

Transformative Consumer Research Conference 2017 Track Description

Healing Multiculturalism: Challenges, Tensions and Opportunities

Track Participants

[List of participants here.]

Statement of Problem

The proclaimed crisis of multiculturalism besets many contemporary societies such as the USA, UK, France, reaching unprecedented levels. Researchers are highlighting the role of the marketplace in contributing to these tensions. Yet, the marketplace can also be an enabler of intercultural conviviality. Cultural meanings embodied in consumption objects (goods), experiences (services) and images (advertising) (re)produced by marketplace actors (brands and organisations) and (re)interpreted by consumers can spark, facilitate and legitimize harmful (prejudicial, discriminatory) as well as positive (inclusive) discourses extending far beyond 'market transaction' (Penaloza, 1994; Arnett, 2002). Research in this area is in its infancy. Considering the salience of the issue today, when the well-being of many consumers is threatened, it is critical for TCR scholars to better understand the different ways the marketplace can either inflame or heal the current so-called 'crisis of multiculturalism'. In particular, while the potential of market-conveyed meanings to de-stabilize individual and group cultural identities by generating/exacerbating harmful cultural associations and cognitions received attention (Broderick et al., 2011; Kipnis et al., 2013; Visconti et al., 2014; Schroeder and Borgerson, 2005), only a handful of studies address consumption's potential to bridge cultures and heal culture-informed social rifts (Elliott et al., 2014; Seo and Gao, 2015; Cross and Gilly, 2014).

Selected organisations and brands are attempting to combat discourses of culture-informed prejudice and are acting as ideological advocates for multicultural conviviality. Examples include MTV's Look Different campaign, General Mill's 'Grace' Ad, Ben&Jerry's #disagreewithlove campaign, the companies such as PayPal, and IBM protesting the LGBT legislation, and the social enterprises aiming to support products, projects and spaces that bridge cultures (e.g. <http://www.freepeopleinternational.com/>). As such, 'reconciliation brands' are a recently identified trend (<http://trendwatching.com/trends/10-latin-trends-for-2015/>). However, to the best of our knowledge these attempts are intuitive and lack the underpinning of science-informed models that take account of the nuances required to navigate multicultural societies' complexity.

Track Goals

The broad goal of the track is to unpack the healing potential of the marketplace in the crisis of multiculturalism. Continuing on from earlier work from TCR 2011, 2013 and 2015, we also seek to build a more engaged scholarship approach to influencing the healing role of the marketplace and defusing its threatening potential for conviviality in multicultural societies. More specifically, our team will pursue the following three key objectives focused on advancing knowledge and developing tools to enhance conviviality and reduce the damaging impact of stereotyping, prejudicial and other practices in multicultural marketplace interactions on societal well-being:

- 1) To design a multi-country programme of empirical research examining whether, how and what experiences in consumptionscapes affect identity threat cognitions;
- 2) To consolidate extant knowledge on practices of consumption that enable multicultural adaptiveness skills development and support bridging of cultural difference;
- 3) To identify pathways for maximising the societal awareness and impact of our work through collaborative development of a programme of outputs and actions following relational engagement approach (Ozanne et al., in press).

The track brings together an international, multicultural and multidisciplinary team of researchers and practitioners. In the tradition of TCR community we also open to applications from junior researchers interested in participating in the track (see below on how to apply).

Track Structure

Preconference: Consolidating conceptual foundations and gaining initial practical grounding

To meet the objectives of the track our team will focus on: 1) developing a conceptual model for understanding how marketers as individual researchers and practitioners, as well as brands and organisations they are engaged with, can enable and sustain multiculturalism as a lived experience in the marketplace; 2) designing and planning implementation of an empirical study/studies underpinned by the focal problem and expertise of track members; and 3) identifying pathways and agreeing actions for engaging stakeholders beyond academia we will pursue. Given the multidisciplinary nature of our track, preconference work will concentrate on bringing together and consolidating disciplinary and theoretical perspectives of the track members to form a shared conceptual understanding of the healing vs damaging potential influences of the marketplace interactions on multicultural conviviality and wellbeing. The schedule of preconference work has already been agreed by the confirmed track members. Newly joining track members will need to plan on committing to at least five days to preconference work that will include working on the following tasks:

Identifying key areas of focus: each track member will be invited to provide 1-2 research questions they would suggest are pertinent to address for addressing the research problem;

Building a shared understanding of core literature: each track member will be asked to identify key papers that all track members should read. Track chairs will consolidate these individual contributions into a list of preconference readings for all to complete.

Integrating practical evidence: each track member will be asked to collect and share case examples (individual observations/reflections and/or media coverage on market actors, environments and interactions) that showcase instances of marketplaces artefacts and interactions impacting or having potential to impact (positively and/or negatively) multicultural conviviality.

Initial model development: the track chairs will organise and facilitate two 'virtual' team brainstorms via video-conferencing, for collaborative development of an initial conceptual model that will form basis for our work at the conference. The chairs will prepare a draft poster presenting the initial model and gathered illustrative examples. The poster will be finalised during the conference day 1 and presented as part of evening track poster session.

During the conference: Finalising conceptual development and planning actions

The goal of the work at the conference is to finalise development of the conceptual framework, collaboratively design the planned empirical study and agree strategies for maximising impact that will underpin outputs of our track. Building on the framework of Relationship Engagement for Impact by Ozanne and colleagues (in print), we anticipate to collaboratively produce at least two joint papers, as academic knowledge products. The first (publication 1) will be a conceptual paper integrating the developed model and illustrative case examples to provide a science-informed model for brand and organisational ideological advocacy of multicultural conviviality and reconciliation through their marketing activities. The second paper (publication 2) is planned to be developed from a joint empirical study, to be designed at the conference. Outputs relating to other strategies for impact beyond academia will be discussed and agreed during the conference.

Conference Day 1 – morning session: reflect on and refine conceptual model; finalise poster; prepare for poster presentation.

Conference Day 1 – afternoon session: publication 1 planning and task assignment; commence empirical study design; brainstorm other strategies for impact beyond academia.

Conference Day 2: finalise empirical study design; agree actions for impact beyond academia; task assignment and wrap-up.

Post-conference: Implementation of Planned Outputs and Actions

As outlined above, the schedule of post-conference work is planned across 12 months following the conference and includes development of at least two publications, implementation of an empirical study and a programme of non-academic outputs and actions to raise societal awareness and impact of what we learn.

We will prepare publication 1 for submission to the Journal of Business Research within the deadlines for the Special Issue on 'Transformative Consumer Research: Increasing Impact through Relational Engagement'. We anticipate to implement the pilot and main empirical studies by end of February 2018 and to finalise data analysis by April 2018, with a target to prepare publication 2 for submission by September 2018. The target outlet for publication 2 will be decided collectively during the conference.

We anticipate the plan of actions for achieving impact beyond academia to emerge as a collective product of our work at the conference. One possible platform we may use is the Multicultural MICS (Markets, Interactions, Consumption, Society) Research Network (see [@MICSNetwork](#)) established by the track co-chairs.

References

- Arnett, J. J. (2002). The Psychology of Globalization, *American Psychologist*, Vol 57(10), pp.774-783.
- Broderick, A.J., Demangeot, C., Kipnis, E., Zuñiga M., Roy, A., Pullig, C., Mueller, R.D., Mandiberg, J.M., Johnson, G., Henderson, G.R., Ferguson, N.S., and Adkins, N.R. (2011a). No Harm done? Culture-based branding and its impact on consumer vulnerability: A research agenda, *Social Business*, Vol. 1 (3), pp.263-280.
- Broderick, A.J., Demangeot, C., Adkins, N.R., Henderson, G.R., Johnson, G., Kipnis E., Ferguson, N., Pullig C., Mandiberg, J.M., Mueller, R.D., Roy, A., and Zuñiga, M. (2011b). Consumer empowerment in multicultural marketplaces: navigating multicultural identities to reduce consumer vulnerability, *Journal of Research for Consumers*, Issue 19, pp.1-13.
- Crockett, D., Anderson, L., Bone, S.A., Roy, A, Wang, J.J., and Coble, G. (2011) Immigration, Culture, and Ethnicity in Transformative Consumer Research, *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* Vol. 30 (1), pp.47-54.
- Cross, S.N.N. and Gilly, M. (2014). Cultural Competence and Cultural compensatory Mechanisms in Binational Households, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 78(3), pp.121-139.
- Demangeot, C., Broeckerhoff, A., Kipnis, E., Pullig, C., and Visconti, L.M. (2015). Consumer mobility and well-being among changing places and shifting ethnicities, *Marketing Theory*, Vol 15 (2), pp.271-278.
- Demangeot, C., Mueller, R.D., Henderson, G.R., Ferguson, N., Mandiberg, J.M., Roy, A., Adkins, N.R., Johnson, G., Kipnis E., Pullig C., Broderick, A.J., and Zuñiga, M. A. (2013) Towards Intercultural Competency in Multicultural Marketplaces. *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, Vol.32, pp.156-164.
- Elliott, E.A., Xiao, Y., and Wilson, E. (2015). A multicultural blend: metaphors, cognitive social capital and multiculturalism, *International Marketing Review*, Vol 32 (2), pp.200-218.
- Kipnis, E., Broderick, A.J., Demangeot, C., Adkins, N.R., Ferguson, N.F., Henderson, G.R., Johnson, G., Mandiberg, J.M., Mueller, R.D., Pullig, C., Roy, A., Zúñiga, M. Branding Beyond Prejudice: Cultural Branding and Consumer Well-being in Multicultural Marketplaces (2013). *Journal of Business Research*, Vol 66, pp.1186-1194.
- Ozanne, J.L., Davis, B., Murray, J.B., Grier, S., Benmecheddal, A., Hilary, D., Ekpo, A.E., Garnier, M., Hietanen, J., Le Gall-Ely, M., Seregina, A., Thomas, K.D., and Veer, E. (in press). Assessing the Societal Impact of Research: The Relational Engagement Approach, *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*. Available at: https://www.ama.org/academics/Documents/assessing_the_societal_impact_of_research.pdf [accessed 9th September 2016].
- Penaloza L.N. (1994). Atravesando Fronteras/Border Crossings: A Critical Ethnographic Exploration of the Consumer Acculturation of Mexican Immigrants, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol 21(1), pp.32-54.
- Schroeder, J. E., & Borgerson, J. L. (2005). An ethics representation for international marketing communication, *International Marketing Review*, Vol 22(5), pp.578–600.
- Seo, Y. and Gao, H. (2015). Towards a Value-based perspective of consumer multicultural orientation, *European Management Journal*, Vol 33 (1), pp.30-36.
- Visconti, L., Jafari, A., Batat, W, Broeckerhoff, A., Dedeoglu, A.O., Demangeot, C., Kipnis, E., Lindridge, A., Penaloza, L., Pullig, C., Regany, F., Ustundagli, E., and Weinberger, M.F. (2014). Consumer ethnicity three decades after: A TCR agenda. *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol 30 (17-18), pp.1882-1922.