legal structures" (Garth and Powell 2017, 180). Between consumers and brands, people and environments, memory and practice, and individual and community; these anthropological studies can better inform consumer researchers the ways in which "the senses mediate the relationship between self and society, mind and body, idea and object" (Morais and Malefyt 2014, 3). This connects to how the advancement of retail goods emerging are maintained by anthropologists communicating between consumers and brands strong which has required "a more complex learning process than soap, washing powder, or shampoo" which were the products researched during the early cross of anthropology and business days (Desjeux 2016, 71). Business anthropologists not only provide information on the motivations and senses which consumers are drawn to, but also works on providing a vision of society, an analysis of the field a company acts within, and a following of social movements which contribute to consumers daily lives. Anthropologists can

additionally, track the innovation of new technologies which may or may not threaten its

business plans (Desjeux 2016, 76). As interconnectedness heightens, the Westernization of

consumption increases along with it.

Anthropologists research in business has shown that whether it is our desires or the power

of firms, our culture is deteriorating and reaping negative benefits from our consumption

choices. Wilk and Arnold contribute to this as they bring up the idea of "telling poor people

about products they have the money to buy right now, such as Coca Cola and Twinkies, opens up

new horizons" (Wilk and Arnold 2016, 13). These new horizons ultimately leads to the harmful

changes in society as ethics are being put aside as "traditional peoples are 'seduced' into

dependence on imported manufactures and foodstuffs, through a process of luxuries become

necessities " (Wilk and Arnold 2016, 11). Malefyt supports this as he remarks that in Western

society, concepts of success and identity are ideologies ingrained in material culture (Malefyt

2015, 23). This supports Wilk and Arnolds argument that non-Western items are being

Westernized and Malefyt further explains how the world of advertising is socially constructed

(Malefyt 2017, 95). Given this, anthropologists increasingly must address the issue of how to

deal with and study new forms of cultural diversity, which is relevant to business anthropologists

as they manage and produce results for corporations within and across an increasingly global

society. The moral dilemma for anthropologists is that they must build towards "an

understanding of integration of cultural diversity in other cultures different from our own"

(Morais and Malefyt 2014, 3).

5. Conclusion

This review brings light and attention to the immersion of anthropologists in the business world as it is a fairly recent field of research. It is important for our world of consumerism to be understood by corporations and by the consumers themselves. Anthropologists still cannot agree on whether it is the businesses or the consumers who are at blame for the deleterious direction consumerism is heading. The benefits, issues, understanding of consumer behavior and its effects on society have been explored through this paper. The benefits of anthropologists that strike the business world begin with the consumer and flourish through the rest of society as cultural understanding is accomplished. Issues surrounding business anthropology can be found in the tasks asked of anthropologists to their discoveries of unethical practices revealed through their research. Consumer behavior would not be what it is today, without the connections between sensory experiences and cultural ties. Lastly, all of the meaning of the previous subheadings is revealed through the effects of this research on society; through the changes, advancement and distribution of power between consumers and firms as anthropologists discover that consumption is simply a reflection of culture.

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