

Journal website  
SCP website  
Guide for authors  
Online issues  
Most downloaded  
Most cited articles  
Media mentions

## Journal of Consumer Psychology, Volume 25, Issue 1

### In this issue...

- New JCP Editor-In-Chief Anna Kirmani's thought-provoking editorial on moving towards imperfect but interesting and relevant research instead of perfect results and perfect theory
- Research articles on early adopters, credit card debt, consumption of experiential products, food cravings, interpersonal touch, cause-related marketing, brand switching and the effectiveness of donation appeals
- Research reports on the impact of climactic interruptions on behaviour and how word-of-mouth recommendations differ on social media compared to traditional word-of-mouth
- Research review on gender differences and a research dialogue on consumption happiness

### Updates from SCP

Before you dive into the exciting current issue, some announcements from the Society:

- We are looking forward to a lively intellectual exchange at the [SCP Phoenix Conference](#) from February 26-28, 2015 at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel with keynote speakers such as Elizabeth Loftus and Robert Cialdini, and an entertaining Saturday night event, The Great GatSCP at the historic [Wrigley Mansion](#). The preliminary program is now up on the conference website and registration open at <http://www.myscp.org/conferences/upcoming.aspx>. Ph.D. students are invited to register for the **pre-conference Doctoral Consortium** co-chaired by Kristin Diehl and Joe Goodman that will be held on Thursday, February 26, 2015.
- The Society for Consumer Psychology is now accepting **proposals for a SCP book series**. Proposals should be submitted electronically to SCP President Susan Broniarczyk ([susan.broniarczyk@mcombs.utexas.edu](mailto:susan.broniarczyk@mcombs.utexas.edu)) by **April 1, 2015** as an attached Word file. Further details available at: <http://www.myscp.org/>.
- The Marketing Science Institute (MSI) is featuring three JCP articles on its MSI's Academic Trustees list of "must read" articles of interest to their marketing practitioner audience for 2014:
  1. "[Tablets, Touchscreens and Touchpads: How Varying Touch Interfaces Trigger Psychological Ownership and Endowment](#)" by Stevan Adam Brasel and James Gips
  2. "[Slim by Design: Redirecting the Accidental Drivers of Mindless Overeating](#)" by Brian Wansink and Pierre Chandon
  3. "[A Meaningful Embrace: Contingent Effects of Embodied Cues of Affection](#)" by Rhonda Hadi and Ana Valenzuela

### Consumer psychology in the media

- How repetitive lyrics boost a song's popularity ([The Telegraph](#), Dec 28; [Boston Globe](#), Jan 4; [Pacific Standard](#), Jan 12)
- How mood affects our eating habits ([Delaware Online](#), Jan 21)
- How to relax by dimming the lights ([Washingtonian](#), Dec 31)
- And finally: the news of retail therapy alleviating sadness covered on a Japanese news site ([Mynavi](#), Jan 25 - for a Google Translation, [click here](#))

*If your research has been featured in the media, don't forget to email us at [elina@myscp.org](mailto:elina@myscp.org) and we'll post it on the [CP Buzz section](#) of the SCP website and promote it through Facebook and Twitter.*

### Editorial

#### Neatly Tied with a Bow

*Anna Kirmani*

Extracts:

"In order to move the field towards more impactful research, we need to move away from the "neatly tied with a bow" approach. A paper should be judged as part of an ongoing research stream, not as a neatly tied package that has to be perfect. Research is an ongoing discovery, where we visit and revisit the same phenomenon from different angles. Nothing stands alone. If it does, it tends to lack impact."

"Our field has gotten bogged down in the pursuit of perfection: the perfect study with the perfect results and the perfectly tight theory. The work is so perfect that no follow-up studies are needed, so no one cites the papers. This has to change."

**Intrigued? Read the full editorial:** <http://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-consumer-psychology/news/editorial-neatly-tied-with-a-bow/>

## Research articles

### **"Share and scare": Solving the communication dilemma of early adopters with a high need for uniqueness**

*Sarit Moldovan, Yael Steinhart, Shlomit Ofen*

Early adopters are considered essential to new product success due to their role in encouraging others to adopt. In this paper, we show that this may not always be true. Early adopters with a high need for uniqueness may experience a communication dilemma of whether or not to communicate about innovations they adopt. The dilemma derives from the clash between their need to flaunt the innovation they adopted and their desire to preserve their uniqueness by preventing imitation by others. We suggest that this dilemma might be resolved by a "share and scare" strategy, in which early adopters share information about their adoption with others yet scare them out of adopting it. In a series of four studies, we demonstrate early adopters' communication dilemma, the "share and scare" strategy, and three moderators that confirm our theory.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.06.001>

### **Dual payoff scenario warnings on credit card statements elicit suboptimal payoff decisions**

*Hal E. Hershey, Neal J. Roese*

U.S. Federal regulation from 2009 requires credit card companies to convey information regarding payoff scenarios, i.e., details such as total amount paid and time to pay off when only a minimum payment is made (over time). Across seven studies, the present research shows that consumers who were given a dual payoff scenario (i.e., how much is paid in total based on the minimum payment and also based on a 3-year payoff window) on credit card statements recommended lower payments than those given a single payoff scenario (when the 3-year payment amount was less than what they would have paid otherwise), and were less likely to pay off the balance in full. The effect is driven by a tendency of consumers to infer that the 3-year payment amount is the most appropriate. The dual-scenario effect is minimized by an intervention that draws attention away from the 3-year payment amount. Theoretical and public policy implications are considered.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.06.005>

### **To have in order to do: Exploring the effects of consuming experiential products on well-being**

*Darwin A. Guevarra, Ryan T. Howell*

The experience recommendation – if you want to be happier, buy life experiences instead of material items – is supported in empirical research. However, this evidence is primarily based on the dichotomous comparison of material items and life experiences. The goal of this article is to examine the effects of consuming experiential products – purchases that fall between material items and life experiences – on well-being. Study 1 and Study 2 demonstrate that experiential products provide similar levels of well-being compared to life experiences and more well-being than material items. Study 3 replicates this finding for purchases that turn out well. In addition, Study 3 shows experiential products, when compared to life experiences, lead to more feelings of competence but less feelings of relatedness, which explains why these two purchases result in similar levels of well-being. We discuss why experiential products and life experiences lead to psychological need satisfaction and how our results support the Positive-Activity Model, Self-Determination Theory, and Holbrook and Hirschman's hedonic consumption framework.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.06.006>

### **"I can almost taste it:" Why people with strong positive emotions experience higher levels of food craving, salivation and eating intentions**

*David J. Moore, Sara Konrath*

The goal of this paper is to examine whether individual differences in affect intensity predict people's responses to food advertisements. In doing so, we aim to uncover individual differences and situational factors that are associated with higher food cravings and other consumption-related responses. Studies 1 and 2 identified three mediators (emotional memories, weak impulse control, and the intensity of pleasure anticipation) which indirectly link affect intensity to food cravings and behavioral intentions. Studies 3 and 4 identified two moderators (vividness of advertisement, dieting status of participants) of the relationship between affect intensity and consumption-related outcomes. In Study 3 high affect intensity individuals reported stronger food cravings only in response to vivid advertising appeals. In Study 4, respondents with high levels of positive affectivity, a sub-dimension of affect intensity, experienced increased salivation, but especially when they were dieters exposed to vivid food images. Implications for theory development and for marketing and public policy strategists are discussed.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.07.001>

### **Individual differences in interpersonal touch: On the development, validation, and use of the "comfort with interpersonal touch" (CIT) scale**

*Andrea Webb, Joann Peck*

This research details the development of the "comfort with interpersonal touch" (CIT) scale designed to measure individual differences in interpersonal touch tendencies and preferences. The CIT construct is defined as the degree to which an individual is comfortable with intentional interpersonal touch from or to another person. The scale incorporates the distinction between initiating touch, which is the act of touching someone else, and receiving touch, which is the act of being touched by someone else. Investigation of this construct includes scale development, measure purification, and validation. We situate CIT-initiating and CIT-receiving within an approach-avoidance framework and demonstrate that comfort with initiating touch is more related to approach tendencies such as assertiveness while comfort with receiving touch is more related to avoidant tendencies such as avoiding crowded spaces. While previous research generally finds positive effects of interpersonal touch, we find that these effects, at least in part, depend on an individual's comfort with interpersonal touch. We discuss theoretical and managerial implications as well as future research opportunities using the CIT scale.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.07.002>

### **The impact of perceptual congruence on the effectiveness of cause-related**

## marketing campaigns

*Andrew Kuo, Dan Hamilton Rice*

In the cause-related marketing (CRM) literature, the degree of fit between a firm and cause has been shown to positively impact the effectiveness of CRM campaigns. Throughout the literature, however, firm-cause fit has been operationalized as the relatedness of conceptual attributes such as brand image and positioning (i.e., conceptual congruence). Across three studies, the authors demonstrate that the relatedness of perceptual attributes such as color (i.e., perceptual congruence) can also enhance the effectiveness of CRM campaigns. Study 1 shows that perceptual congruence between a firm and cause positively affects perceptions of overall fit and participation intentions. Study 2 provides evidence that perceptual congruence impacts CRM effectiveness through a fit-as-fluency mechanism. Finally, Study 3 demonstrates the moderating effect of elaboration on the relationship between fit type (perceptual vs. conceptual congruence) and participation intentions. Consistent with previous findings, elaboration positively affects participation intentions when the fit type is conceptual, but the results of Study 3 indicate that elaboration negatively impacts participation intentions when the fit type is perceptual.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.06.002>

## Sins of omission versus commission: Cross-cultural differences in brand-switching due to dissatisfaction induced by individual versus group action and inaction

*Sharon Ng, Hakkyun Kim, Akshay R. Rao*

We examine how brand-switching varies across cultures, depending on the drivers of a prior unsatisfactory consumption experience. We draw from the literature on regret, norm theory and cross-cultural psychology to predict that Westerners are more likely to switch brands when the unsatisfactory consumption experience is a consequence of their inaction relative to the inaction of a group to which they belong. In contrast, it is predicted that Easterners are more likely to switch brands when the unsatisfactory consumption experience is a consequence of inaction on the part of the group to which they belong relative to their own inaction. We discuss the relevance of our research for marketing theory, the need to account for cultural differences in consumer segments, and the implications for organizations targeting culturally distinct market segments, both domestically and internationally.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.07.003>

## The impact of mortality salience on the relative effectiveness of donation appeals

*Fengyan Cai, Robert S. Wyer Jr.*

Some donation appeals emphasize the magnitude of the help that is needed. Other, "bandwagon" appeals emphasize the fact that many others have already donated. The relative effectiveness of these appeals can depend on individuals' awareness of their mortality. Four experiments converge on the conclusion that need-focused appeals are effective when individuals are not conscious of their own mortality. When people's mortality is salient, however, bandwagon appeals have relatively greater influence. This is particularly true when others' donations have put the goal of the donation campaign within reach. These effects are evident when people have little a priori interest in the individuals being helped and sympathy does not play a major role in donation decisions.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.05.005>

## Research reports

### Can't finish what you started? The effect of climactic interruption on behavior

*Daniella M. Kupor, Taly Reich, Baba Shiv*

Individuals experience a greater frequency of interruptions than ever before. Interruptions by e-mails, phone calls, text messages and other sources of disruption are ubiquitous. We examine the important unanswered question of whether interruptions can increase the likelihood that individuals will choose closure-associated behaviors. Specifically, we explore the possibility that interruptions that occur during the climactic moments of a task or activity can produce a heightened need for psychological closure. When an interruption prevents individuals from achieving closure in the interrupted domain, we show that the resulting unsatisfied need for psychological closure can cause individuals to seek closure in totally unrelated domains. These findings have important implications for understanding how consumer decisions may be influenced by the dynamic—and often interrupted—course of daily events.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.05.006>

### Why recommend a brand face-to-face but not on Facebook? How word-of-mouth on online social sites differs from traditional word-of-mouth

*Andreas B. Eisingerich, HaeEun Helen Chun, Yeyi Liu, He (Michael) Jia, Simon J. Bell*

We examine the conceptual difference between consumer electronic word-of-mouth on online social sites (sWOM) such as Facebook and traditional face-to-face word-of-mouth (WOM). We find that consumers are less willing to engage in sWOM than WOM. Such a difference in willingness to offer word-of-mouth can be explained by social risk associated with different communication modes. We show that the difference between people's desire to engage in sWOM and WOM is mediated by perceived social risk and amplified when social risk is made salient. Furthermore, we show that consumers' need to self-enhance mitigates the difference in willingness to offer sWOM versus WOM.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.05.004>

## Research reviews

### Revisiting gender differences: What we know and what lies ahead

*Joan Meyers-Levy, Barbara Loken*

Efforts to identify and understand gender differences have a long history that has sparked lively debate and generated much public interest. Although understanding gender differences is pivotal to consumer researchers and marketers, investigations into this issue by such individuals have been few in number, often weak in theory,

and rather limited in progress made. This paper strives to reinvigorate such inquiry. We begin by describing four major theories of gender differences (socio-cultural, evolutionary, hormone-brain, and the selectivity hypothesis) and then assess relevant research from 2000 to 2013 in marketing, psychology, and biomedicine. From this, five conclusions emerge: Males are more self-oriented, while females are more other-oriented; females are more cautious responders; females are more responsive to negative data; males process data more selectively and females more comprehensively; and females are more sensitive to differentiating conditions and factors. We conclude by identifying several areas of opportunity for advancing our understanding of gender differences.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.06.003>

## Research dialogues

### On consumption happiness: A research dialogue

*Michel Tuan Pham*

Most research on consumer psychology focuses on predictors of consumption behavior, such as attitudes, social influences, emotion effects, and decision processes. Much less attention has been paid to the consequences of consumption behavior. This research dialogue focuses on the consequences of consumption, and examines a simple but fundamental question: Does buying and consuming actually make people happier?

Read more: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.10.001>

### A wonderful life: experiential consumption and the pursuit of happiness

*Thomas Gilovich, Amit Kumar, Lily Jampol*

To live in the developed world is to live in a consumerist society. Although the broader forces that created this society have led to unprecedented material abundance, scholars have maintained that these benefits have come at a significant psychological cost. An important question, then, is how these psychological costs can be minimized. With that in mind, we review research showing that people derive more satisfaction from experiential purchases than material purchases. We then summarize the findings of an extensive program of research on the psychological mechanisms that underlie this difference. This research indicates that experiential purchases provide greater satisfaction and happiness because: (1) Experiential purchases enhance social relations more readily and effectively than material goods; (2) Experiential purchases form a bigger part of a person's identity; and (3) Experiential purchases are evaluated more on their own terms and evoke fewer social comparisons than material purchases. We conclude by discussing how social policy might be altered to take advantage of the greater hedonic return offered by experiential investments, thus advancing societal well-being.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.08.004>

### From experiential psychology to consumer experience

*Bernd Schmitt, J. Joško Brakus, Lia Zarantonello*

We comment on Gilovich and colleagues' program of research on happiness resulting from experiential versus material purchases, and critique these authors' interpretation that people derive more happiness from experiences than from material possessions. Unlike goods, experiences cannot be purchased, and possessions versus experiences do not seem to form the endpoints of the same continuum. As an alternative, we present a consumer-experience model that views materialism and experientialism as two separate dimensions whose effects on consumer happiness, both in the form of pleasure and in the form of meaning, depend on the type of brand experiences evoked. Thus, a good life in a consumerist society means integrating material and experiential consumptions rather than shifting spending from material to experiential purchases.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.09.001>

### Building a science of spending: Lessons from the past and directions for the future

*Elizabeth W. Dunn, Aaron C. Weidman*

A decade of research suggests that people derive more happiness from buying experiences (e.g., vacations, concert tickets) than from buying material things (e.g., shoes, televisions; see Gilovich, Kumar, & Jampol, 2014, this issue). This highly impactful program of research provides a valuable model to apply in building a broader "science of spending." By examining both the strengths and limitations of research comparing experiential and material consumption, we extract two lessons for researchers interested in studying how consumers can buy the most happiness with their money, and suggest two methodological improvements that could yield new insights into the happiness benefits of experiential and material purchases. In addition, moving beyond past research on the material/experiential distinction, we offer two fertile areas for future research in the science of spending.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.08.003>

### The beach, the bikini, and the best buy: Replies to Dunn and Weidman, and to Schmitt, Brakus, and Zarantonello

*Thomas Gilovich, Amit Kumar, Lily Jampol*

We reply to commentaries on Gilovich, Kumar & Jampol (2015--in this issue) by Dunn & Weidman (2015-in this issue) and Schmitt, Brakus and Zarantonello (2015-in this issue). We argue that the distinction between material and experiential purchases is meaningful and important, that experiences can be bought, and that our comparisons of the two have not been confounded by factors such as significance, importance, purchase price, or subjective appeal. We further discuss the potential limitations of populations from which we have sampled, and differences in consumer satisfaction across different time frames. We conclude by embracing the fact that our program of research has generated many open questions and by welcoming further empirical attempts to understand the psychological processes and hedonic consequences that attend these two types of purchases.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.09.002>