Consumer Behavior
(SOSK-508)

Individuality in Consumption

Joel Hietanen
Centre for consumer society research
University of Helsinki
Identity /// Community /// Authenticity
The Perfect Real Body
THE CLEANER YOU ARE  THE DIRTIER YOU GET

NEW IMPROVED AXE SHOWER GEL
"I have heard to-day that his father keeps a stork!"
FREEDOM
CHOICE
(AGENCY)

BOUNDENESS
DISCIPLINE
(STRUCTURE)
Classic ‘self’ making decisions

Daniel realizes he’s fed up with a b/w TV that has bad sound.

Daniel talks to friends about buying a new TV.

Daniel compares models in terms of available features.

Daniel chooses the one with a feature that appeals to him.

Daniel brings home the TV and enjoys his purchase.
Demographics
Psychographics
Practices, social structures & myth
Pomo is not a thing or movement – it is an attitude, a cultural tendency

Grand narratives, progress, meaning, future

What is this tendency? What kinds of consumers does it produce?
Identity is not stable but is rather in constant flux

Consumers’ identity projects are far more contingent that what the literature typically assumes

Identity is in constant paradox which is both mitigated and facilitated by the market
Identity projects have been seen as naively *open to anyone*

How much of us are *of the individual* versus *of the communal*?

Question of *materiality* versus *immateriality*?
Psychoanalytic approach to consumer culture

Real desires have nothing to do with needs or even wants, but are repressed in society and channelled through consumption options – objects that temporarily reduce anxiety by building Bridges between the fantasy and reality

This creates paradoxical and discontent subjects, but also ones that follow the rule of fantasy with controllable discipline

Perhaps the individual’s freedom and choice are such fantasies?
Psychoanalysis goes against stable identities – in the extreme we’re all just neurotics, perverts and psychotics (in a theoretical sense)

We thus inhabit fantasy worlds we treat as reality

The goal is to examine the irrationality of the subject and the consumer culture it inhabits
A group of hipsters eating lunch
Identity politics!
In academic usage, the term has been used to refer to a wide range of political activities and theoretical analysis rooted in experiences of injustice shared by different social groups [for] challenging externally imposed characterizations, instead of organizing solely around belief systems or party affiliations. Identity is used as a tool to articulate political claims, promote political ideologies, and guide political action with the aim of asserting group distinctiveness and gaining power and recognition in the context of perceived inequality or injustice. (Wikipedia)
Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything.
Socially liberal, fiscally conservative

WE WELCOME ALL RACES
ALL RELIGIONS
ALL COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN
ALL SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS
ALL GENDERS
WE STAND WITH YOU
YOU ARE SAFE HERE

RESTROOMS ARE FOR CUSTOMER USE ONLY
Shut the fuck up and listen, sh*t posters. PAMU is entirely comprised of POCs and slavic allies so i better not hear your disgusting wh*te coloniser sunburned mouth flaps in the comments. This is the PAMU ideological commandments. Any deviation from the party line will be met with vicious attacks from our 10 follower twitter:

1. wh*te people are demons from hell
2. do not ever talk over pocs
3. POCs cannot be terfs
4. POCs cannot be racist
5. wh*te cis women cannot be feminists
6. being cis or hetero is offensive, stay in your lane
7. gay men are at best honorary allies
8. Pewd*ep*e is not funny so should be banned
9. "arguments" are micro-aggressions, stay in your lane
10. STAY IN YOUR LANE
11. 🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣🤣�
12. If you don't laugh at gulag jokes you get the gulag haha
13. anti-vaxxers are comrades
14. prostitution is emancipatory
15. SEX WORK IS WORK
16. memes are a gateway to fascism
17. the world is your safe space, keep it that way
18. there is no "human nature", if there was its racist
19. anarchic communism DOES NOT deteriorate into a state
20. pls buy my 500$ antifa jacket, im too big to use it anymore
21. "idenititarianism" is a vile slur created by disgusting cis gendered white hetero males
22. men are Rapists before proven Rapists
23. if they ask you for "f*cts", send them a reputable news source like VICE
24. do not waste emotional labour on educating the ignorant, make them feel guilty for being so
25. homosexuality is a choice
26. hit them where it hurts, an
WE HAVE NO NAMES

BUY AND NAME US