

16 Interpersonal Influences in Consumer Psychology

When Does Implicit Social Influence Arise?

Kirk Kristofferson and Katherine White

Introduction

Imagine the following scenario: You are about to fly to Chicago to attend a conference, but boarding is delayed by ten minutes. Rather than open your laptop to begin that assignment or review that is due in two days, you head to the newsstand to find something to read. While perusing the latest issue of *People* (and by *People*, we of course mean *Businessweek*), you determine that this is the perfect distraction for the flight and decide to purchase it. So, you put back the magazine you were holding, grab an identical issue situated at the back of the stack, and head to the cash register to make your purchase. Most likely, many of us can relate to this purchase experience. But what if we asked you *why* you replaced the magazine you were reading with an identical one from the back of the stack? Most consumers would answer, "I don't know, I just did," but research has shown that people perceive that the item at the front is somehow *contaminated* by other people, even if they have not seen anyone touching it (Argo, Dahl, & Morales, 2006).

The influence that others in the environment have on our subsequent emotions, opinions, and behaviors has been shown to be extremely powerful. In fact, the most foundational investigations in social psychology have often highlighted the strong impact that another individual can have on people's attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Asch, 1956; Darley & Baston, 1973; Milgram, 1963; Sherif, 1936; Zimbardo, 1972). Following in these footsteps, consumer psychologists have made considerable contributions to understanding the impact of social factors on consumers' daily experiences and decisions. For example, research has investigated how consumers react to persuasive agents and draw inferences about their motives (Boush, Friestad, & Rose, 1994; Campbell, 1995, 1999; Friestad & Wright, 1994; Kirmani, 1990; Kirmani & Wright, 1989), and when and how this "persuasion knowledge" is used by the experienced consumer (Campbell & Kirmani, 2000; Kirmani & Campbell, 2004; Sujaan, 1996). Recent work along these lines now goes beyond the effects of *explicit* social influence, by which we refer to purposeful and direct tactics utilized by those trying to influence others, including salespeople, advertisers, negotiators, and other agents in persuasive roles (e.g., Campbell & Kirmani, 2000; Menon & Kahn, 2003; Pechmann, Zhao, Goldberg, & Reibling, 2003).

The aim of the current chapter is to provide a framework for considering emerging research in consumer psychology that focuses on indirect or *implicit* forms of social influence in consumer contexts. We define “implicit social influence” as emerging when there is not an explicit or direct attempt to influence another, yet social elements or cues in the context itself subtly impact consumer attitudes and behaviors. For example, altering one’s attitude or decision due to the presence or choices of other consumers in the environment is implicit in nature because influence occurs even though no direct attempts are present. This is contrasted with explicit forms of influence in which consumers are presented with tactics that seek to change attitudes and decisions directly, such as salesperson attempts and ad appeals (e.g., Campbell and Kirmani 2000; Cialdini 2009). Given the extensive work on explicit forms of social influence, the current chapter surveys work examining these implicit forms of social influence and suggests that four key motivations underlie consumer reactions to implicit social influence: association, uniqueness, self-enhancement, and self-presentation. For each motivation, we provide an in-depth review of recent findings in the consumer domain, elucidate the psychological processes driving such effects, and discuss conditions under which alternative responses might emerge. We think that these four motivations can exist in isolation; however, there are some situations under which more than one underlying motive is present and might account for the observed social influence. We also note that other motives may arise in social influence contexts (a point we return to in the discussion section). Nonetheless, we believe that association, uniqueness, self-enhancement, and self-presentation are the most commonly occurring motivations, and they provide the most parsimonious and encompassing explanations for these implicit forms of social influence. In addition, we find that examining social influence through the lens of these key drivers highlights gaps existing in the literature, and therefore we close with a discussion of unanswered research questions and directions for future study that we hope will motivate scholars to continue work in this burgeoning area.

The Desire for Association

One of the most fundamental human desires that defies gender, linguistic, and even cultural borders is the desire to associate, or feel a sense of connection, affiliation, and similarity with other people (Brewer, 1991; Leary, Tambor, Terdal, & Downs, 1995). In fact, researchers have suggested that the need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and the need to feel a sense of assimilation and similarity with others (Brewer, 1991) are fundamental human motives. As such, even when no explicit attempt to change our behavior is made, it naturally follows that the motivation to fulfill this desire and need to connect and assimilate with those around us can leave us susceptible to implicit social influence.

Social Norms and Association

Social norms refer to “the customs, traditions, standards, rules, values, fashions and all other criteria of conduct that are standardized as a consequence of contact with individuals” (Sherif, 1936, p. 3). Although research has shown that the degree of normative influence exerted is affected by the number (Campbell & Fairey, 1989), uniformity (Valenti & Downing, 1975), expertise (Cialdini & Trost, 1998), and status level (Foushee, 1984) of those in the social environment, individuals often behave similarly to relevant others (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955). Cialdini and his colleagues (Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991; Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990; Reno, Cialdini, & Kallgren, 1993) highlight two types of social norms. First, descriptive norms convey information regarding what others commonly do. Second, injunctive norms convey information regarding what others approve and disapprove of. The past literature on social norms suggests that this type of information can have a powerful impact on individuals’ attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991; Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990; Nolan, 2008; Schultz et al., 2007). Such norms serve as implicit forms of social influence because an explicit call to action need not be present for the norms to operate.

More recent research has extended our understanding of the conditions under which such normative influence is likely to arise (e.g., Goldstein, Cialdini, & Griskevicius, 2008; White & Simpson 2013). For example, Goldstein, Cialdini, and Griskevicius (2008) attempted to increase participation in an energy conservation program by encouraging hotel guests to reuse their towels. The guests were given different normative messages regarding the sustainable usage behaviors of others. These authors found that employing descriptive norms, such as noting that the majority of guests reuse their towels, led to higher reuse rates than standard appeals highlighting environmental protection. Furthermore, they found that if the message appealed to the consumer in a way that increased the psychological closeness of the message – in this case, by referring to the sustainable behaviors of other guests who stayed in the same room as the present consumer – sustainable reuse behaviors increased even more.

In another line of research examining consumers’ sustainable disposal behaviors (such as “grasscycling” and composting other organic materials), White and Simpson (2013) find that people are often motivated to engage in the same behaviors as others, which is why descriptive norms are particularly powerful motivators of behavior they inform people of what might be appropriate in a given context. In addition, they find that injunctive norms can be particularly effective in encouraging similar behaviors when the collective level as opposed to the individual level of the self is activated. Taken together, these studies suggest that the desire to assimilate to the behaviors of others can drive consumers to engage in similar actions.

Association in Interpersonal Contexts

Although technology has expanded the methods of searching for and purchasing products (e.g., in online contexts), the retail environment remains a primary

source of product information knowledge and acquisition (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). In addition, it remains an environment where interpersonal interactions often occur. In such contexts, subtle elements in the social setting can exert an implicit social influence and impact subsequent consumer behaviors. For example, recent work shows that consumers are influenced by salespersons in indirect ways – such as consumers being influenced by their own past behavior toward salespersons (Dahl, Honea, & Manchanda, 2005), by the incidental similarity of the salesperson to the self (Jiang, Hoegg, Dahl, & Chattopadhyay, 2010), and by how consumers are treated by the salesperson (Ward & Dahl, 2014). In addition, consumers are influenced by individuals that they know (Luo, 2005), as well as by the mere presence of other, unknown consumers (Argo, Dahl, & Manchanda, 2005).

In one example of implicit social influence in retail contexts, Dahl, Honea, and Manchanda (2005) investigated the dynamics of consumer–salesperson interactions and proposed that consumers develop social connections with sales staff. Building upon the notion that consumers have a need to affiliate with others, the authors found that not purchasing a product after receiving help and making social conversation induces guilt among shoppers. This guilt, in turn, increased consumers' desire to purchase from the salesperson in the future. In this case, a positive social experience fostered affiliation toward the salesperson and led to increased willingness to purchase from that individual in the future. This work thus suggests that fostering positive relationships with consumers can have beneficial consequences in the future.

However, in other work, Ward and Dahl (2014) challenged the notion that providing friendly customer service is the best course of action and investigated whether negative customer sales experiences could have a positive influence on consumer brand attitudes and subsequent sales. Drawing on affiliation research showing that consumers will go to great lengths to reestablish social connections after rejection from an in-group (Williams, Cheung, & Choi, 2000; Williams & Somer, 1997), Ward and Dahl (2014) found that participants who were treated rudely by salespeople from an aspirational brand (e.g., luxury: Gucci, Prada) actually displayed a more *positive* brand attitude and reported a *higher* willingness to pay toward the brand than did participants who were treated more neutrally.

Consumers are also influenced when shopping with peers in the environment. Luo (2005) found that the nature of the relationship one has with a shopping companion can impact consumption decisions. Specifically, this research found that shopping in the presence of peers increased the urge to purchase, but the presence of family members decreased it, especially when the group (peers or family) is cohesive because norms of responsibility became salient. Consumer researchers have further found that individuals are more positive about their evaluations and consume more of a product presented by a mimicker, especially when the mimicker is highly invested in the success of the product (Tanner et al., 2008).

Although the desire to associate is often paramount in contexts where the consumer interacts with known others such as salespeople and friends in the

consumption environment, research has also shown that this desire is activated even in the mere presence of other, unknown consumers. For example, Argo, Dahl, and Manchanda (2005) asked participants to seek out and purchase batteries from their university bookstore. They varied the presence of others in the aisle (none vs. one vs. three) and examined the resulting feelings that participants had. The results revealed that consumers felt significantly more positive when a single individual was present than when no consumers were present or when three consumers were present. The authors argue that the presence of another person in the aisle may have satisfied participants' need for association and caused the decrease in negative (increase in positive) emotions between the other conditions. Moreover, Ferraro, Bettman, and Chartrand (2009) examined whether incidental exposure to a brand being used by a stranger could impact brand preference and found that repeated incidental exposure to a brand increased preference for that brand; however, this positive effect occurred only when association with the stranger was desirable (e.g., when the stranger was an in-group member).

The Impact of Feeling Excluded on Desire to Associate with Others

One compelling condition under which a desire to associate with others can emerge is when the individual feels excluded by others. Research in social psychology has developed innovative methods to induce feelings of social exclusion in laboratory settings, showing that individuals can respond in self-focused and destructive ways. For example, earlier work found that after being socially rejected, individuals behaved more aggressively (Twenge, Baumeister, Tice, & Stucke, 2001), were less cooperative with others (Twenge et al., 2003), displayed self-destructive behaviors (Twenge, Catanese, & Baumeister, 2002) and exhibited lower self-control (Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, & Twenge, 2005). For example, in one series of studies, Baumeister and colleagues (2005) manipulated feelings of exclusion via interpersonal rejection by fellow participants. Upon arrival to the lab, participants engaged in a "get-to-know-you" activity for twenty minutes with fellow participants and then rated their desire to work with each individual on the next task. Participants in the exclusion (control) condition were told that no one (everyone) wanted to work with them on the next task, and as a result (but due to group size issues) they would have to complete it alone. Participants were then asked to taste unhealthy but tasty cookies and provide feedback. Excluded participants coped with their exclusion by consuming significantly more cookies than did affiliated participants.

More recent consumer research suggests that responses to social exclusion may sometimes be strategic in nature (Mead et al., 2011). Specifically, individuals may cope with exclusion by choosing to consume to foster relationships with others (Mead et al., 2011), pursuing riskier but potentially more profitable financial opportunities (Duclos, Wan, & Jiang, 2013) and acting more dishonestly due to feelings of entitlement (Poon, Chen, & DeWall, 2013). In one example, Mead and colleagues (2011) found that consumers strategically tailor

their consumption choices toward affiliating with others even at a cost of financial, physical, and ethical well-being. In a creative set of studies, Mead and colleagues (2011) found that, in comparison to nonexcluded participants, socially excluded participants showed a higher preference for membership-branded products (e.g., university logo), were willing to spend more on an unappealing food product (chicken feet) that was liked by a potential interaction partner, and showed a higher willingness to use cocaine when it would facilitate immediate acceptance by a social group. This work suggests that consumers choose products to increase the chances of making a connection – a deliberate and strategic course of action, and potentially carrying destructive consequences.

Lee and Shrum (2012) built upon this work and showed that the fundamental need being threatened through social exclusion is a key factor in predicting whether responses would be self-focused/self-serving or affiliation-focused/prosocial in nature. This research found that threats to efficacy needs, such as having a meaningful existence, led to self-focused responses, whereas threats to relational needs, such as self-esteem, led to the prosocial or affiliation-seeking behaviors such as were found in the work of Mead and colleagues (2011).

In sum, the desire to associate, connect, or assimilate with others in some way increases consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence even when a source makes no explicit attempt to influence the consumer. This influence can take the form of (a) social norms present in the context; (b) the presence of others, including salespersons, peers, and strangers; or (c) exclusion by others. A second, somewhat opposing desire that affects the influence others have on our consumption behaviors is the need for uniqueness, or the desire to stand out in a crowd. We now turn to a discussion of this desire's impact on social influence and how the motives of affiliation and uniqueness operate separately and in tandem.

The Desire for Uniqueness

Although association is a strong driver of social influence, a separate, seemingly contradictory desire for differentiation or uniqueness from others is also present. Indeed, both of these two opposing motives are proposed to be powerful drives that consumers are impelled to restore to a state of balance (Brewer, 1991). Sometimes need for uniqueness is conceptualized as an individual difference variable (e.g., Tian, Beaden, & Hunter, 2001; Tian & McKenzie, 2001) and sometimes as a need arising out of elements of the social context that increase the desire to differentiate the self from others (e.g., Ariely & Levav, 2000; White & Argo, 2011). Recent work suggests that those motivated by a high need for uniqueness tend to opt for more unusual or counternormative options (e.g., Berger & Heath, 2007; Simonson & Nowlis, 2000; Tian, Bearden, & Hunter, 2001), and they seek to differentiate themselves from others when a sense of distinctiveness is threatened in some way (Irmak, Vallen, & Sen, 2010; Cheema & Kaikati, 2010; Ward & Berger, 2010; White & Argo, 2011).

Others' Choices as Threats to Consumer Distinctiveness

A condition under which uniqueness motives are evident is when a consumer's sense of distinctiveness is threatened in some way. One direct method of threatening uniqueness is a situation in which another consumer makes product choices identical to our own. How might we react? On the one hand, we may take this choice as a compliment, reinforcing our preference or selection as a "good choice." On the other hand, we may take it as a threat to our uniqueness and alter our consumption choices in favor of another product. In a classic example of this in the consumer domain, Ariely and Levav (2000) collected lunch receipts from more than two thousand diners and analyzed the variety of dishes selected based on group size. The results showed that as group size increased, the proportion of different dishes selected significantly increased. Thus, it appears as though consumers deliberately selected unique dishes to signal uniqueness, even at a potential cost of not choosing the best-tasting dish or their true preference.

More recent work has examined the pursuit of uniqueness in the context of mimicry, wherein another consumer copies a consumer's behaviors. Although mimicry can lead to positive outcomes (e.g., Tanner et al., 2008), as noted in the previous section, when mimicry poses a threat to distinctiveness, negative outcomes can arise. For example, White and Argo (2011) examined how consumers reacted after being mimicked by a similar other. They proposed and found that when consumers high in the need for distinctiveness were mimicked by a similar (versus dissimilar) other, this threatened their sense of uniqueness. This threat, in turn, led consumers to alter or give up their original product selection, even when the substitute product was less desirable. This effect was particularly pronounced when the product was symbolic in nature (i.e., it conveyed information about the consumer to others).

Not surprisingly, altering product choice to defend against infringement of one's own uniqueness has been documented in the domain of luxury brands. For example, in an investigation of conspicuous consumption, Berger and Ward (2010) explored how consumers alter their choices of product lines that carry items with more or less conspicuous brand logos. In this work, the authors focused on fashion, sampling high cultural-capital consumers. The results showed that "insiders" preferred less conspicuous brand cues to obvious cues in order to differentiate themselves from mainstream consumers. This choice was made with the awareness that these subtle products (e.g., black Louis Vuitton purse) would only be recognized by a select few.

Moreover, research by Irmak, Vallen, and Sen (2010) explored how Need for Uniqueness (NFU) is related to widespread adoption of new and innovative products by examining two social comparisons by which consumers infer product attitudes: introjection and projection. These authors argued that introjection, which is a reliance on other consumers' preferences to determine one's own, is more motivational in nature than projection, or relying on one's own preference to infer the preferences of others. Specifically, they show that

as adoption of a product increases, high-NFU consumers will halt adoption of the product as they see it as infringing on their uniqueness.

Finally, work by Cheema and Kaikati (2010) investigates the effect of NFU in word of mouth, a topic we discuss in more detail in the final section of this chapter. This line of research argues that because others' adoption of publicly consumed products threatens a high-NFU person's individuality, such a person is less likely to provide positive word of mouth regarding products that he or she presently owns (vs. did not own or plan to buy). Interestingly, this effect did not hold for privately consumed products or when high-NFU individuals were asked to give details about products.

Overall, uniqueness threats can make consumers quite susceptible to various forms of implicit social influence. Throughout this section, we have also discussed the seemingly contradictory desires of affiliation and uniqueness. We now turn to the topic of identity to clarify the relationship between these two desires.

Consumer Identity Signaling

While research supports the impact of NFU as an individual factor, another example of consumer desire for uniqueness emerges in the domain of identity signaling, or making unique choices in product categories that signal one's identity to other people (Berger & Heath, 2007, 2008; see Chapter 10 in this volume). The identity-signaling model suggests that the number of consumers making similar product choices will influence consumers' divergent choices based on the social group to which they belong and the level with which the product signals their identity to others.

In one study, participants completed a survey on brand preferences in both symbolic and nonsymbolic product categories (e.g., favorite musical artist, toothpaste brand). They returned to the lab a few weeks later for a follow-up survey, but before completing the task they were asked to help the researchers with some data entry. The data they entered were the choices of other participants from the original preference survey they completed, but these surveys were altered to reflect the preferences of the participant. Put another way, participants were led to believe that the majority of participants had similar preferences to their own. They then proceeded to complete the preference survey again, and the dependent variable was the number of original preferences changed. A control condition was established in which participants received no exposure to other student preferences. Supporting the model, participants abandoned their original preferences significantly more in identity-signaling product categories. Although high-NFU participants diverged more than low-NFU participants when exposed to the other student preferences condition, no differences based on NFU emerged in the control condition.

The natural question, then, is how do consumers manage or balance their choices in identity-signaling product categories when they do not want

to abandon their preferences? Certain brands are powerful symbols of the group to which one belongs and become central to consumer identity (e.g., Apple, Harley-Davidson). As such, switching products is not an option. How do consumers balance affiliation and uniqueness motives when more and more consumers are adopting their brand of choice? Luckily, recent consumer work helps to clarify how this influence operates.

Combining Association and Uniqueness Desires through Choice

Chen, Berger, and van Boven (2012) sought to understand how consumers walk the line between affiliation and uniqueness desires when making an individual product choice. They found that consumers can simultaneously pursue both goals, satisfying them in different ways. When the product category is strongly associated with the desired in-group's identity, consumers choose product attributes that conform to the majority on one dimension to signal identification with the group (e.g., brand), while differentiating themselves from other in-group members on other dimensions (e.g., color). In one study using automobile brands, consumers showed higher preference on the brand dimension for BMW when it was strongly linked to the in-group regardless of the preferences of others. However, within the in-group-associated brand (BMW), participants were less likely to choose the specific product type preferred by the majority. This suggests that facing the threat of increased adoption by accountants, Harley-Davidson riders will not switch to a Honda, but may trade in their Fatboy for a customized Street Bob.

Overall, the preferences and choices of other consumers have a strong influence on our perceived uniqueness and subsequent choices. Recent consumer research has helped clarify our understanding of how uniqueness and affiliation desires operate simultaneously to drive subsequent behavior.

The Desire to Self-Enhance

Self-enhancement refers to the desire "to enhance the positivity of the self-concept and to protect the self from negative information" (Sedikides, 1993, p. 18; see Sedikides & Strube, 1997, for review). To fulfill this desire, consumers can both seek out positive associations and avoid negative associations. For example, to feel more physically desirable, consumers have been shown to increase their preference for a product that has been touched by an attractive member of the opposite sex (Argo, Dahl, & Morales, 2006). On the other hand, consumers may attempt to fulfill this desire by reducing the relationship between the self and an undesirable group. This can be achieved by actively avoiding products that connect them to an undesirable group (White & Dahl, 2006). Although the previous discussion of uniqueness addressed differentiating oneself from others, it did not go as far as to suggest that one was actively *avoiding* a particular individual or group. To clarify, the desire for

uniqueness motivates consumers to behave in ways that signal their individuality to themselves and others, whereas the desire to self-enhance motivates consumers to behave in ways that deliberately and visibly distance the self from an undesirable group (as well as increase associations with the favored group). While there may be overlap between the outcomes of these two motivations (desire for uniqueness and desire to self-enhance), we argue that the underlying motivations influencing the outcomes differ. Recent consumer research has made considerable contributions toward understanding the negative relationship portion of this desire.

Earlier research on association and dissociation for reasons of self-enhancement has examined this in the context of reference group influence. Reference groups refer to those groups or group members who are "psychologically significant for one's attitudes and behavior" (Turner, 1991, p. 5). The majority of reference-group research has focused on the role of membership (e.g., family, gender) and aspirational (e.g., celebrities, athletes) groups in influencing consumer preferences, showing that consumers often associate with positive referents (Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Childers & Rao, 1992; Escalas & Bettman, 2003, 2005; Folkes & Kiesler, 1991; Moschis, 1976; Park & Lessig, 1977). However, recent consumer research shows that not only are people motivated to associate with others in ways that maintain positive self-views (as might be attained by aligning the self with membership and aspirational reference groups), but they often are motivated to avoid negative self-associations as well (as might be accomplished by avoiding dissociative reference groups).

The Impact of Dissociative Reference Groups

An in-group or membership is a type of positive reference group that the individual belongs to, identifies with, is attracted to, and/or feels psychologically involved with (Turner, 1991). Dissociative (or negative) reference groups, on the other hand, are those groups an individual wishes to avoid being associated with (Dunn, White, & Dahl, 2012; Englis & Solomon, 1995). The act of dissociation is the avoidance or disparaging of products and brands that represent undesired groups or identities (Dunn, White, & Dahl, 2012).

To maintain a positive self-concept, consumers engage in behaviors that communicate and reinforce desired identities with their in-groups and differentiate their group from out-groups (Marques, Abrams, & Paez, 1998). White and Dahl (2006, 2007) show, however, that the desire to avoid the negative associations of dissociative outgroups can have compelling implications for consumer preferences via implicit social influence. In one study, participants were asked to make food selections from a banquet dinner menu (White & Dahl, 2006). Of interest was the selection of the main dish: either a ten-ounce or twelve-ounce steak. The key manipulation was the name of the smaller steak: chef's cut or ladies' cut. Note that for most males, the social category of being female is a dissociative reference group. The results showed that male

participants were more likely to avoid and negatively evaluate the ten-ounce steak when it was associated with a dissociative reference group (women) than when it was associated with a neutral group (chefs). A subsequent investigation supported this avoidance strategy and found that Canadian consumers formed weaker brand connections with a brand symbolically representative of a dissociative out-group (American) than a neutral one (Belgian; White & Dahl, 2007).

Social Identity Threat

Another stream of research that highlights that consumers will often avoid negative associations in ways that help them to enhance and maintain positive self-views is work on social identity threat. For example, when one of an individual's social group memberships, such as male, golfer, Canadian, or teacher, becomes cast in a negative light, this can have implications for subsequent consumer evaluations and behaviors (e.g., Lee, Kim, & Vohs, 2011; White & Argo, 2009). In one example, Lee, Kim, and Vohs (2011) found that awareness of a negative in-group stereotype made consumers sensitive to whether service providers were in-group versus out-group members and lowered purchase intentions when the service provider was an out-group member.

Consumer research has uncovered factors that predict how and why consumers will attempt to self-enhance as a response when their own identities are threatened. One factor is the strength with which the individual sees the social identity as central to the self-concept, or collective self-esteem. White and Argo (2009) found that when an aspect of social identity was threatened (e.g., one's gender identity), high-collective-self-esteem individuals were less likely to distance themselves from the group than were low-collective-self-esteem individuals. This is because consumers with low collective self-esteem are more likely to focus on the individual (vs. collective) self, and they seek to protect self-worth when their identities are threatened.

A second factor that influences consumer responses to identity threat is self-construal. Self-construal refers to the extent to which the self is viewed as being separate and distinct from, or interconnected with, others (Singelis, 1994). Consumers with an independent self-construal focus on individual-level goals, while consumers with an interdependent self-construal value social identities and exhibit strong bonds to one's social groups (Trafimow, Triandis, & Goto, 1991). White, Argo, and Sengupta (2012) found that consumers primed with an independent self-construal tended to avoid identity-linked products when that identity was threatened because they were motivated to restore positive self-worth. Consumers primed with interdependent self-construals, however, expressed *higher* preferences for identity-linked products when that identity was threatened as a means of fulfilling belongingness needs.

In sum, the desire to self-enhance through increasing and decreasing the relationship between self and social identities can exert a strong influence on consumer behavior. Such responses represent a form of implicit social influence

because individuals are responding to the situation or others on their own accord without explicit prompting. Do situations exist in which consumers may actually seek out dissociative reference groups? Recent research suggests that there are instances in which the desire to self-enhance is achieved through the reverse direction, such that consumers respond in ways that *increase* their affiliation with dissociative reference groups.

Shalev and Mortitz (2011) tested the theory that observing undesirable consumers (such as individuals with low socioeconomic status) using desirable products may actually increase preference for those products. This work proposes a social-influence model called comparison-driven self-evaluation and restoration (CDSER), which suggests that when consumers observe undesirable others using a high-status product, they infer that their relative standing on that desirable status trait is lower than originally believed to be. This lower perception, in turn, prompts consumers to approach (vs. avoid) the product used by the dissociative other by increasing preference and subsequent purchase. These findings are supported by work in the prosocial domain by White, Simpson, and Argo (2014), who show that when a consumer receives information about a dissociative out-group performing comparatively well on a positive behavior, the consumer is more likely to respond with positive intentions and actions when the setting is public as opposed to private. This influence occurs because learning of the successful performance of a dissociative out-group in public threatens the consumer's group-image and activates the desire to perceive the group-image in a positive light.

Individual Factors

The desire to self-enhance can also be activated upon encountering undesirable individuals in the consumption environment. Using a creative experimental method, McFerran, Dahl, Fitzsimons, and Morales (2010a) investigated how the body type of another individual influenced the amount of food consumers ate. Under the guise of evaluating a movie experience, participants came to the lab and were joined by a confederate. Although the same confederate was used in each experimental session, her body type was manipulated using a professionally constructed obesity prosthesis (a "fat suit"). The confederate was naturally a size zero, and in the thin condition she participated without the prosthesis. However, in the obese condition, the prosthesis increased her body dimension to size sixteen, thus causing her to appear obese. Participants first observed the confederate taking five heaping tablespoons of snacks and then were invited to take as much snack food as they wished, with the amount selected and consumed serving as dependent variables. The results showed that when another consumer (the confederate) chose a large portion, participants in the study chose less when the other consumer was obese than when she was thin. Given that obesity is viewed undesirably in Western cultures, consumers, to distance themselves from the undesirable other, took and consumed less food after seeing an obese consumer take a large amount. Interestingly, another

effect emerged. When the other consumer chose a small portion, participants selected a larger portion when the other was obese than when she was thin, likely perceiving that if a desirably thin person can eat that much, they can as well.

A subsequent investigation examined the effects of the body type of serving staff on the amount of food ordered (McFerran et al., 2010b). These results found that non-dieters consumed more snacks when the server was thin, while dieters ate more when the server was obese. In addition, dieters were more persuaded by a heavy (vs. thin) server, choosing both a healthy and unhealthy snack more often when she recommended it.

Another factor shown to influence self-enhancement avoidance reactions to individuals is a consumer's level of body esteem. Dahl, Argo, and Morales (2012) explored how consumers react when other consumers or salespeople consume the same product they are interested in purchasing. The results showed that when an attractive target of comparison is consuming the same product as the consumer, the comparative difference in attractiveness – in this case, being less attractive – is highlighted for low-body-esteem consumers, leading to lower evaluations of the products.

Contagion Effects

One notable example of protecting the self from negative social information is contagion. Contagion occurs when a source and recipient come into direct or indirect contact (e.g., through touch), and the source transfers part or all of its “essence” to the recipient, and this essence remains even after contact is broken off (Nemeroff & Rozin, 1994; Rozin & Nemeroff, 1990). Argo, Dahl, and Morales (2006) manipulated the salience of contamination cues, such as the number of times an item was touched, and found that consumers perceived that the item in question was “contaminated” by other consumers, leading to a lower evaluation of the product. This lower evaluation was driven by increased feelings of disgust. In the desire to perceive the self as clean or “pure,” consumers lower evaluations of products touched by others.

However, can owning a product contaminated by a stranger actually increase one's self-concept? Argo, Dahl, and Morales (2008) examined a situation in which this result occurs: highly attractive others. The authors found that product evaluations were higher when consumers perceived a product as having been physically touched by a highly attractive other, but only when the other was of the opposite sex. Newman, Diesendruck, and Bloom (2011) show further support for the presence of contagion in a study that examined why consumers express high demand for products owned and used by revered (e.g., film stars) or notorious (e.g., serial killers) celebrities. In this work, the authors show that while market factors do play a role in driving the prices paid for celebrity products, the critical factor is the essence transferred to these products through contagion.

The Desire to Look Good to Others

Impression management refers to the desire that individuals have to present themselves in a positive light to others (Goffman, 1959; Leary & Kowalski, 1990; Schlenker, 1980). By this definition, the presence of others in the social environment yields considerable influence on subsequent behavior. For example, positive social impressions facilitate rewarding social interactions (Chen, Schechter, & Chaiken, 1996), which increases consumer self-esteem (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Moreover, successful impression management helps consumers avoid negative feelings associated with looking bad to others (e.g., embarrassment; Dahl, Manchanda, & Argo, 2001). Earlier research linked impression management motives to social anxiety (Schlenker & Leary, 1982), perceived exertion (Hardy, Hall, & Prestholdt, 1983), and self-handicapping (Kolditz & Arkin, 1982). Consumer researchers have made significant contributions in this area, highlighting the positive and negative impacts of the desire to look good to others.

Earlier consumer research showed that impression-management motives prompt consumers to alter their behaviors strategically in order to present themselves positively. When these motives are in conflict with honesty or rational economic gain, consumers are willing to trade off benefits in favor of portraying a positive image to others (e.g., lie about price paid, Sengupta, Dahl, & Gorn, 2002; coupon redemption, Ashworth, Darke, & Schaller, 2005). Specifically, Ashworth, Darke, and Schaller (2005) proposed that coupon use could convey a negative impression of cheapness and stinginess because it undermines positive impressions of financial wealth. In this work, the authors found that consumers were significantly less likely to redeem a coupon in public as opposed to private purchase situations, and this reluctance was driven by a fear of appearing cheap in front of others. Argo and Main (2008) extended these findings by proposing that the proximity to another consumer using a coupon may make *us* appear cheap. Argo and Main (2008) proposed that non-coupon-redeeming consumers experience stigma by association, or "a stigma that arises from one individual's behavior/trait/characteristic extending to negatively affect another person located nearby" (Goffman, 1963; Hebl & Mannix, 2003), when a consumer redeems a low-value coupon in close proximity. In this study, the researchers positioned two confederates in line at a retail store just ahead of a regular store patron. The first confederate purchased a pen and redeemed a low- or high-value coupon (experimental conditions) or paid the normal price (the control condition). When the actual store patron purchased their item, the cashier asked whether the consumer would answer a short survey, which was composed of questions measuring perceptions of others in the store. Results showed that the second confederate, who did not use a coupon, was stigmatized (perceived as cheap) significantly more when the first confederate redeemed a low-value coupon versus a high-value or no coupon. The authors showed that this stigma by association was stronger when a relationship existed between the two shoppers, but did not occur when the

other consumer was located in a different cashier line or was highly attractive. Thus, it appears as though consumers not only need to work hard to manage their own impressions, they also have to be on guard against other consumers "cramping their style."

Kurt, Inman, and Argo (2011) build upon these findings by investigating the impact of impression-management motives when shopping with a friend. They find that consumers who are agency-oriented (operationalized as men in this research) spend significantly more when they shop with a friend (vs. alone), because they want to conform to their friend's expectations of them. Moreover, this effect is especially true for high self-monitors. Next, we turn to a research area that recent studies have shown to be strongly affected by the desire to manage impressions: prosocial behavior.

Prosocial Behavior

Early research in the domain of charitable giving showed that heightened public self-image concerns led to increased donor support (Glazer & Konrad, 1996; Satow, 1975). However, recent work in the prosocial domain provides evidence that the public nature of support does not uniformly increase donor support. White and Peloza (2009) find that the nature of charitable giving appeals – whether the benefits communicated are to others or to the self – is significantly affected by public self-image concerns. In this work, the authors find that when public self-image concerns are heightened, appeals that highlight the benefits to others (i.e., help those less fortunate) led to higher donation to the cause than appeals that highlight benefits to the self (i.e., networking opportunities).

Recent work investigating the social issue of slacktivism also highlights the impact that impression management can have on subsequent prosocial behavior. Slacktivism is defined as a willingness to perform a relatively costless, token display of support for a social cause, with an accompanying lack of willingness to devote significant effort to enact meaningful change (Kristofferson, White, & Peloza, 2014). Nonprofit organizations utilize a number of token-support campaigns (e.g., wearing a pin, liking a page on Facebook) in order to engage with consumers for the purpose of generating meaningful support for their causes. Given that these behaviors are observable to others, Kristofferson, White, and Peloza (2014) examined whether providing token support – which does little to advance the mission of the organization – led consumers to provide more meaningful support to the cause (e.g., activism, volunteering, financial donation) or not (e.g., slacktivism, no support). In one study that used the poppy pin to show support for Remembrance Day, participants received a free poppy and either displayed it publicly (on a jacket) or took it with them privately (in an envelope) before entering the student union building. Shortly after entering the building, a research assistant made a donation request on behalf of Canada's War Veterans. The results showed that public token supporters donated significantly less money to the cause when support was public than private. In fact, the amount of money public token supporters donated was no

different from the amount donated by those in a control condition, who provided no token support. Subsequent studies showed that this lower support in the public condition was due to impression-management motives being satisfied. In effect, supporters realized that by wearing the pin, they communicated to others that they had *already* supported the cause. Preliminary results from our lab show that this pattern of behavior may extend to the communications of close others' prosocial behavior (Kristofferson & White, 2014). In one study, participants communicated or thought about the positive charitable behavior of a close other or acquaintance and later received a volunteer request. Results showed that participants who publicly communicated the positive behavior of a close other were less likely to volunteer to complete the survey than participants who thought about the close other's behavior, as well as those who communicated an acquaintance's prosocial behavior.

Recent research has shown one's level of moral identity – the extent to which moral traits are experienced as a central part of one's overall self-concept (Aquino et al., 2009; Aquino & Reed, 2002) – to be a strong predictor of charitable giving when impression-management motives are present (Reed & Aquino, 2003; Reed, Aquino, & Levy, 2007; Winterich, Zhand, & Mittal, 2012; Winterich, Mittal, & Aquino, 2013). Winterich, Mittal, and Aquino (2013) looked at how recognition of charitable donation affected subsequent support by examining the internalization and symbolization dimensions of moral identity. The results showed that public recognition increased subsequent charitable support among consumers with high moral-identity symbolization and low moral-identity internalization. Further, Lee, Winterich, and Ross (2014) qualify the prosocial support of high moral-identity consumers by showing that this relationship may not hold when recipients of benefits are responsible for their plight.

Overall, the awareness that one's actions are visible to others exerts a significant influence over one's subsequent choices. Recent consumer research has shown that the desire to present the self in a positive light influences consumer behavior in both positive and negative ways. We now turn to the final section of this chapter and discuss future directions for this exciting and promising research domain.

New Ways to Influence: Future Research Opportunities and Unanswered Questions

In this chapter, we propose a conceptualization of recent consumer research findings of social influence that involves four basic human psychological desires. Studying these desires can aid us in understanding and predicting consumer reactions. In addition, given the rapid technological changes and new types of social environments emerging in our society, we believe a fifth desire is potentially becoming increasingly important to understand and offers fruitful opportunities for consumer social-influence researchers: the desire

to be *informed*. Evolving technology continues to change the ways that consumers interact with firms, social groups, peers, and even strangers with common interests. For example, brand communities previously confined to annual interpersonal events can now interact more frequently using multiple channels of engagement (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006). Along with generating additional desires, this technological advancement means that the current desires can and will be expressed in novel ways.

One area in which the desire to be informed can exert influence in the consumption environments is through word of mouth. While earlier word-of-mouth investigations focused on the impact of face-to-face consumer interactions (Westbrook, 1987), the rise in usage of social media and online forums creates opportunities for interaction among consumers from around the globe. Thousands of blogs, company and user forums, and online reviews provide consumers with information about and experience with products, brands, and customer experiences to which they previously would have never had access. Consumer research has only scratched the surface of understanding how these forms of interactions influence our behavior (see Chapter 14 in this handbook).

For example, whereas consumers once primarily relied on firm-to-consumer channels (such as retail sales staff and company websites) for information search, they now actively seek out and converse with current user forums. This two-way communication can influence consumers in a multitude of ways. Naylor, Lamberton, and Norton (2011) examined how the ambiguity of an online reviewer's identity impacted reviewer perception and persuasion, showing that consumers inferred that ambiguous reviewers had similar tastes to their own, which increased persuasion. Given that previous research has shown that consumers look to similar others to obtain accurate information about their current standing and needs (e.g., Collins, 1996; Festinger, 1957), this influence of potentially dissimilar others diverges significantly from past literature. Given this potentially undesirable influence, how can firms respond to this type of influence? How might firm intervention be perceived? Would the introduction of a self-interested party be viewed as supportive to consumers or be met with reactance?

Viewing word of mouth from the alternative perspective, what are the factors that drive consumers to participate in and initiate word-of-mouth communication? Berger (2014) suggests that the motivation behind creating word-of-mouth content is more self-serving than prosocial in nature. However, consumers seek out word-of-mouth communication from others under the assumption that the available information was shared to be helpful. How might knowledge of this self-serving motivation affect the consumption, adoption, and persuasion of this product information?

Future research should also examine how social interactions in the online world can influence consumer self-perceptions. Consumers interact with multiple others through various online channels, with connections varying in closeness: for example, one's closest circle includes family and close friends, while other connections are professional, interest-focused (e.g., running group,

photography), and anonymous (e.g., user forums). How do these connections influence our feelings about ourselves? Wilcox and Stephen (2013) find that social-network usage increases self-esteem for those who focus on closer ties. Interestingly, this momentary increase in self-esteem reduces self-control in subsequent tasks. These authors also show that higher social-network usage is associated with higher levels of obesity and credit card debt. Clearly, our online behavior influences our lives in more ways than keeping up with our friends' travel photos. We call on future research to uncover these influences.

In addition, social-networking channels have made it increasingly easier to be instantly aware of offline activities that one could be engaging in. As such, an emerging social issue for high social-media users is the *fear of missing out* (FoMO), defined as a pervasive apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent (Przybylski, Murayama, DeHaan, & Gladwell, 2013). Przybylski and colleagues (2013) demonstrated that FoMO was associated with lower mood and life satisfaction, as well as higher social-media usage. Interestingly, it was also associated with distracted driving and social-media usage during student classes. We urge consumer researchers to investigate this novel issue and to understand the potential consequences.

Summary

Social influence continues to be a fruitful and exciting area of interest for both consumer researchers and social psychologists. In the current chapter, we have introduced a framework that highlights four primary desires, the study of which can help us to understand underlying psychological processes and predict consumer responses. In doing so, we focus on recent research in consumer psychology and present vital questions that we hope future research will explore and address. The world is changing more rapidly than ever before, bringing with it new social interactions and potential for influence. We hope this chapter has helped provide a snapshot of current social-influence understanding as it pertains to implicit social influence and that it will motivate readers to continue to explore this fascinating aspect of consumer behavior. We also hope the introduction of this framework will encourage researchers to examine these and potentially other drivers of reactions to implicit social influence.

References

- Amaldoss, W., & Jain, S. (2005). Pricing of conspicuous goods: A competitive analysis of social effects. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 42(1), 30–42.
- Aquino, K., Freeman, D., Reed II, A., Lim, V. K. G., & Felps, W. (2009). testing a social-cognitive model of moral behavior: The interactive influence of situations and moral identity centrality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 97(1), 123–141.

- Aquino, K., & Reed II, A. (2002). The self-importance of moral identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(6), 1423–1440.
- Argo, J. J., Dahl, D. W., & Manchanda, R. V., (2005). The influence of a mere social presence in a retail context. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32(2), 207–212.
- Argo, J. J., Dahl, D. W., & Morales, A. C. (2006). Consumer contamination: How consumers react to products touched by others. *Journal of Marketing*, 70(2), 81–94.
- Argo, J. J., Dahl, D. W., & Morales, A. C. (2008). Positive consumer contagion: Responses to attractive others in a retail context. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 45(6), 690–701.
- Argo, J. J., and Main, K. J. (2008). Stigma by association in coupon redemption: Looking cheap because of others. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(4), 559–572.
- Ariely, D., & Levav, J. (2000). Sequential choice in group settings: Taking the road less traveled and less enjoyed. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27(3), 279–290.
- Asch, S. E. (1956). Studies of independence and conformity: I. A minority of one against a unanimous majority." *Psychological Monographs: General and Applied*, 70(9), 1–70.
- Ashworth, L., Darke, P. R., & Schaller, M. (2005). No one wants to look cheap: Trade-offs between social disincentives and the economic and psychological incentives to redeem coupons. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 15(4), 295–306.
- Baca-Motes, K., Brown, A., Gneezy, A., Keenan, E. A., & Nelson, L. D. (2013). Commitment and behavior change: Evidence from the field. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39(5), 1070–1084.
- Bagozzi, R. P., & Dholakia, U. M. (2006). Antecedents and purchase consequences of customer participation in small group brand communities. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 23(1), 45–61.
- Baumeister, R. F., DeWall, N., Ciarocco, N. J., & Twenge, J. M. (2005). Social exclusion impairs self-regulation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 88 4), 589.
- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117 (3), 497–529.
- Bearden, W. O., & Etzel, M. J. (1982). Reference group influence on product and brand purchase decisions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(2)(September), 183–194.
- Berger, J. (2008). Who drives divergence? Identity signaling, outgroup dissimilarity, and the abandonment of cultural tastes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95(3), 593–607.
- Berger, J. (2014). Word of mouth and interpersonal communication: A review and directions for future research. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 24(4), 586–607.
- Berger, J., & Heath, C. (2007). Where consumers diverge from others: Identity signaling and product domains. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 34, 121–134.
- Berger, J., & Heath, C. (2008). Who drives divergence? Identity signaling, outgroup dissimilarity, and the abandonment of cultural tastes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95(3), 593.
- Berger, J., & Rand, L. (2008). Shifting signals to help health: Using identity signaling to reduce risky health behaviors. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35, 509–518.

- Berger, J., & Ward, M. (2010). Subtle signals of inconspicuous consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37(4), 555–569.
- Bernieri, F. J. (1988). Coordinated movement and rapport in teacher–student interactions. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*, 12(2), 120–138.
- Bloch, P. H. (1995). Seeking the ideal form: Product design and consumer response. *Journal of Marketing*, 59(3), 16–29.
- Boush, D. M., Friestad, M., & Rose, G. M. (1994). Adolescent skepticism toward TV advertising and knowledge of advertiser tactics." *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21(June), 165–175.
- Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17(5), 475–482.
- Brewer, M. B. (2003). Optimal distinctiveness, social identity, and the self. In M. Leary and J. Tangney (eds.), *Handbook of Self and Identity* (pp. 480–491). New York: Guilford Press.
- Byrne, D., & Griffith, W. (1969). Similarity and awareness of similarity of personality characteristic determinants of attraction. *Journal of Experimental Research in Personality*, 3(3), 179–186.
- Campbell, M. C. (1995). When attention-getting advertising tactics elicit consumer inferences of manipulative intent: The importance of balancing benefits and investments. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 4(3), 225–254.
- Campbell, M. C. (1999). Perceptions of price unfairness: Antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 36(May), 187–199.
- Campbell, M. C., & Kirmani, A. (2000). Consumers' use of persuasion knowledge: The effects of accessibility and cognitive capacity on perceptions of an influence agent. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27(1), 69–83.
- Campbell, J. D., & Fairey, P. J. (1989). Informational and normative routes to conformity: The effect of faction size as a function of norm extremity and attention to the stimulus. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57(3), 457.
- Chan, C., Berger, J., & Van Boven, L. (2012). Identifiable but not identical: Combining social identity and uniqueness motives in choice. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39(3), 561–573.
- Chartrand, T. L., & Bargh, J. A. (1999). The chameleon effect: The perception-behavior link and social interaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 76(6), 893–910.
- Chartrand, T. L., Maddux, W. W., & Lakin, J. L. (2005). Beyond the perception-behavior link: The ubiquitous utility and motivational moderators of nonconscious mimicry. In R. Hassin, J. S. Uleman, & J. A. Bargh (eds.), *The New Unconscious* (pp. 334–261). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cheema, A., & Kaikati, A. M. (2010). The effect of need for uniqueness on word of mouth. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 47(3), 553–563.
- Childers, T. L., & Rao, A. R. (1992). The influence of familial and peer-based reference groups on consumer decisions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19(September), 198–211.
- Cialdini, R. B. (2009). *Influence: Science and Practice*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Cialdini, R. B., & Goldstein, N. J. (2004). Social influence: Compliance and conformity. In S. T. Fiske, D. L. Schacter, & C. Zahn-Waxler (eds.), *Annual Review of Psychology* (vol. 55, pp. 591–621). Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews.

- Cialdini, R. B., Kallgren C. A., & Reno, R. R. (1991). A focus theory of normative conduct: A theoretical refinement and reevaluation of the role of norms in human behavior. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 24(20), 1–243.
- Cialdini, R. B., Reno, R. R., & Kallgren, C. A. (1990). A focus theory of normative conduct: Recycling the concept of norms to reduce littering in public places. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58(6), 1015.
- Cialdini, R. B., & Trost, M. R. (1998). Social influence: Social norms, conformity and compliance. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (eds.) *The Handbook of Social Psychology*. 4th ed. (vol. 2, pp. 151–192). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Cialdini, R. B., Vincent, J. E., Lewis, S. K., Catalan, J., Wheeler, D., & Darby, B. L. (1975). Reciprocal concessions procedure for inducing compliance: The door-in-the-face technique. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 31(2), 206.
- Chan, C., Berger, J., & Van Boven, L. (2011). Differentiating the “I” in “in-group”: How identity-signaling and uniqueness motives combine to drive consumer choice. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39(3), 561–573.
- Chen, S., Shechter, D., & Chaiken, S. (1996). Getting at the truth or getting along: Accuracy-versus impression-motivated heuristic and systematic processing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71(2), 262.
- Childers, T. L., & Rao, A. K. (1992). The influence of familial and peer-based reference groups on consumer decisions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19(2), 198–211.
- Collins, R. L. (1996). For better or worse: The impact of upward social comparison on self-evaluations. *Psychological Bulletin*, 119(1), 51.
- Colton, C. C. (1820). *Lacon* (vol. 1). London: Longman, Hurt, Rees, & Brown.
- Dahl, D. W., Argo, J. J., & Morales, A. C. (2012). Social information in the retail environment: The importance of consumption alignment, referent identity, and self-esteem. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 38(5), 860–871.
- Dahl, D. W., Honea, H., & Manchanda, R. V. (2005). Three Rs of interpersonal consumer guilt: Relationship, reciprocity, reparation. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 15(4), 307–315.
- Dahl, D. W., Manchanda, R. V., & Argo, J. J. (2001). Embarrassment in consumer purchase: The roles of social presence and purchase familiarity. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28(3), 473–481.
- Darley, J. M., & Batson, C. D. (1973). “From Jerusalem to Jericho”: A study of situational and dispositional variables in helping behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 27(1), 100.
- Deutsch, M., & Gerard, H. B. (1955). A study of normative and informational social influences upon individual judgment. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 51(3), 629.
- Duclos, R., Wen Wan, E., & Jiang, Y. (2013). Show me the honey! Effects of social exclusion on financial risk-taking. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40(1), 122–135.
- Dunn, Lea, White, K., & Dahl, D. W. (2012). That is so not me: Dissociating from undesired consumer identities. In A. Ruvio & R. Belk (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Identity and Consumption* (p. 273), New York: Routledge.
- Edson Escalas, J., & Bettman, J. R. (2003). You are what they eat: The influence of reference groups on consumers’ connections to brands. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 13(3), 339–348.

- Englis, B. G., & Solomon, M. R. (1995). To be and not to be: Lifestyle imagery, reference groups, and the clustering of America. *Journal of Advertising*, 24(1), 13-28.
- Escalas, J. E., & Bettman, J. R. (2005). Self-Construal, Reference Groups, and Brand Meaning. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32(3), 378-389.
- Ferraro, R., Bettman, J. R., & Chartrand, T. L. (2009). The power of strangers: The effect of incidental consumer brand encounters on brand choice. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(5), 729-741.
- Festinger, L. (1957). *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (vol. 2). Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Folkes, V. S., & Kiesler, T. (1991). Social cognition: Consumers' Inferences about the self and others. *Handbook of Consumer Behavior*, 3, 281-315.
- Foushee, H. C. (1984). Dyads and triads at 35,000 feet: Factors affecting group process and aircrew performance. *American Psychologist*, 39(8), 885.
- Friestad, M., & Wright, P. (1994). The persuasion knowledge model: How people cope with persuasion attempts. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21(June), 1-31.
- Glazer, A., & Konrad, K. A. (1996). A signaling explanation for charity. *American Economic Review*, 86(4), 1019-1028.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City, NY: Anchor.
- Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Goldstein, N. J., Cialdini, R. B., & Griskevicius, V. (2008). A room with a viewpoint: Using social norms to motivate environmental conservation in hotels. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(3), 472-482.
- Granovetter, M. S., & Soong, M. (1986). Threshold models of interpersonal effects in consumer demand. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 7(1), 83-99.
- Hardy, C. J., Hall, E. G., & Prestholdt, P. H. (1983). *The Mediation Role of Social Influence in the Perception of Exertion*. Dissertation, Louisiana State University.
- Hebl, M. R., and Mannix, L. M. (2003). The weight of obesity in evaluating others: A mere proximity effect. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29(1), 28-38.
- Irmak, C., Vallen, B., & Sen, S. (2010). You like what I like, but I don't like what you like: Uniqueness motivations in product preferences. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37(3), 443-455.
- Jiang, L., Hoegg, J., Dahl, D. W., & Chattopadhyay, A. (2010). The persuasive role of incidental similarity on attitudes and purchase intentions in a sales context. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(5), 778-791.
- Kirmani, A. (1990). The effect of perceived advertising costs on brand perceptions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 17(September), 160-171.
- Kirmani, A., & Campbell, M. C. (2004). Goal seeker and persuasion sentry: How consumer targets respond to interpersonal marketing persuasion. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(3), 573-582.
- Kirmani, A., & Wright, P. (1989). Money talks: Perceived advertising expense and expected product quality. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(December), 344-353.

- Kolditz, T. A., and Arkin, R. M. (1982). An impression management interpretation of the self-handicapping strategy. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 43(3), 492.
- Krishna, A., & Morrin, M. (2008). Does touch affect taste? The perceptual transfer of product container haptic cues. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 34(6), 807–818.
- Kristofferson, K., & White, K. (2015). I shared what you did last summer: vicarious impression management via the good deeds of others. Working Paper.
- Kristofferson, K., White, K., & Peloza, J. (2014). The nature of slacktivism: How the social observability of an initial act of token support impacts subsequent prosocial action. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40(6), 1149–1166.
- Kurt, D., Inman, J. J., & Argo, J. J. (2011). The influence of friends on consumer spending: The role of agency-communion orientation and self-monitoring. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 48(4), 741–754.
- La France, M. (1979). Nonverbal synchrony and rapport: Analysis by the cross-lag panel technique. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 42(1), 66–70.
- Lakin, J. L., & Chartrand, T. L. (2003). Using nonconscious behavioural mimicry to create affiliation and rapport. *Psychological Science*, 14(4), 334–336.
- Lasaleta, J. D., Sedikides, C., & Vohs, K. D. (2014). Nostalgia weakens the desire for money. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 41(3), 713–729.
- Leary, M. R., & Kowalski, R. M. (1990). Impression management: A literature review and two-component model. *Psychological Bulletin*, 107(1), 34.
- Leary, M. R., Tambor, E. S., Terdal, S. K., & Downs, D. L. (1995). Self-esteem as an interpersonal monitor: The sociometer hypothesis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68(3), 518.
- Lee, J., & Shrum, L. J. (2012). Conspicuous consumption versus charitable behavior in response to social exclusion: A differential needs explanation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39(3), 530–544.
- Lee, K., Kim, H., & Vohs, K. D. (2011). Stereotype threat in the marketplace: Consumer anxiety and purchase intentions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 38(2), 343–357.
- Lee, S., Winterich, K. P., & Ross, Jr., W. T. (2014). I'm moral, but I won't help you: The distinct roles of empathy and justice in donations." *Journal of Consumer Research*, 41(3).
- Lewin, K. (1935). *A Dynamic Theory of Personality*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Luo, X. (2005). How does shopping with others influence impulsive purchasing? *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 15(4), 288–294.
- Marques, J., Abrams, D., & Paez, D. (1998). The role of categorization and in-group norms in judgments of groups and their members. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75(4), 976–988.
- McFerran, B., Dahl, D. W., Fitzsimons, G. J., & Morales, A. C. (2010a). I'll have what she's having: Effects of social influence and body type on the food choices of others. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(6), 915–929.
- McFerran, B., Dahl, D. W., Fitzsimons, G. J., & Morales, A. C. (2010b). "Might an Overweight Waitress Make You Eat More? How the body type of others is sufficient to alter our food consumption. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 20(2), 146–151.
- Mead, N. L., Baumeister, R. F., Stillman, T. F., Rawn, C. D., & Vohs, K. D. (2011). Social exclusion causes people to spend and consume strategically in the service of affiliation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37(5), 902–919.

- Menon, S., & Kahn, B. E. (2003). Corporate sponsorships of philanthropic activities: When do they impact perception of sponsor brand? *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 13*(3), 316–327.
- Milgram, S. (1963). Behavioral study of obedience. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 67*(4), 371.
- Mooy, S. C., & Robben, H. S. J. (2002). Managing consumers' product evaluations through direct product experience. *Journal of Product & Brand Management, 11*(7), 432–446.
- Moschis, G. P. (1976). Social comparison and informal group influence. *Journal of Marketing Research, 13*(August), 237–244.
- Naylor, R. W., Lambertson, C., & Norton, D. A. (2011). Seeing ourselves in others: Reviewer ambiguity, egocentric anchoring, and persuasion. *Journal of Marketing Research, 48*(3), 617–631.
- Nemeroff, C., & Rozin, P. (1994). The contagion concept in adult thinking in the United States: Transmission of germs and of interpersonal influence. *Ethos, 22*(2), 158–186.
- Newman, G. E., Diesendruck, G., & Bloom, P. (2011). Celebrity contagion and the value of objects. *Journal of Consumer Research, 38*(2), 215–228.
- Park, C. W., & Lessig, V. P. (1977). Students and housewives: Differences in susceptibility to reference group influence. *Journal of Consumer Research, 4*, 102–110.
- Pechmann, C., Zhao, G., Goldberg, M. E., & Reibling, E. T. (2003). What to convey in antismoking advertisements for adolescents: The use of protection motivation theory to identify effective message themes. *Journal of Marketing, 67*(2), 1–18.
- Peck, J., & Childers, T. L. (2006). If I touch it I have to have it: Individual and environmental influences on impulse purchasing. *Journal of Business Research, 59*(6), 765–769.
- Poon, K., Chen, Z., & DeWall, C. N. (2013). Feeling entitled to more ostracism increases dishonest behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 39*(9), 1227–1239.
- Przybylski, A. K., Murayama K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell, V. (2013). Motivational, emotional, and behavioral correlates of fear of missing out. *Computers in Human Behavior, 29*(4), 1841–1848.
- Reed, II, A., & Aquino, K. F. (2003). Moral identity and the expanding circle of moral regard toward out-groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*(6), 1270–1286.
- Reed II, A., Aquino, K., & Levy, E. (2007). Moral identity and judgments of charitable behaviors. *Journal of Marketing, 71*(January), 178–193.
- Reno, R. R., Cialdini, R. B., & Kallgren, C. A. (1993). The transsituational influence of social norms. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 64*(1), 104.
- Rozin, P., & Nemeroff, C. (1990). The laws of sympathetic magic: A psychological analysis of similarity and contagion. *Psychological Science, 1*(6), 383–384.
- Satow, K. L. (1975). Social approval and helping. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 11*(6), 501–509.
- Schlenker, B. R. (1980). *Impression Management: The Self-Concept, Social Identity, and Interpersonal Relations*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Schlenker, B. R., & Leary, M. R. (1982). Social anxiety and self-presentation: A conceptualization model. *Psychological Bulletin, 92*(3), 641.

- Schultz, P. W., Nolan, J. M., Cialdini, R. B., Goldstein, N. J., & Griskevicius, V. (2007). The constructive, destructive, and reconstructive power of social norms. *Psychological Science, 18*(5), 429–434.
- Sedikides, C., & Strube, M. J. (1997). Self-evaluation: To thine own self be good, to thine own self be sure, to thine own self be true, and to thine own self be better. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 29*, 209–269.
- Sengupta, J., Dahl, D. W., & Gorn, G. G. (2002). Misrepresentation in the consumer context. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 12*(2), 69–79.
- Shalev, E., & Morwitz, V. G. (2011). Influence via comparison-driven self-evaluation and restoration: The case of the low-status influencer. *Journal of Consumer Research, 38*(5), 964–980.
- Sherif, M. (1936). *The Psychology of Social Norms*. New York: Harper.
- Simonson, I., & Nowlis, S. M. (2000). The role of explanations and need for uniqueness in consumer decision making: Unconventional choices based on reasons. *Journal of Consumer Research, 27*(1), 49–68.
- Singelis, T. M. (1994). The measurement of independent and interdependent self-construals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 20*(5), 580–591.
- Snyder, C. R. (1992). Product scarcity by need for uniqueness interaction: A consumer catch-22 carousel? *Basic & Applied Social Psychology, 13*(1), 9–24.
- Snyder, C. R., & Fromkin, H. L. (1977). Abnormality as a positive characteristic: The development and validation of a scale measuring need for uniqueness. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 86*(5), 518.
- Snyder, C. R., & Fromkin, H. L. (1980). *Uniqueness*. New York: Plenum.
- Sujan, H. (1996). Special session summary: Influence professionals. In Merrie Brucks and Deborah J. MacInnis (eds.), *Advances in Consumer Research* (vol. 24, pp. 334–335). Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). *An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Tanner, R. J., Ferraro, R., Chartrand, T. L., Bettman, J. R., & van Baaren, R. (2008). Of chameleons and consumption: The impact of mimicry on choice and preferences. *Journal of Consumer Research, 34*(April), 754–766.
- Tian, K. T., Bearden, W. O., & Hunter, G. L. (2001). Consumers' need for uniqueness: Scale development and validation. *Journal of Consumer Research, 28*(June), 50–66.
- Tian, K. T., & McKenzie, K. (2001). The long-term predictive validity of consumers' need for uniqueness scale. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 10*(3), 171–193.
- Trafimow, D., Triandis, H. C., & Goto, S. G. (1991). Some tests of the distinction between the private self and the collective self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 60*(5), 649–655.
- Turner, J. C. (1985). *Social Categorization and the Self-Concept: A Social Cognitive Theory of Group Behavior*. Greenwich, CT: JAI.
- Turner, J. C. (1991). *Social Influence*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Twenge, J. M., Baumeister, R. F., DeWall, C. N., Ciarocco, N. J., & Bartels, J. M. (2007). Social exclusion decreases prosocial behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92*(1), 56.
- Twenge, J. M., Baumeister, R. F., Tice, D. M., & Stucke, T. S. (2001). If you can't join them, beat them: Effects of social exclusion on aggressive behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 81*(6), 1058–1069.

- Twenge, J. M., Catanese, K. R., & Baumeister, R. F. (2002). Social exclusion causes self-defeating behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(3), 606–615.
- United States Census Bureau (2014). *Quarterly Retail E-Commerce Sales Report*. www.census.gov/retail/mrts/www/data/pdf/ec_current.pdf.
- Valenti, A. C., & Downing, L. L. (1975). Differential effects of jury size on verdicts following deliberation as a function of the apparent guilt of a defendant. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 32(4), 655.
- van Baaren, R. B., Holland, R. W., Kawakami, K., & van Knippenberg, A. (2004). Mimicry and prosocial behavior. *Psychological Science*, 15(1), 71–74.
- van Baaren, R. B., Maddux, W. W., Chartrand, T. L., De Bouter, C., & van Knippenberg, A. (2003). It takes two to mimic: Behavioral consequences of self-construals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(5), 1093–1102.
- Ward, M. K. and Dahl, D. W. (2014). Should the devil sell Prada? Retail rejection increases aspiring consumers' desire for the brand. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 41(3), 590–609.
- Westbrook, R. A. (1987). Product/consumption-based affective responses and post-purchase processes. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 24(3), 258–270.
- White, K., & Argo, J. J. (2009). Social identity threat and consumer preferences. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 19, 313–325.
- White, K., & Argo, J. J. (2011). When imitation doesn't flatter: The role of consumer distinctiveness in responses to mimicry. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 38(4), 667–680.
- White, K., Argo, J. J., & Sengupta, J. (2012). Dissociative versus associative responses to social identity threat: The role of consumer self-construal. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39(4), 704–719.
- White, K., & Dahl, D. W. (2006). To be or not be? The influencer of dissociative reference groups on consumer preferences. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 16(4), 404–414.
- White, K., & Dahl, D. W. (2007). Are all out-groups created equal? Consumer identity and dissociative influence. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 34, 525–536.
- White, K., & Peloza, J. (2009). Self-benefit versus other-benefit marketing appeals: Their effectiveness in generating charitable support. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(4), 109–124.
- White, K., & Simpson, B. (2013). The “dos and don'ts” of normative influence: When do (and don't) normative messages lead to sustainable consumer behaviors? *Journal of Marketing*, 77(2), 78–95.
- White, K., Simpson, B., & Argo, J. J. (2014). The motivating role of dissociative outgroups in encouraging positive consumer behaviors. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 51(4), 433–447.
- Wilcox, K., & Stephen, A. T. (2013). Are close friends the enemy? Online social networks, self-esteem and self-control. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40(2), 90–103.
- Williams, K. D., Cheung, C. K., & Choi, W. (2000). Cyberostracism: Effects of being ignored over the Internet. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79(5), 748–762.
- Williams, K. D., & Sommer, K. L. (1997). Social ostracism by coworkers: Does rejection lead to loafing or compensation? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 23, 693–706.

- Winterich, K. P., & Barone, M. J. (2011). Warm glow or cold, hard cash? Social identity effects on consumer choice for donation versus discount promotions. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 48(5), 855–868.
- Winterich, K. P., Mittal, V., & Aquino, K. (2013). When does recognition increase charitable behavior? Toward a moral identity-based model. *Journal of Marketing*, 77(May), 121–134.
- Winterich, K. P., Mittal, V., & Ross, Jr., W. T. (2009). Donation behavior toward in-groups and out-groups: The role of gender and moral identity. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(August), 199–214.
- Winterich, K. P., Zhang, Y., & Mittal, V. (2012). How political identity and charity positioning increase donations: Insights from moral foundations theory. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 29(4), 346–354.
- Wood, W., Lundgren, S., Ouellette, J. A., Busceme, S., & Blackstone, T. (1994). Minority influence: A meta-analytic review of social influence processes. *Psychological Bulletin*, 115(3), 323.
- Zimbardo, P. (1972). *Interpersonal Dynamics in a Simulated Prison*. Fort Belvoir, VA: Defense Technical Information Center.