

Meredith Rhoads Thomas

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ACADEMIC POSITION

Assistant Professor of Marketing, Florida State University Beginning Fall 2018

EDUCATION

Wisconsin School of Business, University of Wisconsin-Madison May 2018

Doctoral Candidate, Marketing

Minor areas of study: Sociology and Anthropology

Dissertation committee: Thomas O'Guinn (Chair), Amber Epp,
Page Moreau, Melanie Wallendorf, Gary Green (Sociology)

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Master of Business Administration

December 2006

Bachelor of Science, Marketing

August 2005

RESEARCH

My research focuses on community dynamics related to the consumption of space and place, relationships between urban design and community, consumption inequality, and the social-psychological nature of money. I utilize both sociological and psychological theories, and as a consequence, my work often employs multiple methods: qualitative and survey methodologies from traditional sociology, and experimental methods from social psychology. My two papers currently under review share an interest in the perceived superiority and privileging of one's own money and resources (over others') and the consequences for downstream behavior. My interests share a concern for consumer wellbeing and transformative action, and typically yield implications for social responsibility and public policy.

PUBLICATIONS

Polman, Evan, Daniel A. Effron and **Meredith Thomas** (2017), "My Money Buys More than the Same Amount of Your Money," conditionally accepted at *Journal of Consumer Research*

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Thomas, Meredith and Thomas C. O'Guinn (2017), "Buying Community," invited for second round review at *Journal of Consumer Research* (Job market paper)

TEACHING

Teaching Interests: Marketing communications, principles of marketing, brand management, new product development, marketing strategy, consumer behavior, digital marketing, public policy and marketing

Teaching Experience at Wisconsin School of Business:

Year (Term)	Course title	Position	Student evaluation average
2017 (Spring)	Consumer Behavior*	Lecturer	4.8/5.0
2016 (Fall)	Contemporary Brand Thought	Co-Lecturer	4.8/5.0
2015 (Summer)	Consumer Behavior*	Lecturer	4.6/5.0
2015 (Spring)	Marketing Management	Teaching Assistant	4.6/5.0

2014 (Fall)	Contemporary Brand Thought	Co-Lecturer	4.7/5.0
2013 (Spring)	Marketing Management	Teaching Assistant	4.6/5.0

* Wisconsin School of Business Distinguished Teaching Award Recipient Spring 2017, Summer 2015

ABSTRACTS OF PUBLISHED ARTICLES AND MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Polman, Evan, Daniel A. Effron and **Meredith Thomas** (2017), “My Money Buys More than the Same Amount of Your Money,” conditionally accepted at *Journal of Consumer Research*

Abstract: Do people imbue their own money with perceptions of greater purchasing power than those of others? Do I believe a dollar of mine is worth more than a dollar of yours; will it buy more? If so, why? The results of nine experiments suggest that people do actually believe their money has greater purchasing power than others’ money. Using a variety of products from socks to clocks to chocolates, we found that participants thought their own money could buy more than the same amount of other people’s money – a pattern that extended to undesirable items, thus testing an important boundary condition. Participants also believed their money would help charities/governments more than others’ money. We test six potentially competing mechanisms: psychological distance, endowment effect, wishful thinking, better-than-average biases, pain-of-payment, and beliefs about product preferences. Only a psychological distance mechanism received strong support. In line with research on psychological distance, we find that the perceived purchasing power of other people’s money changed logarithmically, such that money belonging to increasingly distant others was perceived to have sub-additively less purchasing power. To be sure, money’s purchasing power should not depend on whether money belongs to the self or others, yet we find that people judge money as though it does, which has implications for a range of areas (from marketing, management, psychology, to economics) where research on money is ubiquitously tested.

Thomas, Meredith and Thomas C. O’Guinn (2017), “Buying Community,” invited for second round review at *Journal of Consumer Research*

Abstract: Community has become an important and highly referenced construct in both academic literature and marketing practice. Past research, however, has been largely limited to considering community in the context of brand communities that are not based in geography or face-to-face interactions. My research takes a different path, exploring face-to-face, geographic community offered in the form of a home purchase. This work studies community in a New Urban neighborhood, where community is explicitly offered with the purchase of a home. There are over 400 New Urban neighborhoods in the U.S. alone. Clearly, a consumer need is being expressed and the market is responding. The first paper in this stream uses ethnographic data from a New Urban neighborhood to directly compare three major community theories: community lost, community saved and community liberated. The data best support the community-saved theory, but suggest needed refinements. The three traditional markers of community are demonstrated, and it is the residents’ consumer behavior that most significantly instantiates and reproduces community, and is most often used as an evidence of community. Our results show that consumers who buy a home in the neighborhood we chose to study experience authentic, face-to-face community, and have little or no trouble accepting community in the context of the marketplace. Studies of community are rare in affluent neighborhoods, and this paper reveals a segment of affluent consumers who feel the need for community and are willing to pay for it and invest in its success. Our findings offer implications for consumer behavior, sociology, marketing management, public policy at both theoretical and substantive levels.

WORKING PAPERS

Thomas, Meredith and Thomas C. O’Guinn, “The Essential Dynamics of Customer Satisfaction and Reproduction of Residential Community.” This is from my second dissertation essay. It uses both qualitative and more recently employed quantitative measures of community, such as social cohesion, social psychological measures such as in-group-out-group indicators, and includes marketer-driven

questions of consumer satisfaction. It also looks at geographic variation over time throughout the seven stages of the neighborhood’s development. Its contribution is an extension and substantive addition to the “Buying Community” paper above in terms of the demonstrable evolution of community and its consumer behavior correlates. It makes substantive, theoretical and methodological contributions. Target: *Journal of Marketing Research*. Data collection underway.

Thomas, Meredith “Attaching to Community: Retail Store Siting.” This research comes partially from my dissertation and studies how companies can counteract an increasingly difficult retail environment by locating and designing stores and other consumption venues that benefit from place based community. Target: *Journal of Marketing*. Data collection underway.

SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2017 Transformative Consumer Research Conference, Ithaca, NY.
 “Buying Community”
- 2016 Association for Consumer Research Conference, Berlin, Germany.
 “The Joneses’ Don’t Live Here: Belonging Through Consumption in a New Urban neighborhood.”
- 2016 Consumer Culture Theory Canon of Classics, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark.
 “Owning Community: Social class and consumption in a neo-traditional neighborhood.”
- 2016 Marketing and Public Policy Conference, California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, CA.
 “Owning Community: Social class and consumption in a neo-traditional neighborhood.”
- 2016 Robert D. Mittelstaedt Doctoral Symposium, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
 “Owning Community: Social class and consumption in a neo-traditional neighborhood.”
- 2015 Association for Consumer Research Conference, New Orleans, LA
 Working Paper-“Owning Community: Social class and consumption in a neo-traditional neighborhood.”
- 2015 Consumer Culture Theory Conference, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
 “Owning Community: Social class and consumption in a neo-traditional neighborhood.”
- 2015 Albert Haring Symposium, University of Indiana-Bloomington
 “Consuming Community”
- 2014 Robert D. Mittelstaedt Doctoral Symposium, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
 Discussant for peer work on service marketing

SELECTED GRADUATE COURSEWORK

	Course Title	Taught by
Marketing	Consumer Culture Theory Seminar	Craig Thompson
	Consumer Behavior Seminar	Rob Tanner
	Marketing Models and Behavioral Economics Seminar	Noah Lim
	Marketing Strategy Seminar	Kersi Antia
Sociology/ Anthropology	Modern American Communities	Gary Green
	Collective Behavior	Chaeyoon Lim
	Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis	Douglas Maynard
	History of Anthropological Theory	Katherine Bowie
Psychological Methods	Factor analysis, multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis	Daniel Bolt
	Applied regression analysis	Peter Steiner

	Experimental design	Ronald Serlin
	Advanced Statistical Methods	Ryan Hanke

AWARDS, HONORS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

2016 AMA Sheth Doctoral Consortium Fellow, University of Notre Dame
2016-2017 John G. Schutz Excellence in Marketing Award
2016 William Bers Business Fellowship Award
2015-2016 Mendota Marketing Scholarship Award
2015-2016 Advanced Opportunity Fellowship Award
2015-2016 John C. and Lillian M. Putzer Fund Scholarship
2014-2015 Wisconsin School of Business Distinguished Teaching Award
2013-2014 McKinnon Stewart and Grace Award
2013-2014 John C. and Lillian M. Putzer Scholarship Award
2013 Westing J. Howard Marketing Fellowship
2012 Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowship

BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

Southern Illinois University Carbondale, College of Business, Director of Marketing and Public Information

October 2008-August 2012 (Carbondale, Illinois)

Carbondale Chamber of Commerce: Executive Director

February 2007-October 2008 (Carbondale, Illinois)

Anheuser Busch, Inc.: New Products and Innovations Intern

May-December 2006 (St. Louis, Missouri)

Southern Illinois University Carbondale: Graduate Teaching and Research Assistant, Department of Marketing

August 2005-December 2006

Intercontinental Hotels Group: Marketing Intern

Spring 2005 (Atlanta, Georgia)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE & CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

Reviewer, AMA Marketing and Public Policy Conference
Reviewer, Association for Consumer Research Conference
Reviewer, Consumer Culture Theory Conference
Wisconsin PhD Proseminar Panel Member
Wisconsin PhD Programs and Research Panel Member
Rotary Club of Carbondale Vice President, and Group Study Exchange participant (2008-2012)
Boys and Girls Club of Carbondale Board of Directors (2008-2012)

