

**The Cynic's Guide to Shopping for Morals.
On the commodification of morality in
consumer culture**

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Abstract

This thesis questions the idea that morality is only part of consumer culture in explicitly ethical consumption, and instead argues that morality is shaped in several layers throughout consumer culture. This thesis examines these layers by considering the question: *How is morality shaped and perpetuated both explicitly and implicitly in consumer culture?*

It has found that consumer culture is not post-ideological but that in it, ideology and morality are obscured by a cynical disconnection between belief and action, which is used by both consumers and producers. By disconnecting what people 'know and believe' from what they 'do', it becomes harder to recognise where ideology and morality affect consumer culture, because they are denied their role while they fulfil it. Ideology and morality are obscured further by a second disconnection within this first one; between what people 'know' and what they 'believe'. The tension this disconnection causes is addressed through myth, which adds and hides ideology and morality in consumer culture by naturalising ideology and morality in advertising.

This shows that there is more to consumption than the satisfaction of needs, and there is more to the concept of needs in consumer culture than their practical satisfaction. Consumer culture is a complex sphere where good and bad co-exist, and consumers are active co-creators of ideology and morality. Their contributions however, are made within limits set by dominant voices in consumer culture, perpetuating an inequality of power in consumer culture. This thesis shows that when consumer culture is looked at as a complex social sphere, it becomes clear that atonement is an important part of consumer culture, not just in explicitly ethical consumption but in consumer culture in general, and that consumer culture is a sphere where morality is taught and learned.

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Introduction

Both academic and popular discourse paint a picture of consumer culture as damaging to the earth and to those living on it, by connecting it to ill effects such as pollution and alienation. This view of consumption is deeply rooted in a more than 2000-year-old discourse. From the downfall of Plato's Republic to Aristotle's condemnation of making money for money's sake: from the story of Adam and Eve's consumption of the Forbidden fruit, Veblen's conspicuous consumption and the Frankfurt school's criticisms of mass consumption, the narrative of consumption is steeped in unfavourable moral judgement. While it's often presented as amoral at best and immoral at worst, there are many clear examples of interactions between morality and consumer culture. Fairtrade coffee, vegan sausages, bio-degradable straws that don't hurt the turtles, and petitions against animal testing are only a fraction of the instances of explicit morality in consumer culture that a consumer could encounter during a single shopping trip. They are examples of what is often called 'ethical consumption', which is generally seen as a small, specific subsection of consumer culture, distinct from mainstream consumption. This thesis questions the idea that morality is only part of consumer culture in these widely acknowledged instances, and instead argues that morality is shaped in several layers throughout consumer culture. This thesis examines these layers by considering the question: *How is morality shaped and perpetuated both explicitly and implicitly in consumer culture?* To answer this question, I consider several sub-questions, of which the first is: *Is consumer culture, as is commonly assumed, post-ideological?* This, and the question: *What is the role of myth in the shaping of ideology and morality in consumer culture?* provide the structure for the first chapter of this thesis.

In the second chapter I examine the role of consumers in the construction of morality in a social context. Questions about morality in consumer culture are often formulated about the satisfaction of needs by consumption. In this thesis I question not the satisfaction, but the definition of needs in consumer culture by asking the question: *How is morality constructed in the definition of needs in*

consumer culture? I also consider the sub-question: *What role do consumers play in the shaping and perpetuating of morality in consumer culture?* To frame this discussion, I explore the theoretical links between the way morality is shaped and perpetuated in religion – traditionally associated with the construction of morality - and in consumer culture, through the question: *What parallels can be identified between the way morality is shaped and perpetuated in religion and in consumer culture?*

These sub-questions are explored further in the thesis' case studies. The first case study, of food discourse, aims to answer the sub-question: *How is moral responsibility constructed in food discourse.* The following chapter, a case study of the brand TOMS, is an in depth study of the sub-question introduced in the second chapter: *How is morality constructed in the definition of needs in consumer culture?* The third and final case-study is an in depth study of the Lonely Planet brand, which examines a parallel between the way morality is shaped in religion and in consumer culture, by asking the sub-question; *What role does happiness play in the construction of morality in consumer culture?*

Before outlining the contributions/content of each chapter in more detail, the next section situates the thesis within the major contemporary debates about morality, consumption and ideology.

Ethical consumption discourse

The connection between morality, consumption and community in ethical consumption practices lies in the framing of ethical consumption as a possible solution to problems such as damage to the environment, global warming, poverty or the suffering of animals. These are problems defined by morality and solving them with consumption choices links consumption to morality. Examples of consumption choices that can be made for ethical reasons are almost endless, ranging from every day items such as organic and locally produced apples, Fairtrade bananas and coffee, UTZ-certified chocolate and recycled paper, to the Fairphone (Fairphone, 2016), an ethically produced mobile phone, and the use of electric cars. While the degree of ethicality and effectiveness of these products is the subject of many a debate, their increasing popularity is not. Within the broad category of 'ethical consumption', the literature describes a range of

consumption practices that 'can be a lever for change' (Barnett & Soper, 2006) and emphasises the cultural significance of these practices (Littler, 2009; Schor & Holt, 2000). Ethical consumption takes the consumer's social and natural environment into account, and often has an intended impact on social realms outside of the consumer's immediate living environment. Willis and Schor (2012, p. 162) define ethical consumption as:

'Any choice about products or services made as a way to express values of sustainability, social justice, corporate responsibility, or workers' rights, that takes into account the larger context of production, distribution, or impacts of goods and services. Conscious consumption choices may include forgoing or reducing consumption or choosing products that are organic, eco-friendly, Fairtrade, local, or cruelty-free.'

The very diverse consumer practices that fall within this concept of ethical consumption are roughly categorised as either boycotting or positive buying, which is dubbed buycotting (Micheletti, 2003). Consumers have for instance boycotted animal-tested products, producers that are known to use sweatshop labour, or products from regions in the world whose politics they don't agree with. Positive buying is for instance choosing Fairtrade or organic products; it entails choosing one consumption option over the other on the basis of the ethical values it stands for. The idea behind it is that consumers have some modicum of power over producers by 'voting' with their consumer choices. The early 20th century economist Fetter (1905, p. 212) suggested that 'every buyer determines in some degree the direction of industry. The market is a democracy where every penny gives the right of vote'. This idea is still prominent in today's framing of ethical consumption. Notably, the issue of 'having more pennies equals having more votes' is not often framed as problematic, undemocratic or a way of perpetuating inequality.

While ethical consumption in the form of boycotting and buycotting seems to be increasingly pervasive, it is not a new phenomenon. Fetter made his remarks about voting with pennies in 1911, but even then it wasn't a novel idea. In as early as the late 1700's, American and European consumers were

protesting African slavery by boycotting slave-grown sugar. An abolitionist pamphlet in 1792 made the consumers' role in slavery explicit: 'The consumer of the West India produce may be considered as the master spring that gives motion and effect to the whole machine of cruelties' (Sussman, 2000). Sussman describes how consumers were seen as having a moral duty to boycott the products of slavery. It was seen as blood-stained, wretched, and was in some pamphlets even described as cannibalistic (Sussman, 2000, p. 40). William Fox (quoted in Sussman, 2000, p. 116) made the very graphic statement that 'In every pound of sugar used, we may be considered as consuming two ounces of human flesh'.

Not only have the issues that people try to influence through their consumption choices have stayed fairly constant; the contradictory nature of consumption choices was an issue then just like it is now. In the early 1900's when the ethical consumer shopped conscientiously in Europe's capitals, protesting sweatshops by boycotting specific tailors, and avoiding or even protesting outside certain department stores for their exploitation of their shop girls, consumers united in leagues and co-operatives, and fought for their rights as consumers and against exploitation of low-wage staff. Unlike the earlier protests against slavery, now their causes were local, not global, which is ironic because the mass market was possible only because of large scale injustices done to the inhabitants of Europe's colonies (Trentmann, 2016). The situation has arguably improved since the times of European empire and the use of slave labour, but large-scale exploitation of workers in low-wage countries still forms an important condition for mass consumption in the West, and continues to inform ethical consumption choices.

This contradiction mirrors the opposition found in the common discourses of consumption in which either consuming more or consuming less are presented as the moral choice. Common critiques of ethical consumption are often related to this conflicting conception of consumption as either destructive or creative of a good life for society's citizens. Ethical consumption, while its goal is to put less stress on the natural and social environments, is still consumption, and high levels of it will still have negative consequences. There is also the fear of green-washing, where polluting companies have a token 'sustainability' project

to focus their marketing communication on, distracting from their overall negative impact. It is always possible to be critical of any effort of consuming ethically, as the different elements of the social and the natural can't all be spared at the same time. Ethically produced goods will still need to be shipped, packaged and sold, at cost to the environment, and ethically packaged goods are not always made with completely ethically sourced materials. There is also always the option of critiquing a consumption choice for not being ethical enough, Fairtrade for instance, has been the subject of criticism for protecting farmers by paying a fair price, while ignoring the wages and living conditions of those working on the farms. These examples show that the nature of ethical consumption is complicated, and because the measures against which it is held are so varied, it is impossible to define a perfect way to consume ethically.

Žižek (2009b) explores the role of ethical consumption in Western economies, arguing that where charity was once something some people did occasionally, it has now become the basic constituent of our economy. He calls it contemporary cultural capitalism, and contrasts it with the pre-countercultural transformation of capitalism of the 1960's. Before this revolution, commerce and charity were two separate things. Now, he observes, the two dimensions are increasingly brought together into a capitalism that embodies values such as 'caring for the environment' and 'feeding the starving children in Guatemala' (Žižek, 2009a). The consumption of goods now comes with what Žižek calls the anti-capitalist duty of doing something for someone else included in the deal; 'In the very consumerist act, you buy your redemption' (Žižek, 2009a).

This idea, Žižek argues, is becoming universal. He explains that in his eyes, the intentions of those who want to fight the evil of the suffering they encounter are admirable but misdirected. In fact, he says, the remedies are part of the disease; they fight the symptoms but not the disease. 'The real goal should be to reconstruct society in a way that poverty should be impossible, and the altruistic virtues have prevented the carrying out of this aim'. To the attitude of 'let's not discard the evil, let's make the evil work for the good', when it comes to trying to reform global capitalism, Žižek says 'let's give to the devil what belongs to the devil' (Žižek, 2009a).

There is a growing body of work that addresses this complicated nature of consumption, that recognises consumer culture as a sphere like any other, where good and bad both exist. Sayer for instance has written extensively on the concept of the moral economy (Sayer, 1994, 2001, 2003, 2007), and adds nuance to the debate with the argument that consumption is far from 'individualistic, self-indulgent, and narcissistic' and is often done with regard for others and their needs and desires (Sayer, 2003, p. 353). Campbell argues that, 'both self-interested and idealistic concerns are involved in consumerism' (C. Campbell, 1998, p. 152). This is something that can be seen in everyday consumption, not just in explicitly ethical consumption, for instance in shopping for others, gift buying and consumer and brand communities. This interweaving of the good and bad aspects of consumer culture, and recognizing that they are both parts of the whole is important, as it means that it is impossible to identify the bad parts and then simply banish them, 'leaving behind some untainted good' (Barnett, Cafaro, & Newholm, 2005). This view of consumer culture makes room for a much more nuanced and richer theoretical exploration of how morality and consumer culture interact. In writing that goes beyond the dichotomy of consumption or production as either good or bad, Barnett et al. work with a concept of consumer culture as a sphere where morality is shaped. Looking at it this way opens up the possibility to go beyond thinking about how ethical a certain consumption choice is, or how ethically a specific product is produced, or how genuine an ethical marketing campaign is (Barnett et al., 2005), and makes it possible to consider the ways in which consumer culture functions as a sphere where morality is shaped, taught and learnt.

Caruana (Caruana, 2007a, 2007b) argues that the literature on consumption and morality follows three main threads, starting with the structural morality that Weber (2005) and Durkheim (1915) describe. In their writing, morality comes most strongly from society's institutions such as the church and the state, and is imposed on individuals by offering a structure within which moral considerations take place. The second is the constructivist tradition, of which Berger, Berger and Luckmann (1991) were key proponents. In this view, morality is shaped and manifested in a dialectical process. Caruana also describes the outlines of what he sees as the contemporary way in which

morality is written about, by for instance Campbell (1987) and Barnett (2011). In the contemporary view, he argues, morality is seen as more dependent on the context in which it is shaped, as taking a much more fluid shape, manifesting itself differently in different individuals and in different situations.

All three perspectives on morality have their strengths when it comes to the analysis of morality and consumption, each offering insights into different aspects of the formation and manifestation of morality, and the distinction between the three views is useful in showing the development of thinking on this subject through the ages. The contemporary approach in particular is useful in the context of this thesis, as it builds on the dialectical process that the constructivist tradition sees, and highlights the changeable nature of morality. The definition of morality that I use in this thesis is grounded in Aristotle's (2009) writing on ethics, in which morality is changeable and learnable. It is a set of beliefs about what is seen as good, and what is perceived as bad.

The discourse on the role of morality in consumer culture is varied. Scholars such as Littler (2009), Willis and Schor (2012) and Soper (2011) are critical, but overall they see ethical consumption as providing opportunities to create positive change in the world. On the other side there are the many scholars who see capitalism and consumer culture in general as a negative development, such as Frankfurt school scholars Adorno (2002) and Marcuse (1964), and scholars such as Berger, Berger and Luckman (1974) and Putnam (2000). Žižek takes on ethical consumption specifically, and is clear in his position that ethical consumption belongs to the devil (Žižek, 2009b). This thesis does not aim to examine the morality of ethical consumption itself, nor does it intend to measure the success of either the concept of ethical consumption or specific instances of it. Like the work of for instance Barnett (2005), Sayer (2007) and Campbell (1998), this thesis will examine consumption as a sphere where what is seen as good and as bad both exist, and where morality is formed. This thesis will build on their theoretical work that argues *that* morality is formed in consumer culture, and will demonstrate *how* it's formed in consumer culture. In the following chapter I go into myth and ideology in more depth, and by drawing on those theories I can pry apart and give insight into the layers in which morality is formed in consumer culture, demonstrated in the three case

studies. The original contribution this thesis will make is an original synthesis of the literature on ideology and myth, developed through a range of case studies of consumer culture, drawing original conclusions regarding the role of ideology, the definition of needs, the construction of moral responsibility and the role of happiness in consumer culture.

Overview of the thesis

1. I know well, but still. Ideology, cynicism and punk credit cards

It is commonly asserted that consumer culture is post-ideological. In this chapter I question this idea and argue that morality has not disappeared from consumer culture, rather, it is obscured. By drawing on the work of theorists such as Boorstin, Debord, Sloterdijk, Mannoni, Žižek and Barthes, I aim to answer the question *What is the role of myth in the shaping and perpetuating of ideology and morality in consumer culture?*

2. From False Needs and Dystopias to Consumption for the Greater Good

In the second chapter I examine consumption as an active practice, as a dynamic process in which morality is constructed. I argue that in this process, consumers should be recognised as having an active role and that consumption should be seen as both constitutive and expressive of morality. In the first section of the chapter I discuss how the definition of needs is part of how morality is shaped in consumer culture, and how the active role of consumers can be investigated through consumption rites of sharing, appropriating, shaping, reflecting and ending to demonstrate how ideology, myth and morality move through consumer culture in such practices of consumption and meaning-making.

In the second section of the chapter I look at consumption as a social practice and summarise both the negative and positive sides of the discourse on consumption. I highlight three cases in which morality plays a role in consumption that is not commonly acknowledged; shopping and sacrifice, minimalism and happiness. The final section of the chapter is an introduction of the case studies and an elucidation of the research design.

3. From Hatted Smoothies to Flat Cap Chefs: Moral Responsibility in Food Discourse

The first case study chapter in this thesis looks at various aspects of food discourse. It examines cases such as the Fairtrade Foundation and the Rainforest Alliance, Innocent's Big Knit and a small scale local deli market. It is structured to give insight into how moral responsibility is created in food consumption discourse, and to whom. The chapter is divided into three sections, which ask how moral responsibility is constructed to the global, the national/regional and the local community.

4. TOMS: Giving shoes and selling morality

The second case study chapter is a study of the brand TOMS, which combines the social goal of giving shoes to children in need with their profit goal. While morality is very explicitly part of their marketing communication, I argue that there is more to it. I use Barthes' concept of myth to analyse the brand's definitions of needs, to show how below the surface of the explicit morality constructed by the brand, there is another layer of under-acknowledged morality.

5. Happiness on a 'Lonely' Planet

The third and final case study chapter is an investigation into the relationship between morality and happiness in consumer culture. This connection is commonly made by linking consumer culture to hedonism and pleasure, which are often perceived as morally inferior to what is seen as 'true' happiness. This chapter looks at the travel brand Lonely Planet and investigates if and how the historical link between happiness and morality that originates in the works of Plato and Aristotle play a part in contemporary consumer culture.

Conclusion

Finally, the concluding chapter brings together the answers to the sub-questions to answer the main research question, *How is morality shaped and perpetuated both explicitly and implicitly in consumer culture?* It includes suggestions for further research.

The original contribution this thesis makes is an original synthesis of the literature on ideology and myth, and by applying the originally combined theories to case studies of consumer culture, it gives insight into the layering of morality in consumer culture.

1. I know well, but still. Ideology, cynicism and punk credit cards

Introduction

Contemporary consumer culture is commonly referred to as a culture in which meaning, values, ideology and morality have been lost. From its rise in the post war years, scholars such as Adorno (1991), Marcuse (1964), Gane (2002), Peter Berger et al. (1974) and Putnam (2000) have lamented the effects consumer culture has had on moral values. In its place, advertising creates and sells a spectacle (Debord, 1994), pseudo-events (Boorstin, 1992) and forms a hyper-reality, in which signs, rather than consumer items are the objects of consumption (Baudrillard, 1994, 1996). Here, advertising is not about what is factually true, but about what people feel or believe to be true. The tension this creates is addressed by scholars such as Boorstin (Boorstin, 1992), Adorno and Horkheimer (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002), who believe that consumers take a sense of enjoyment from what they describe as consumer culture's deceptions. Sloterdijk and Žižek take this idea further and argue that consumers use cynicism to negate the tension between what they know, what they say they believe, and what they actually do.

The above summary provides the theoretical basis for this chapter. My aim in this chapter is to outline advertising's relationship to ideology, cynicism and morality as understood by critical commentators. Referring to Sloterdijk's famous phrase, who himself draws on Mannoni's famous essay, *'Je sais bien, mais quand meme'*: 'I know well, but still,' I interrogate the idea that people know full well that advertising's claims are not true, but still act as if they are. Following Žižek's dual understanding of ideology, I argue that consumer culture is not post-ideological; rather, ideology remains an under acknowledged part of consumer culture. By applying Barthes' theory of myth, it becomes clear how advertising creates ideology and morality, and at the same time hides it from plain view, making advertising a site within consumer culture in which ideology and myth are shaped and perpetuated, and under-acknowledged. In this chapter I discuss the theories of advertising's various theoretical connections to the concept of

truth and show how Žižek's concepts of constituted and constituent ideology are connected and hidden in consumer culture through the construction of Barthesian myth in advertising. Žižek sees ideology as having two parts, constituent and constituted ideology, and the disconnection between the framework of ideology (constituted) and the actions people take (constituent) is an important part of why ideology remains under-acknowledged in consumer culture. I argue that this disconnection can be recognised in consumer culture in advertising. The final part of the chapter proposes that ideology and morality are at the core of consumer culture by considering the work of theorists of ideology such as Marx, Gramsci, Mannheim and Althusser, and looking at how such writers' conceptualisations of ideology have shifted over time in ways that are useful to this study.

True-ish

Advertising is not about what's true; it's about what's believable. Baudrillard explains this phenomenon by comparing advertising to a child's belief in Santa:

'Neither its rhetoric nor even the informational aspect of its discourse has a decisive effect on the buyer' [...] he thus no more believes in advertising than the child does in Father Christmas but this in no way impedes his capacity to embrace an internalised infantile situation, and to act accordingly. Herein lies the real effectiveness of advertising, founded on its obedience to a logic which, though not that of conditioned reflex, is nonetheless very rigorous; a logic of belief and regression. (Baudrillard, 1996, p. 167)

Advertising uses this space between what's true and what's believable. It's not deceiving us; it's changing our concepts of truth, knowledge and reality (Boorstin, 1992, p. 211). It's not the advertisements' producers who are in a one-way street mode of deception; consumers and advertisers create the space for myth together. Advertisers feed the consumers' ever-growing expectation of novelty, innovation, development and progress. The issue with truth and advertising is in this case, not about false advertising. While there are always those that look for the limits of what is allowed, there are regulations in place

intended to protect consumers from deceitful advertising, preventing advertisers from blatantly lying about their wares (Office of Fair Trading, 2008). The underlying issue, the one that is relevant in this context, is that advertising has been able to redefine what lying means, and what constitutes 'truth'.

'Green-washing' is an example of a way that companies can take liberty with the concept of truth in their advertising. For instance of an oil company's corporate image, where a multi-national that relies on the sale of fossil fuels makes a token effort in the field of renewable energy and then uses that relatively small part of their business to present themselves to the outside world (Cherry & Sneirson, 2011). It's not strictly speaking a lie, but it's also not exactly a balanced image of what is actually happening in the business. This can also be seen in the advertising by skin care company Dove, that says everyone is beautiful, regardless of shape, size, colour or age (Dove, 2017c). But they still need to sell beauty products, so they need consumers to believe that they are not quite beautiful enough and they should still buy Dove's products. This is one of the ways that advertising creates space for myth; the overt and covert messages are contradictory and can't both be true.

Boorstin observes that successful advertising has several ways of appealing to our ever-growing expectations. For instance, they use the ambiguous '*appeal of the neither-true-nor-false*' by making a claim about their product that, while it is absolutely true, is also common practice for all products in that category regardless of their brand, and they present it in a way as if they are the only brand doing it. The competition cannot claim that they do it as well (as they have been for years), because they will be perceived as trying to copy the brand that communicated it first (Boorstin, 1992, p. 214). The second aspect is '*the appeal of the self-fulfilling prophecy*' (Boorstin, 1992, p. 216), which is the way in which brands or companies become what they advertise to be, because they advertise that they are. For example, becoming the number one brand, by claiming that you are the number one brand. Celebrity endorsement is often used to create self-fulfilling prophecies. There is an attraction to brands that we helped make the number one, we can feel like we own, or can be credited for part of the success. The third way Boorstin argues advertisers appeal to consumers is the use of the '*half-intelligible*'. The use of (pseudo) scientific jargon that stands

for innovation, for development, for progress. If consumers can understand everything that's being said in an advertisement the need for the new would not be satisfied. There is also a certain social prestige in being up to date with the jargon used; it's a way for consumers to make a distinction in the Bourdieusian sense of the word.

Adorno and Horkheimer added that they did not believe consumers were necessarily convinced of the truth-value of the social order that is being sold to them with their consumer goods, but that they cling to the illusion, or delusion, regardless. In their own famous words:

'The phrase, the world wants to be deceived, has become truer than had ever been intended.[...] They force their eyes shut and voice approval, in a kind of self-loathing, for what is meted out to them, knowing fully the purpose for which it is manufactured. Without admitting it they sense that their lives would be completely intolerable as soon as they no longer clung to satisfactions which are none at all' (2002, p. 106).

Boorstin points out that finding out about a deception can even be a source of enjoyment. 'Strictly speaking,' Boorstin observes, 'there is no way to unmask an image. An image becomes all the more interesting with our every effort to debunk it.' (1992, p. 193) . We are fascinated by what happens behind the scenes. We still enjoy the deception after having been backstage. It even seems as if we appreciate the image more when we see all the effort that has gone into manipulating it; as if the elaborate contrivance proves to us that we were not stupid for being taken in. Advertising, but also the proliferation of so-called reality TV shows ranging from *Big Brother* to *Keeping up with the Kardashians* and *Love Island*, and shows such as *X-Factor* and *WWE SmackDown*, which very actively and openly play with the definition of what is 'true' or authentic, is a testament to the fact that the theories of Boorstin, Debord and Baudrillard about images, deception and hyper-reality are very much a part of everyday consumer culture.

Advertising as pseudo-event

Consumer culture mainly addresses the question of 'what is believable' with the use of images. Images are believable. Images are also ideological. Debord (1994, p. 6) argues that in societies with modern production systems, the entirety of reality is now mere representation. The spectacle, as he calls it, 'is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images' (1994, p. 1). This means that images have a central role in how consumers relate to each other, placing the visual at the very center of the social. Boorstin argues that there are simple and straightforward reasons for the omnipresence of advertising in daily life. Consumers' perception of their world is organised through what he calls pseudo-events. A pseudo-event is an event that is planned or incited; they are for instance interviews or debates rather than natural events such as earthquakes or unintended events such as a bad traffic incident. Advertising is an excellent example of a pseudo-event. When pseudo-events like advertising are planned, they are designed for the immediate purpose of being reported on or to be reproduced. Their success is measured by how widely they are spread. An important characteristic of a pseudo-event is that the questions 'is it newsworthy, is this interesting?' are much more relevant to it than the questions: 'is this real, or is this true?'. Boorstin argues that this is why the relation of the pseudo-event to its underlying reality is ambiguous. Notably, it is often the ambiguity that makes it interesting. Boorstin (1992, p. 36) poses that pseudo-events are self-fulfilling prophecies; they become an event by declaring themselves to be one. Unlike Adorno, Boorstin does not see pseudo-events such as advertising as conscious efforts to deceive, even though their relation to truth is ambiguous. He argues that the distortion of reality is the result of the media's structural limits, rather than a concentrated calculated effort by 'crooks that want to deceive us' (Boorstin, 1992, p. 36).

Advertising overshadows attention for spontaneous and uncontrived events for very mundane reasons, for instance because they are designed to be more dramatic. And as they are made specifically for easy dissemination, they are repeatable and therefore re-enforceable. Also, someone has spent money on creating them; someone is invested in disseminating them. To ensure appeal to as many people as possible, advertising messages are made easy to grasp. They

simplify complicated issues so that they go down a little smoother, they don't require the effort to understand that spontaneous events need. Another important reason for pseudo-events to overshadow spontaneous ones is a social one: there is an incentive to keep up and stay informed on what the conversations at the office will be about (1992, pp. 11-12). For all these reasons, advertising plays an essential role in consumers' daily lives, and even though it does not always deal with themes that consumers will recognise as explicitly moral, it plays an important part in how ideology is shaped in consumer culture. Boorstin argues that the fact that the information available to people is mainly about pseudo-events rather than natural 'true' events, is what is causing the distinction between what is true and what is believable to become less clear (2014, p. 270). When it comes to designing advertising, disseminating it, reading it, interpreting it, and acting on it, the question 'what is believable' has become more important than the question 'what is true'. And the question of what is believable can only be answered from an ideological perspective. This makes designing, disseminating, reading, interpreting and acting on advertising ideological practices.

Boorstin also emphasizes that images play a central role in ideology (1992, pp. 39-40), and he argues that there are several characteristics of images that give it that role. The first is that images, like pseudo-events, are synthetic and planned. They are created to serve a purpose, to communicate a certain message (1992, p. 185). Trademarks, logos, and the other images that make up a brand's visualisation don't just happen, they don't just 'arise'; they are created by specialists (1992, p. 185). An image is believable. But an image can't stretch the truth too much; it can't directly oppose what we already believe if it is to be a successful, 'vivid' image. Boorstin continues, arguing that an image is also passive. A trademark or a logo is not something that has to change to reflect the corporation; rather, the image becomes something the corporation has to live up to.

Boorstin, in the same way that Adorno, Horkheimer (2002) and Althusser (2008) have, argues that images have become an invitation to conform. Images of celebrities wearing certain items, presenting themselves and the products they promote in a certain way, have a very measurable effect on consumer behaviour

(Swerdlow & Swerdlow, 2003). The central place images have in contemporary life has played an essential part in the shift towards an emphasis on 'how to look' rather than on 'how to be'. 'An image is the kind of ideal that only becomes real when it becomes public' (Boorstin, 1992, p. 186). Another reason Boorstin gives for images' role in the shaping and perpetuating of ideology is that an image is vivid and concrete. But an image is also limited; it can't give a list of objectives or characteristics. A few of the characteristics have to be exaggerated and emphasised to get the point across; meaning that, like advertising in general, an image is always a simplification. To be successful an image needs to be simpler than the object it represents. An image is also ambiguous; 'it floats somewhere between the imagination and the senses, between expectation and reality' (Boorstin, 1992, p. 189). It needs to be ambiguous to withstand the changes in tastes that come with time and it needs to be able to give the opportunity for several interpretations, by different people and in different settings (Boorstin, 1992, p. 193). This ambiguity or ambivalence of images gives them a quality of malleability that makes them a particularly fruitful focus for analysis when thinking about how values and ideologies circulate in consumer culture.

The consumption of signs

Debord argues that the spectacle should be seen as not just a blurring of appearance and reality, but as a new reality in which the image has taken a central role and appearance has become more real than reality itself (Debord, 1994, pp. 12-13). Baudrillard argues a similar situation, in which image and appearance have become central as well. But Baudrillard posed that there is no longer a reality that is waiting to be discovered behind the material existence of ideology. In his eyes, reality and representation have now collapsed and come together in a hyper-reality made up of signs. Debord retains another distinction that Baudrillard argues has disappeared: that between object and subject. In Debord's eyes, the spectacle is still a representation. Debord poses that the relationship between object and subject has become indirect and less transparent, but they are distinguishable as two different entities, one representing the other. In Baudrillard's opinion, the object has converted into a sign of its use, with no necessary relation to its actual use, or even to any

objective reality. Consumption, from this point of view, is no longer about the objects consumed, it is about what these objects represent, and what they represent is often but not exclusively decided through advertising.

Baudrillard applies his theory to the sphere of consumption, a sphere where the creation and circulation of signs is central. He formulates a theory of consumption in which objects are not the object of consumption. The material goods are the 'objects of need and the satisfaction of need' (Baudrillard, 1994, p. 6). The meanings added to the products in advertising, the signs, are the actual objects of consumption. This means that consumption is not a purely material practice. It is, in Baudrillard's words, 'not defined by the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the car we drive, nor by the visual and oral substance of images and messages, but in the organization of all this as signifying substance' (Baudrillard, 1996, p. 200). He argues that consumption is the 'virtual totality of objects and messages ready constituted as a more or less coherent discourse' and that 'if it has any meaning at all, consumption means an activity consisting of the systematic manipulation of signs' (Baudrillard, 2004, p. 21). Consumption, in this meaning, Baudrillard argues, has become central to the organisation of industrial society. In this perspective consumption is not a passive process, in which consumers simply consume what and how producers tell them to, but an active relationship: 'a mode of systematic activity and global response which founds our entire cultural system' (Baudrillard, 1996, p. 200).

Baudrillard and Debord both see the system of consumption as a mode of domination. Debord describes the spectacle as both the outcome and the goal of the dominant mode of production, with the choices that consumers can make already limited or even decided on in the sphere of production. In this system, consumption becomes a justification of the existing social order. Baudrillard poses that the combination of the way we employ consumption to signify and aim to achieve social status, and consumption as the active consumption of signs, has resulted in a system of recognition that has become dominant, to the detriment of other systems such as language, birth status and code of moral value. In this process, consumption discourse becomes the foundation for the structure consumers use to think about the world, which becomes the foundation for how people think about what is the right or the wrong thing to do.

Morality is constructed within this system that is built through the consumption of signs, even when it is not directly and overtly related to morality through for instance ethical consumption. The code of 'social standing' is becoming the primary code, under the influence of all-pervasive advertising:

'The collective function of advertising is to convert us all to the code. Since it is sanctioned by the group the code is moral, and every infraction is more or less charged with guilt. The code is totalitarian; no one escapes it: our individual flights do not negate the fact that each day we participate in its collective elaboration' (Baudrillard, 1996, p. 199).

Baudrillard and Debord also agree on the totality and inescapability of consumption. For Debord, it is the omnipresence of the spectacle that makes it so; consumption is the constant justification of consumption, there is no end to it (Debord, 1994, p. 13). Baudrillard emphasises the role of need, or rather the fact that needs do not play a role in consumption. If there was such a thing as a true need, it could be satisfied; there would be a possibility of saturation and with it, an end to consumption. Baudrillard argues that it is more than just a perpetual trying to 'keep up with the Joneses'. Rather, it is a 'frustrated desire for totality' and the constant need to mask the absence of reality that makes consumption endless and limitless (Baudrillard, 2004, p. 19).

'Anything is possible when your man smells of Old Spice and not a lady'. Cynicism and ideology

Boorstin (1992) and Debord (1994) both show how important the role of the media in general and images in particular are in the interpellation of individuals into ideology. Boorstin not only argues that when judging the media and images of consumer culture, the question of 'what is believable' has gained prominence over the question 'what is true' (2014, p. 270) and that the question of what is believable is only answerable from an ideological viewpoint, he also poses that there is no real way to unmask an image. Where Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) argued that people seem to want to be deceived, Boorstin (1992) goes even further, arguing that they take pleasure from it. 'The more elaborate the

contrivance, the less stupid people feel for being taken in' he argues. Sloterdijk addresses this issue as well, in his work on cynicism. He posed that people are aware of what they believe, but are still able to systematically act contrary to their beliefs. The early Marxists argued that people don't know but still do. Sloterdijk, drawing on Mannoni's famous essay, '*Je sais bien, mais quand meme*': 'I know well, but still,' argued that people know, but still do. He sees this cynicism as 'the universally widespread way in which enlightened people see to it that they are not taken for suckers' (2003), because cynicism lets people say they don't believe in advertising claims, all the while acting as if they do. Sloterdijk sees a universal and diffuse cynicism as a quality assumed by the discontent in Western culture (Sloterdijk, 2001, p. 5).

Mannoni illustrates the concept of 'I know well, but still' with the story of the Hopi tribe, who have a tradition that includes masked dancers known as Katcinas: 'At a certain season of the year, the Katcinas appear in the pueblos, much as Santa Claus appears in our culture; and, again like Santa, they take a strong interest in children. They also resemble Santa Claus in that they conspire with parents to deceive them. The imposture is very strictly maintained, and no one would dare to expose it' (Mannoni, 2003, p. 71). As is the case with Santa Claus, there comes a moment when the children are initiated into the secret that the Katcinas are not really magical spirits, but that their uncles and fathers have been playing the role of Katcinas. When the children learn of the deception, they do not simply stop believing; they transform their belief. Their new faith is shaped around the idea that the Katcinas are present in spirit when their fathers and uncles dance masked. While they now know full well that the Katcinas are not spirits, their actions are as if they were; they know, but still. In contemporary consumer culture, Virgin Money provides an exceptional illustration of this theory. In June 2015, the financial branch of the Virgin group brought out the Sex Pistols credit card. The launch was accompanied by a tweet that read; '*Bring a little anarchy to your wallet with our new sex pistols credit card*' (Virgin Money, 2015) and an image of the two designs of the credit card, leaning heavily on punk imagery. The contradiction between the idea of a credit card, so directly linked to tradition, financial institutions, and 'conspicuous' consumption, and the punk ethos that at its very core is a rejection of exactly that, elicited reactions that

followed 'I know well, but still' very closely. One Twitter user tweeted an adaptation of Sex Pistols lyrics to highlight the paradox; *'I am an antichrist. I am an anarchist. I am a reasonable APR, with easy repayments'*, and another replied to this tweet with a good illustration of 'I know well, but still': *'It's horrendous, but I really want one!'* (Virgin Money, 2015).

Mannheim (1946) argued that ideologies could be judged by the coherence of the ideas they contained. Althusser (2014) pointed towards another measure: the alignment of belief and action. Society enforces this alignment, and when there is tension between belief and action, it is often solved by the adoption, not of new actions, but of new beliefs to match the action (2014, p. 258). These new beliefs are not informed by knowledge, but by the action. Sloterdijk argues that it is not only in modern times that enlightenment has had to deal with 'consciousness that has increasingly entrenched itself in impregnable positions' (2003, p. 68). Knowledge would be the one thing that could make these positions more flexible, and the way that knowledge is often framed as power is a testament to this idea. But, as Sloterdijk (2001, p. 11), in agreement with the Frankfurt Scholars and Boorstin, points out: not all knowledge is welcomed with open arms. People don't generally seem to want to have their beliefs challenged. And, Sloterdijk adds, when they are, people incorporate their new knowledge in a way that allows them to not alter their behaviour. Because the actions, from the daily practices to the ritualistic behaviours, remain unchanged, the ideology and the social order become static. 'I know, but still' is readily recognisable in consumption behaviour. It applies especially to ethical consumption, where many if not most consumers don't think they are making any tangible difference to the world, but they do it anyway; 'I don't really believe organic apples are better for the environment, but I buy them anyway'. 'I don't believe the farmers in South America will have a good life if I buy Fairtrade coffee, but I will pay extra for the coffee with the Fairtrade label anyway': I know, but still. Their cynicism solves the tension between knowing and doing.

This is not just the case on the side of the consumers, advertisers use it too. Self-reflexive advertising openly acknowledges its purpose to its audience (Goldman & Papson, 1996, pp. 74-75). Virgin Money are well aware of the

contradiction between punk and credit cards and played that contradiction up in their marketing. The long-running 'Old Spice' campaign (Old Spice, 2010) with a good looking man making fun of advertising conventions by grossly exaggerating them is another good example of how advertisers use cynicism: *'Hello ladies, look at your man, now back to me, now back to your man, now back to me. Sadly, he is not me. But if he stops using lady's scented body wash and switched to Old Spice, he could smell like me.'* The scene changes to the actor being on a boat. *'You are on a boat, with a man your man could smell like.'* On the boat, he has an oyster, which opens up to reveal *'two tickets to that thing you love'*. The tickets then transform into a stream of diamonds. *'Anything is possible when your man smells of Old Spice and not a lady. Look at me, I'm on a horse'*. While he says the last words, he is revealed to in fact be, on a horse. The ad plays with absurdity in both its claims of what will happen if a man uses their product, and in the changes between settings to a point where nobody is expected to take these claims seriously at all. The self-reflexivity of the campaign was strengthened by the release of the 'making of' of the commercial, which was filmed in one shot. By being open about the nature of the commercial, the message that is communicated is that they take their audience seriously; they are not trying to trick or fool them. It results in advertising that comes with the cynicism designed into it, offering its message to consumers with the tension between 'I know, but still' pre-diffused.

Post ideology? Or obscured ideology?

Žižek takes the relation between knowing and doing a step further, with his position that people 'know that they don't know, but still do' (Žižek, 1999, p. 33). He poses that when confronted with cynical reason, the traditional critique of ideology no longer works. It doesn't work to simply point out the beliefs and positions that are not coherent with individuals' behaviour. From Žižek's position, consistency between what people know and believe, and what they actually do is no longer the issue. Cynical reason solves the tension before it arises by taking the distance between the two into account. What people do, and what people know and believe can be related to different aspects of ideology. Žižek (2009c) distinguishes between constituted ideology and constituent ideology.

Constituent ideology parallels Mannheim's notion of the general conception of ideology, it is the social framework within which ideological practices take place. What people know and believe fits into this framework; the knowing and believing part of 'I know, but still' relates to this aspect of ideology. Constituted ideology is defined by Žižek as 'empirical manipulations and distortions at the level of content' and it mirrors closely what Mannheim described as the particular conception of ideology. Mannheim's particular conception of ideology relates to the individual and their beliefs (1946, p. 54). It is this conception of ideology that is meant when the ideas that someone puts forward are doubted because they are seen as 'more or less conscious disguises of the real nature of a situation'; when we believe that this distortion fits their ideas better than the truth would. 'These distortions range all the way from conscious lies to half conscious and unwitting disguises; from calculated attempts to dupe others to self-deception' (1946, p. 49). This is the aspect of ideology that relates to the action part of 'I know, but I still do'.

Žižek (2009c) poses that 'today, the fundamental level of constituent ideology assumes the guise of its very opposite, of non-ideology'. Adorno argued that ideology is a system that makes a claim to the truth, and from this premise it follows logically that ideology does not have a place in a culture as infused with cynicism as consumer culture (Žižek, 1999). But as Žižek argues, 'the fundamental level of ideology is not of an illusion masking the real state of things'; rather, ideology is the myth that structures social reality. And in this sense, we are as far from a post-ideological society as we have ever been (Žižek, 1999, p. 32). The distance we claim to have from unsubstantiated claims to the truth while we are in fact acting on them, makes it harder to distinguish for ourselves what we believe and how our actions are guided by these beliefs that we pretend to have (Žižek, 1999, p. 33). The cynicism people employ to create that distance simultaneously creates a disconnection between the constituent and constituted aspects of ideology. Today's consumer culture does not lack ideology, it has hidden it by cynically disconnecting it from the everyday and ritualistic practices in which ideology is manifested and shaped.

According to Žižek, the cynical position would be a post-ideological one if the illusion was on the side of knowledge; it would simply be a position without

illusions. In that case, people would know what they are doing, and why they are doing it. But as the place of the illusion is on the side of doing, it comes down to the situation that people know that they are following an illusion, but it does not keep them from still doing it (P. A. Taylor, 2010, p. 109). Saying that you pretend to pretend to believe, is really believing without being aware of it (Žižek, 1999, p. 33). And as we continually act as if we did believe, despite our layer of cynicism that makes sure we aren't seen as naïve, social reality is shaped according to these beliefs. As the Thomas theorem states: 'things defined as real, are real in their consequences'. Ethical consumption is a good example of the disconnection between constituted and constituent ideology in consumer culture. By not really believing that an African villager will have better access to water because you bought water from a company that claims to provide said access, but still choosing to buy bottled water from that brand, you act as if you believe. Belief is shaped in the performance of belief (P. A. Taylor, 2010, p. 157). Ideological practices shape the constituted ideology, even if an individual pretends not to believe. By pretending not to believe, the consumer denies the influence of constituent ideology, the framework in which these ideological practices such as buying that ethical brand of water take place. As a result, the two aspects of ideology become disconnected, and the role of the constituent aspect of ideology, that of the ideological framework becomes obscured to a point where consumer culture is misinterpreted as post-ideological. Ethical consumption is a good example of the disconnection between constituted and constituent ideology in consumer culture for another reason. It illustrates well how the disconnection between the two aspects of ideology - that of the framework and that of the practice - makes ethical consumption defy its own goals. Disconnecting the practice from the framework makes it less obvious that ethical consumption is fighting the negative effects of consumption entirely within the structure of consumption.

Myth and consumption - Blurring what's true and what's believable

The concept of myth is a way of showing how constituted and constituent ideology are disconnected in consumer culture. The way myth, specifically in

Barthes conception of it, the multiple layers are connected and can be simultaneously seen and acted on as separate and connected, in a way that mirrors Žižek's concept of the two types of ideology. Advertising and myth have in common that at their very foundation, they are both about blurring the line between what's true and what's believable. Campbell (2007, p. 329) addresses the idea of consumers who see through advertisers in his description of the erosion of universal ideologies as the catalyst behind the rise of a 'mythopoeic culture'. He poses that myths have become meaningful precisely because people do not have to believe in them. Cynical reason, as Sloterdijk (2001) and Žižek (1999) have argued, gives people the opportunity to pretend not to believe, while acting as if they do, and in the process shaping their belief. The realisation that these narratives, these myths, so prominently placed in consumer culture, are not real gives people an alibi to indulge in them. Consumer culture provides a space for these myths to flourish.

Myth, at its core, is not about what's true, it's about what people believe (Henri Hubert & Mauss, 1908). Barthes (2000, p. 133) stresses that 'Men do not have with myth a relationship based on truth but on use; they depoliticise according to their needs' and Baudrillard argues that, 'this is a logic not of propositions and proofs, but a logic of fables and the willingness to go along with them. We do not believe in such fables but we cleave to them nevertheless' (Baudrillard, 1996, p. 166). Myths, Aupers and Houtman argue, reveal archetypal and perennial wisdoms; allegorical stories that have been told in many forms, in different times and various places (Houtman & Aupers, 2003). Curry (1998, p. 131) poses that myth is not so much an 'illusion', but rather a 'poetic truth' providing meaning and consolation. A myth can be 'true' in the same way that a novel can be deeply 'true', even though it is rightly classified as "fiction," not "fact" (Caputo, 2001, p. 112). Myth is 'an illusion which is known to be false, but felt to be true' (C. Campbell, 1987, p. 78).

Barthes asserts that myth is a type of speech. To be more precise, he defines myth as a system of communication, as a message (Barthes, 2000, p. 93). The condition for something to be myth is that it needs to be conveyed by discourse. Myth, he states, is not defined by the object of this message, but by the way the message is communicated. This means that everything can be myth in

Barthes's definition. Mythical speech includes oral speech, but also writing and non-verbal visual modes of communication such as photography, cinema, shows, sports and advertising. Advertising can incorporate all these elements and makes for rich material to analyse myth. Examples include, but are not limited to, traditional print ads, TV commercials, product packaging and store dressing, and online media, which can include a wide range of still or moving images, and spoken or written text. But just like myth is not defined by its object, it cannot be defined by its material, as any material can have any meaning added to it arbitrarily (Barthes, 2000, p. 94).

The making of myth in consumer culture

At the foundation of Barthes's definition of myth beyond the notion of myth as speech lies the semiological concept of the sign and what role its separate elements play in the construction of it. In De Saussure's (1966) classical semiological mode of analysis, the *sign* is the result of the combining of two parts; the signifier and the signified. The *signifier* is the object, in itself empty of meaning. The *signified* is the meaning that is added to the signifier, to the object. The example Barthes (2000) uses to illustrate this concept is the red rose, given to convey passion. The red rose itself has no meaning; it is empty, so to speak. The meaning, passion in this case, is added to it arbitrarily. Arbitrarily, because any other meaning could have been added to it, and in different settings the same object may have different meanings added to it; there is no 'true' or 'natural' connection between the two. But in this case, the signifier - the red rose - and the signified - passion - come together to create the sign, in this case the 'passionified red rose'.

This coming together of signifiers and signifieds into signs is something most consumers will be able to recognise to at least some degree in advertising. Inanimate objects are loaded with an arbitrary value to become signs that are used in everyday life. Soap, for instance, has been the signifier that has different signifieds added to it by different brands. Pears soap has added tradition, pureness, gentleness and innocence; with marketing sentences such as Pears, 'pure and gentle since 1807' 'It keeps your skin soft and smiling with innocence' and 'it's so pure you can see through it!' (Unilever, 2016). The meaning Dove has

added to the same signifier is beauty, for instance with a sentence like ‘Dove isn’t a soap bar, it’s a Beauty Bar’ (Dove, 2017a). Nivea adds the signified of care and nurture, along with happiness and energy (Nivea, 2017), Imperial leather (2017) adds meanings such as luxury, trust and tradition to what is essentially an almost identical product; a simple bar of soap.

Brands don’t show the world as it is in their myth-building advertising; they show what *they believe* the world looks like. The brand no longer places itself just on the shelf in a shop, a brand places itself in the world, or more specifically, in a worldview. Arguably, this is increasingly obvious through the links that brands make to ideological causes. LGBT-rights for instance are a topic in advertising of different brands. Brands have shown their support for equal rights by brandishing their products or their advertising with rainbows, which has become a signifier for LGBT-rights. Examples include but are by no means limited to: Oreos, who have advertised using an image of an Oreo biscuit with filling in all the colours of the rainbow (Griner, 2012), Absolut vodka who have a bottle of vodka with a rainbow on it (Absolut., 2017), and Burger King, who won a marketing award for their rainbow wrapped ‘Proud Whopper’ available during Pride month in San Francisco (PinkNews, 2015). Skittles, a brand of sweets whose packaging normally features a rainbow, decided to print black and white versions of their packaging for pride month in 2017, citing the reason that ‘During Pride, only one rainbow matters. So, we’ve given up ours to show our support’ (Sampathkumar, 2017). Other brands, such as Ikea (McMains, 2014), Lush, Coca-Cola and Google show same sex couples in their adverts (Semple, 2017). Other ideological matters that brands openly engage with are commonly related to issues such as working conditions, animal welfare, caring for the environment, and sustainable production and consumption.

The first order system of myth: the making of skin care signs

This type of engagement of brands with ideology and morality is interesting, but it is overt. Barthes’s theory on the structure of myth allows for a deeper analysis into the more under-acknowledged ways in which brands engage with ideology and morality. The examples used in the following are both skin care brands whose ranges of products overlap. They also have in common that they present

themselves as brands with goals outside of making profit, as brands aiming to have a positive impact on the world. The overt narratives they sell seem very different, but the under-acknowledged morality underlying them is similar. The first order system of myth relates to Žižek's concept of constituted ideology; the ideological actions people take.

The Body Shop

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 fig. idcy1 (*The Body Shop, 2016*)

The Body Shop is a skincare brand founded by Anita Roddick in 1976. The Body Shop is a global company that operates in 66 countries worldwide and it is a well-recognised high street brand. The L'Oreal group bought The Body Shop for £940,000,000 at the height of the brand's success in 2006. After falling sales it was sold to Brazilian company Natura for £880,000,000 (BBC, 2017).

Throughout the ownership changes of the brand, the narrative of The Body Shop has remained close to its origins; from its start it has aligned itself with social goals ranging from saving whales and addressing women's self-esteem and body image issues, to more recent goals of saving the natural diversity of forests by building bio-bridges (The Body Shop, 2017). The Body Shop's current campaign slogan, adopted in 2016 is 'Enrich Not Exploit' and it is accompanied by a set of targets relating to environmental, animal welfare and social goals to be reached by 2020 (The Body Shop, 2016). The imagery The Body Shop uses to communicate this campaign can be found in the interior of their shops, in their corporate communication, on their website and other online communications, their product packaging and on printed materials.

One image that is central to the campaign is that of a black and white picture of the palm of a hand with its fingers stretched out, against a bright yellow background (fig. idcy 1). On top of the fingers is a lush deep green canopy, making the hand look as if it were part of a tree. The canopy is adorned with exotic colourful fruits and flowers, delicate butterflies, an elegantly resting cheetah, and a magnificent macaw spreading its wings as if it is about to land. On the hand's wrist the words 'Enrich not Exploit. It's in our hands' are written in a

tattoo-like aesthetic. In the first order system of myth, The Body Shop becomes a sign of the natural, their imagery a signifier of the signified 'natural'. The constituted ideology that is created by marketing and consuming The Body Shop brand is one in which 'naturalness' is seen as good, and caring for 'the natural' is constructed as a responsibility.

Dove

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fig. idcy 2 (Dove, 2017b)

Dove is another example of a global skincare brand. It is one of the many brands owned by Dutch-British multinational Unilever. For the past 10 years, Dove has made a successful effort to link the brand to the issue of female body issues, presenting itself as the skincare brand for 'real' women, of all ages, shapes, sizes and colours with its 'real beauty' campaign. The campaign message has been used in several ways during its lifetime, including images of women of said different appearances, a video called 'Evolution' (Dove, 2006) that went viral online showing a time lapse of how a model's original picture is retouched resulting in a largely imagined version of that image, and a video in which a woman and a stranger describe the woman to a sketch artist, showing that the women see themselves as less beautiful than strangers do (Dove, 2013). Dove communicates a continued commitment to what they have called 'the real beauty pledge' (Dove, 2017b). The image that accompanies the communication around it is a photo by Mario Testino (fig. idcy 2).

The image is of six women, who while they may not look like conventional models, all have flawless skin and hair. All six have a unique look, are dressed in different styles, and have confident and relaxed body poses. Their literal leaning on each other invokes the idea of the proverbial leaning on each other, strengthened by the way their bodies are positioned towards each other, creating a sense of being 'in this together'. It communicates that the narrative is not about the women in the picture, this picture is about all women, or even about womanhood. The picture is accompanied by short introductions to the women, about their confidence and their success in either their professional or

home life. The biographical texts include statements like these, from Karen, the second on the left in the image above : *'I realised that I had the power to define beauty and what beauty means to me. As I get older I get wiser about it.'* And from Cammy, on the far left: *'Real beauty to me means walking out the door with a smile on your face and challenging yourself to do the things you think you can't.'* In the first order system, the signifier is the image of the diverse and beautiful women, and the signified 'feminine confidence' together make up the sign, and the constituted ideology, of the beautiful confident woman.

The second order system of myth: making myth out of signs

The second order system of myth relates to what Žižek calls constituent ideology. Constituent ideology is the framework from which ideological practices are disconnected, which leads to the obscuring of ideology in consumer culture. For Barthes, myth is a second order system that builds on the outcome of the one just described. In it, the total of the signified and the signifier, the sign, becomes a signifier. The new signifier has meaning added to it in the same way as it occurs in the first order system and together the sign that became the signifier and the new signified constitute myth. Barthes renames the elements in this concept to distinguish them from the elements of the first order system. In De Saussure's (1966) semiology relating to language, the elements are as described above:

Signifier + Signified = Sign

In the second order instance of the system, the sign is the starting point. The sign now has two roles, and Barthes assigns them their own terms. The end result of the first order system, from the perspective of language, becomes *meaning*, and as the first element in the second order system, the signifier relating to myth, it becomes *form*.

Sign (language) -> Meaning / Signifier (myth) -> Form

In the second order system, the signified becomes *concept* and when this is added to form, together they make up the *signification*, which Barthes explains is equal to myth.

Form + Concept = Signification = Myth

Barthes calls the third term of myth the 'signification'. A choice that is even more fitting, in his eyes, 'since myth has in fact a double function; it points out and it notifies, it makes us understand something and it imposes it on us' (Barthes, 2000, p. 102).

At the intersection of the system relating to language and the system relating to myth, there are the *meaning* and the *form*. The double role that the same element plays is an essential element in how myth works, because it is at the same time empty and full. The signifier is empty of meaning, and the sign is full. This element, at the intersection, plays both roles, and therefore has to be transformed from its full instance as *meaning* to its empty status as *form*. The *meaning* is full of history, of social relations, it is connected to society by ideas, it is cultural. When this element in the system changes its role to that of *form*, this history, memory, the connections, they are simplified, flattened, in Barthes's words; 'the essential point in all this is that the form does not suppress the meaning, it only impoverishes it' (Barthes, 2000, p. 103). In this simplified version of the meaning's content, something else that is crucial to how myth works occurs: the connection between the two elements it is made out of, the signifier and the signified becomes solid, the connection loses its arbitrariness.

What was in the first order system a part of the *meaning*, and didn't find its place in the *form*, can in the second order system be found in the signified: the *concept*. The form is spatial, it has an expression in an image or object; we can see it or touch it. The concept on the other hand is not as concrete; Barthes describes it as nebulous (2000, p. 108). The concept, he explains, is like the signified in the first order system in that it is historical, but differs because it also has an element of intent. The concept is where the myth's motivation is, its reason for existing. The history that is added to the myth by the *concept* is selective. It's not so much based on 'reality' as on a specific version of reality.

And this is at the very heart of what myth does; it distorts. Myth doesn't hide anything, nothing quite disappears; it is simply presented in a way which is in line with its intentions (Barthes, 2000, p. 107). As Barthes describes this: 'The relation which unites the concept of the myth to its meaning is essentially a relation of deformation' (2000, p. 108). The distortion is not immediately recognisable because myth uses the double role of the meaning/form element to hide it. It can do this because there is no contradiction possible between the two, as they are never there at the same time. Barthes gives a very useful analogy to illustrate the relationship between *meaning* and *form*.

'If I am in a car and I look at the scenery through the window, I can at will focus on the windowpane or the scenery. At one moment I grasp the presence of the glass and the distance of the landscape; at another, the transparency of the glass and the depth of the landscape; but the result of this alternation is constant; the glass is at once empty and present to me, and the landscape unreal and full. The same thing occurs in the mythical signifier, its form is empty but present and its meaning is absent but full' (Barthes, 2000, pp. 109-110).

To understand myth, it is essential to understand the way it can be full and empty at the same time; and the two parts need to be analysed as a whole; you need it to see that the object of myth is not a mere example of an idea, but that as the outcome of the second order system, it becomes the *very presence* of the concept (Barthes, 2000, p. 115). This doesn't happen by accident, it is the outcome of a motivated system. This is what myth does; by hiding the motivation it naturalises the concept. The historical concept, with all its memory of man-made narrative is added to the form and it is presented in the signification, in the myth, as a natural and indisputable truth (Barthes, 2000, p. 116). The intention stays hidden, but defines the myth. As a consequence, the signification - the myth - appears simultaneously as a notification and a statement of fact (Barthes, 2000, p. 110).

In the The Body Shop example, like the 'passionified' rose from Barthes' example, the 'naturalified' Body Shop becomes the signifier in the second order system, where the myth is shaped in full. In this system it is called form, and

added to it is the concept. In the case of this Body Shop image, the concept that is added is that of fragility, beauty, responsibility and care. Together they form the myth that the natural is inherently good and beautiful, and a morality that says humans have a duty to care for it. In the Dove example, where in the first order system the signifier is the image of the diverse and beautiful women, and the signified 'feminine confidence' together make up the sign of the beautiful confident woman. In the second order system, this connection of beauty and confidence is naturalised, connected as if there was no other way, beauty is confidence and confidence means beauty. In the second order system, this sign of confidence and beauty makes up the form, and the concept of uniqueness, power and success are added, to create a myth of a confident beautiful woman, whose success is in her own hands. Underlying this myth is a morality of feminism in the sense of being the 'self-made woman,' of creating your own path and doing things your way. It is a morality of freedom from constraints, as long as you can see yourself as beautiful. The myths these brands create have differences, but they are compatible. They both fit into a larger ideological framework, what Žižek calls constituent ideology, promoting a narrative of having power over one's surroundings and circumstances, be that the natural environment or one's professional career.

This is how we come to the complete definition of myth; myth is *depoliticised* speech (Barthes, 2000, p. 131). Barthes defines political as 'the whole of human relations in their real, social structure, in their power of making the world', and stresses the prefix in *depoliticised* because it points out the active element of the definition. Myth takes the historical reality supplied to it, and presents it back to us as a natural image of this reality; filtering out the socially constructed quality of it (Barthes, 2000, p. 131). It doesn't deny reality; on the contrary, it communicates it. But it does so in a way that makes reality seem simpler than it is, the nuances of social relations and the complexities of the construction of society are smoothed over to fit into a much cleaner narrative. In the end, myth says 'this is just the way things are', and in this way it obscures the connection between constituent and constituted ideology.

Myth and morality

Mythical thinking has historically been tied to religion (J. Campbell, 1985; J. Campbell & Moyers, 1991; Durkheim, 1995; Durkheim & Mauss, 1963). Durkheim (1995) sees myth as essentially religious (p. 80) and connected to rituals (p. 81), and argues that scientific ideas are the opposite of myth (p. 77). The rise of science as a foundation for the organisation of society, Max Weber argues, came with a related decline in religious, mythical thought. With modernity, he argued, came disenchantment (Weber, 2005). In a context where there was a growing understanding of natural phenomena, these were no longer explained by attributing them to a greater power, but by investigating them through science. With a seemingly declining importance in explaining the world, mythical thought seemed to lose credibility and influence.

Scholarship on the rationalisation that was seen to cause the disenchantment often describes it as cold and grim. For scholars such as Marx and Weber, and later the Frankfurt school scholars, mass industrialisation, mass consumption and capitalism, with the accompanying characteristics of increased pollution, anxiety, alienation and inequality are conceived of as direct results of the process of rationalisation that started during the Enlightenment. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx (2004) describes rationalisation as cold and icy waves of calculation, and Weber (2005) has theorised disenchantment as leading to a society which functions as an iron cage. Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) critique the Enlightenment for making life joyless, and for striving to abolish myth while ignoring its own basis in myth.

In post-modernity, Bauman (1992) argues, there has been a re-enchantment, a re-emergence of the spiritual in different spheres of society, of which consumer culture is an important one. But another argument, perhaps a more convincing one, can be made about mythical thought, and that is that it hasn't returned, because it never went away (Barthes, 2000; Baudrillard, 1998; C. Campbell, 2007; J. Campbell, 1985). Myth plays an important role in religion, but can and does exist outside of it. From this perspective, secularisation of societies does not cause disenchantment; it moves the enchantment to other spheres, of which consumption would be one. Joseph Campbell (1985) asserts that 'it has always been on myths that the moral orders of societies have been

founded' (p. 8). Campbell argues that if the impact of science on myth results in what he calls 'moral disequilibrium' (p. 8), that is a reason to investigate myth scientifically and to come to understand its role and life-supporting nature, rather than disqualifying myth's necessity by criticising its undeniably archaic features. He, and scholars such as Lévi-Strauss (Lévi-Strauss, 1955, 1981, 2001), Colin Campbell (C. Campbell, 1987, 1998, 2007), Baudrillard (Baudrillard, 1994, 1996, 1998) and Barthes (2000), have studied the concept of myth in traditional and contemporary societies, and have found that myth plays an important role in daily life of the people in all societies.

Myth, or narrative as Barthes (2000, p. 252) asserts, is simply there, like life. Baudrillard (1998) addresses consumer society as myth (p. 193) and argues that consumption is 'governed by a form of magical thinking' (p. 131). In contrast to the way Weber described how, in the era of modernity the belief in miracles had disappeared from daily life, Baudrillard contends that miraculous thinking is still a part of it. Like Lévi-Strauss (1955) and Campbell (1991), he associates miraculous thinking with a primitive mentality of sorts, one that deals with the universe as a whole, based on the 'omnipotence of thought', or signs (Baudrillard, 1998, pp. 31-33). He clarifies that the presence of a belief in miracles does not mean that Western society is 'not firstly, objectively and decisively a society of production, an order of production, and therefore the site of an economic and political strategy', but that this order is entangled with the mythical realm of consumption. This realm can be mythical because it is social. Myth, while it exists outside of religion, can only exist in a social context (H. Hubert, 1904; Strenski, 1987). Lévi-Strauss also stresses the importance of this social aspect; he argues that all individual creative works have the potential to be myths, but they can only reach this potential status if they are adopted by the collective (Lévi-Strauss, 1981, p. 627).

Durkheim asserts that 'the mythology of a group is the collection of beliefs common to the group' (Durkheim, 1995, p. 379). In his eyes, mythology serves to perpetuate these ideas: 'it is a morality and a cosmology at the same time as it is a history' (p. 379). Morality and myth are connected in a sense that myth, according to Durkheim, revitalises 'the collective consciousness and conscience' (Durkheim, 1995, p. 379). Rosenblatt (1995) argues that rational thought's

limitations have been a subject throughout modernity, specifically when it comes to defining a society's morality. 'Science', was the argument, 'may give us the facts, but it cannot give us the standards of what is desirable or undesirable, of what is good or evil' (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 192). From this perspective, mythical thinking gives us something that the rational mode of thought can't: the means to think about what we define as good and evil. Campbell (J. Campbell & Moyers, 1991) also explores the function of myth, and he poses that it has four functions, based on four dimensions he distinguishes. He argues that myth has a mystical dimension, in which the universe is seen as a wonder; a cosmological dimension, in which the world is explained; a sociological dimension, in which a social order is supported or validated; and a pedagogical dimension, in which individuals are shown how to live a good life (J. Campbell & Moyers, 1991, pp. 38, 39). The functions are related to these dimensions. He defines a mystical function which is intended to introduce awe and offer an image of the world. The sociological function is to validate, support and imprint the norms of a given moral order, that of the society an individual lives in. The pedagogical function is to teach and guide individuals in each life stage, on how to live a healthy and morally good life (J. Campbell, 1985, p. 172). Myth's functions all play their own role in shaping, manifesting, perpetuating and teaching morality in societies.

'A diamond is forever'. On the commodification of values

The notion that ideology and morality are shaped in the sphere of consumption is based in a theoretical tradition that has a basis in Marx's work on ideology in societies that organise themselves according to principles related to production. More than half a century before a marketing campaign connected love to diamonds, Marx described how he saw that even the things that 'until then had been communicated, but never exchanged, given but never sold, acquired but never bought' such as 'virtue, love, conscience' and 'everything moral or physical' had been commodified and had entered the marketplace (Marx, 1884, p. 30). In 1948, diamond company De Beers launched their first advertising campaign with a slogan by copy-writer Frances Garety: 'A diamond is forever' (Courtney Sullivan, 2013). The aim of the campaign was to convince consumers in the United States that the correct way to propose marriage was to offer a diamond

ring, as a symbol of eternal love and commitment. The tradition of engagement rings dates back to the Middle Ages, but these rings did not become a widely adopted practice until much later and in the 1930s only 10% of engagement rings contained a diamond. De Beers' successful advertising campaign changed this. By the time of the turn of the last century it had become the norm, not just in the US but in most Western countries, to propose marriage with a diamond (Cawley, 2014). De Beers successfully commodified this ritual at the start of marriage and, with it, parts of love: its tangible aspect becoming a costly stone with very little inherent value. The commodification of values such as love has become a common practice in Western capitalist societies. Soap advertising links it with care and purity, beer advertising connects it to friendship and authenticity, and the marketing of coffee can link it to for example glamour and luxury or to adventure.

Marx saw this connection between values and objects as the result of commodity fetishism, which he defined as the structuring of social relations through commodities. According to Marx, the division of labour that industrialisation brought with it means that the main way that people relate to each other is through the exchange of commodities. Elements of social life that until then had been considered inalienable, such as the aforementioned 'virtue, love, and conscience' became objects of exchange. This could happen, in Marx's view, because commodities have different kinds of value. In *Capital*(1971), Marx defines a commodity as being 'in the first place, an object outside us' that we use to 'satisfy human wants of some sort or another.' He adds that when it comes to the nature of these wants, it makes no difference whether 'they spring from the stomach or from fancy' (Marx & Engels, 1971, p. 43). He defines value as having different dimensions; the *use value* of a commodity lies within the object, and the *exchange value* is found outside of the object. This concept of a distinction between value within and outside of the object has laid the base for contemporary theories of consumer culture and its role in how ideology is shaped, manifested and perpetuated; it opened up a way of thinking about consumption that was not about simply satisfying people's needs, or even for simple pleasure; it opened up the possibility of thinking about consumption as having an ideological aspect.

The commodity's use value is limited to the object itself, it exists only within it. Objects, however, have another kind of value as 'the material depositories of exchange value' (Marx & Engels, 1971, p. 54). This value exists only outside of the material object and because it has no base within the material object, it is immeasurable (Marx & Engels, 1971, p. 46). In the first instance, exchange value would seem to simply refer to how much of a particular object is needed in exchange for another. This is how Aristotle defined it. Marx sees this as a shortcoming of the philosopher's work, and argues that there is more to it, because the value needs to be based on something. He argues that the substance of exchange value is the labour needed to produce it (Marx & Engels, 1971, p. 47). He stresses that because of this, 'the value of commodities has a purely social reality' and that means that 'value can only manifest itself in the social relation of commodity to commodity' (Marx & Engels, 1971, p. 54).

In a society in which social relations are structured through commodities and their socially determined value, Marx argued that people became alienated from the things that really mattered, such as belonging, community and love. This was not in their interest but, as he saw it, in the interest of the capitalist ruling elite, who benefited from the labour of the working classes. The members of the working classes were prevented from recognising their oppression, according to Marx, because the ruling class's ideology acted to create a false consciousness. This ideology acted as a veil between their alienated existence and the true reality. Marx believed that there were multiple ideologies at work at any given time in history, but that one of those was the dominant one; 'The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas' (Marx & Engels, 1998). In capitalism, he explains, the members of the ruling elite are the ones who own the means of production, as they have the intellect and the time to think about their ideas, the power to communicate them, and importantly, they are the ones who benefit and therefore have a strong incentive to perpetuate the existing social divisions and hierarchy. Ideology in Marx's view was a means to an end for the ruling elite, the end being the continued oppression of the masses by perpetuating the existing social stratification and relations.

Beyond Marx: Nuances in the concept of ideology

The view that ideology was linked to socio-economic groups was at the core of the writings of later theorists of ideology, Karl Mannheim and Antonio Gramsci. They independently further theorised the connection Marx made between class and ideology, and showed how there were more complex dynamics at play than Marx had acknowledged. Both recognised the importance of ideology and their studies of it gave them a deeper theoretical understanding of the concept. This allowed them to gain insight into where and how it was shaped in daily life, and importantly, they were able to move the concept away from its mostly negative connotations. Problems in the way the concept of ideology is used, Mannheim argues, stem from the fact that ideology has two separable meanings, namely the particular and the total conceptions. The particular conception of ideology is the one that carries the foundation for the pejorative connotations of the word ideology. There is a strong parallel between Mannheim's definition of the particular conception of ideology and the way advertising is commonly described; the particular meaning of ideology is meant when the ideas that someone puts forward are doubted because they are seen as 'more or less conscious disguises of the real nature of a situation', when we believe that this distortion fits their ideas better than the truth would. These distortions range all the way from 'conscious lies to half conscious and unwitting disguises; from calculated attempts to dupe others to self-deception' (1946, p. 49). The particular conception of ideology relates to the individual and their beliefs, and takes into account that these beliefs have a basis in a social structure (1946, p. 54).

In contrast, the total conception of ideology spans across an age or a social group such as a class, and is concerned with the world view prevalent in the whole group or across an entire era (Mannheim, 1946, p. 50). Mannheim credits Marx with being the first theorist to successfully bring the two conceptions together (1946, p. 66). Through making this distinction between the two conceptions of ideology, Mannheim aimed to use ideology as a critical analytical tool, and to delve deeper than Marx had originally done, by focussing on the inner workings of ideology rather than on the effects of it. This led Mannheim to an insight into how ideology was shaped in all classes in society

and had a positive side to it, for instance in the creation of social cohesion (Mannheim, 1946, p. 70). The role of ideology in social cohesion was an important part of Gramsci's work on the concept as well (Gramsci, 2014c, pp. 329-330). He described ideology as being formed in what he called civil society: in the private spheres of family life, education and the media. Mannheim & Gramsci both saw the formation of ideology as a more diffuse and complicated process than Marx. Ideologies, according to Mannheim and Gramsci, were formed within different social groups rather than as Marx had argued: as solely within a dominant class to be imposed on the ruled classes (Freedon, 2003).

The creation of consent

Gramsci in particular argued that ideology is formed in the practices of daily life. An example of a practice he looked into is media consumption. The media, he argued, has a strong influence on ideology through its direct and indirect influences on public opinion and is the most important and dynamic part of the process by which the ideological structure of a dominant class is organised. He called it 'the material organisation aimed at maintaining, defending and developing the theoretical or ideological front' (Gramsci, 2014b, p. 380). Through a Gramscian lens, advertising in contemporary Western societies can be said to be one of the main influencers of public opinion, and can therefore be seen as a sphere where ideology is not just manifested, but shaped. Adorno and Horkheimer, like Gramsci, saw an ideological role for the media. TV, radio, film and popular music were central to their theory of ideology. They saw these media not just as ways of communicating and disseminating ideology, they saw the culture industry as a place where ideology took its shape before being imposed on the masses. For the Frankfurt School scholars the media, of which they saw advertising as an important part, did not play the role of informer as much as it did the role of distracter.

The culture industry, Adorno (2002, p. 95) stresses is important to understand, is not the commercialisation of a popular culture that comes from the masses that are entertained by it. The culture industry is controlled by an economically powerful few, and it needs to be seen as serving their interests, not the consumers' interests (1975, p. 12). Ideology that was shaped within the

limits of this industry was distracting people from what they saw as 'true needs' such as calm, understanding and community. The entire culture industry, Adorno and Horkheimer (2002) argued, is designed to distract and confuse, and its strongly formulaic and repetitive character alienates (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002, p. 97). It keeps people from being actively engaged citizens, turning them into passive consumers instead. In their eyes, the culture industry causes a lack of consciousness of social misery. For Gramsci, the study of ideology would lead to more consciousness of inequality between the classes. He saw it as an opportunity for the oppressed classes; an understanding of how the ideological structure works, would help them fight oppression (2014b, p. 381). Social inequality is an important part of Gramsci's work on ideology; he sees the first as a result of the latter. His notion of hegemony applies to the unequal divisions in society, with one class dominating others, through economic but also through ideological means. Gramsci develops this concept over time, and it eventually comes to mean cultural, moral and ideological leadership. An important characteristic of this leadership is that it leads by creating 'consent rather than coercion, direction rather than domination' (Gramsci, 2014a, p. 423).

Adorno and Horkheimer also recognised ideology as a means of coercion rather than direct violence. They illustrate this with the example of the artist who would sign letters to rulers with 'your most obedient servant', while their creative work challenged the authority of those rulers. Now, world leaders are addressed by their first name, but the orders they lead are strengthened by artists' work. They quote de Tocqueville, who a century before them wrote that 'The ruler no longer says; think as I do or you die, he says, you are free not to think as I do, your life, your property, all that you shall keep. But from this day on you shall be a stranger among us'. Writing in the forties, Adorno and Horkheimer argued that this had become truer than ever (Adorno, 1975, p. 12). And a further seventy years on, the statement does not seem to have become any less true or less applicable to the culture industry. The culture industry gives the impression of choice, of what to consume, and with that: a choice of ideology. But, Adorno and Horkheimer argued, the 'freedom to choose an ideology, which always reflects economic coercion, everywhere proves to be freedom to be the same' (2002, p. 105). Those who do not conform are 'condemned to economic

impotence. Capitalism 'hems' consumers in so tightly, body and soul, that they unresistingly succumb to whatever is proffered to them' (2002, p. 136).

In consumer culture, advertising can be seen to work in a similar way. Without the use of force or physical violence, advertising convinces consumers not just of the need for certain products, but it teaches the ideology of consumption as a whole. It teaches people how to be consumers. No force is used by those in power, but the masses follow the suggestions made, convinced that they do so out of their own free will. It is worth noting that Adorno and Horkheimer don't refer to individuals as 'people', 'individuals' or even 'citizens', they consistently use the words 'consumers', emphasising the passivity of the role played by individuals in this structure. Adorno asserts that in the culture industry, unlike the in-itself ideological proverb that the customer is king, the customer is in fact the object of ideology (2002, p. 95). The advertising through which the individual is subjected to consumer culture's ideology, Adorno argues, no longer necessarily bears a relation to the product it aims to sell. It is no longer a helpful tool for potential consumers to understand their product options, instead it has become the pure representation of social power; advertising for advertising's sake (Adorno, 1975, p. 16). Rather than a product, advertising sells a social order. Like Marx, the Frankfurt School scholars saw ideology as coercive and a means of control to be wielded by those in power over the less powerful classes (2002, p. 106). But Marx and Gramsci both expected that an understanding of ideology, or knowledge of it, would be empowering to the oppressed. Instead, Adorno and Horkheimer realised, even when people don't believe in the ideology oppressing them, in practice they will go along with it nonetheless, further ingraining the system instead of resisting it. Žižek and Sloterdijk developed this argument further by drawing on Mannoni's '*je sais bien, mais quand meme*': I know full well, but still. Even when people know something is not real, they will act as if it is. An important part of that argument is the view of ideology as an active practice, for which Althusser lays a strong theoretical foundation.

Ideology as practice

Althusser too saw ideology as having an important role in the perpetuation of the reigning social order, specifically in the relations of production and the social relations that are shaped by the capitalist structuring of society (Althusser, 2014). In a similar fashion to Gramsci, Althusser emphasises the practice of ideology as an important aspect of ideology. He goes further than the Italian scholar, by making it the foundational element of it. In his essay 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' (Althusser, 2014) he poses three theses that address the role of practice in ideology. His starting point is that 'Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence' (Althusser, 2014). Althusser addresses two common answers to the question of why people have this imaginary relationship. Why do people have ideology? The first answer is that those in power are responsible. By presenting their rule as divine will, they gave their power a legitimacy it would otherwise not have; God's will would be harder to question than a king's (2014, p. 256). The second is the alienation that Marx described, because people tried to make sense of their alienated existence by creating an imaginary, ideological relationship to their social environment.

However, Althusser argues, ideology is not the representation of the *conditions* of an individual's 'real' existence that is presented to them in ideology, rather it is their *relations to their conditions of existence* that is represented in ideology. Ideology, he argues, is an imaginary relation to real relations, such as relations of production or, for instance, class relations (Althusser, 2014, pp. 256 - 257). In consumer culture, advertising is a key medium for the representation of this imaginary relation to real relations. Advertising in general informs individuals how to be consumers, telling people what to buy, where to buy it, when to buy it. But it also represents other types of expected relations. It speaks to people in their social roles and to the responsibilities that those come with. Many of those responsibilities are moral responsibilities, implicitly shaping morality in consumer culture, for instance by speaking to consumers as parents who are expected to take care of their families, with products ranging from cars marketed as safe to nappies that are the softest and driest for baby, and from houses with child-friendly gardens to life insurance policies that will take care of

your family when you no longer can. Class relations are strongly represented in advertising as well, for instance in fashion; the advertising for upmarket designer brands such as Moschino and Vivienne Westwood and those at the lower priced end of the market such as Primark and H&M use different types of images and language to appeal to people in different socio-economic groups.

Althusser (2014, p. 257) questions why the relation to the social relations which govern people's conditions of existence and their collective and individual life is necessarily an *imaginary* relation. This is a point where Althusser disagrees with Adorno and Horkheimer, who saw a much more passive role for what they described as alienated consumers, and an active role for the elite who had the culture industries at their command to heavily influence ideology. They did this not just for their own group, but for the groups they had economic power over. Althusser's theory on where ideology is shaped is that it is a much more diffuse process, and one in which its subjects have a much more active role than described by the Frankfurt School scholars. This brings him to his second thesis: 'Ideology has a material existence' (2014, p. 257). In Althusser's view, the ideas and representations that make up ideology don't have what he calls an 'ideal' or a 'spiritual' existence, but a material existence which can be found in practice. Here, Althusser starts taking the next theoretical step. Gramsci already argued that ideology was partly shaped in particular practices, specifically those that shape public opinion. In Gramsci's work, the practice follows the belief, even when the individual is not aware of the belief itself. For Gramsci, an individual does not need to be aware of the ideological underpinnings of their actions for them to be ideological (Gramsci, 2014a, p. 328). Althusser takes a further theoretical step and argues that belief comes from the practice of ideology. This idea has interesting implications for the development of the concept of ideology because it reframes ideology as active rather than passive.

The notion of ideology as having a spiritual existence is itself ideological. This is why Althusser poses that the term 'idea' can disappear from the discussion about ideology, to make room for the notion of ideology as action, ritual and practice. These ideological practices are carried out by what Althusser calls the subjects of ideology, in other words the individuals living in an ideology. The subjects have a consciousness, and that consciousness contains the subject's

ideological beliefs. Mannheim argued that ideologies could be judged by the coherence of the ideas they contained, Althusser points towards another measure: the alignment of belief and action. If they don't already, the subject's actions and ideological beliefs will eventually align. This is enforced not just by an individual's internal wish to align actions and beliefs, but externally by society's expectations as well. When an individual acts contrary to their own beliefs, Althusser argues that this tension is solved by the adoption of new beliefs that follow from the action. An individual's actions become part of more structural practices, which are in turn part of rituals, performed within the material existence of ideological apparatuses such as schools and families (2014, p. 258).

Hey! Interpellating consumers into consumer culture ideology

Where Mannheim and Gramsci stayed close to Marx in arguing that one does not need to be *aware* of an ideology to act within it, Althusser's position is that you do not need to *believe* in an ideology to act within it. This is illustrated well with the Blaise Pascal quote he uses; 'Kneel down, move your lips in prayer, and you will believe' (Althusser, 2014, p. 259). In consumer culture, it means that consumers do not need to believe that buying the designer handbag will give them the charisma of the woman modelling it, or that the shampoo from the advert will give them the lustrous locks the model has. By buying the products they are kneeling down, moving their lips in prayer, and believing. The idea of ideology as a material existence, lived through the subject's actions, makes the subject a central part of Althusser's notion of ideology. He defines the subject as the central term on which everything else depends, because firstly, 'there is no practice except by and in an ideology, and secondly 'there is no ideology except by the subject and for subjects' (2014, p. 260).

These two propositions culminate in Althusser's third and central thesis: '*Ideology interpellates individuals as subjects*' (2014, p. 261). While the actions of ideology's subjects are always ideological and therefore shape ideology into the material world, this is only one part of the circle. The other half is the process by which ideology hails individuals, making them subjects of that ideology. Individuals, Althusser suggests, are 'always already' subjects, even before they

are born (2014, p. 261). Before birth, the roles people are expected to play are ready for them; they are sons, or daughters, citizens of countries, members of a social class or other social group, consumers; their identities are already limited ideologically. Althusser calls this hailing of subjects by ideology 'interpellation', arguing that it functions in the same way as a simple hailing by for instance a police officer on the street. A subject will recognise an ideology's interpellation in the same way that an individual in the street will know when the officer's 'Hey, you there!' is directed at them. Individuals rarely ignore the hailing and they largely play the role they are given. Failing to do so is prevented by an intricate web of institutions organizing the social, ranging from family, to education, to the law. Althusser argues that this is how ideology constantly reconstitutes itself, by keeping the relations to labour in place, and by organizing social relations around these (2014, p. 265). Adorno points to the role the culture industry plays in this process: through the categorisation it makes by dividing people into income groups. Advertising, as discussed, is designed to do the same; it uses different types of language and images to appeal to different social groups. By hailing different socio- economic groups into different types of consumption, consumer culture constantly reconstitutes the existing social stratification (Adorno, 1975, p. 13).

Consumers are interpellated into the ideology of consumer culture through the strong appeal to their social roles of the media in general and advertising in particular. This strength comes not just from advertising's design to persuade, but also from its pervasiveness. Advertising becomes what Althusser would call an ideological state apparatus (Althusser, 2014), an institute within society that manages behaviour to fit within the ideology of those institutions, such as the family, or the law. Advertising not only interpellates people into consumer culture's ideology, the practices associated with it become one of the ways that they are kept in that ideology.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that while there are many voices in academia and popular opinion that see consumer culture as post-ideological, there is a strong theoretical grounding for the notion that ideology and morality have not

disappeared from contemporary consumer culture; rather, they are obscured from plain view. Boorstin, Debord and Baudrillard's theories on how advertising and its images create a blurred line between what is true and what is believable make for a situation in which consumers have to negate tensions between their actual consumer choices and what they say they believe about those products. One way in which consumers do this is cynicism. By using it, consumers can say they do not believe a claim made in advertising, while buying and using the products advertised. It is one reason that ideology and morality are under-acknowledged in consumer culture. As Mannoni (2003) said, 'je sais bien, mais quand meme': I know well, but still. Ideology and morality are not shaped in what people say they believe, they are shaped in what they actually do, in their actions. Producers use this disconnection between what people 'know and believe' and what people 'do' as well, by playing with self-reflexivity in their advertising, by acknowledging that they realise that consumers don't really believe their claims, but will act as if they do anyway. This self-reflexivity gives themselves and their consumers permission to fully indulge in the 'belief'. It works for the producers because they can't be held accountable to it, and it works for the consumers because they avoid looking stupid for believing it. By disconnecting what people 'know and believe' from what they do, it becomes harder to recognise where ideology and morality affect consumer culture, because they are denied their role while fulfilling it.

Marx, Gramsci and Mannheim argued that people don't know but still do. Sloterdijk argued that people know, but still do and Žižek takes the relation between knowing and doing a step further, with his position that people 'know that they don't know, but still do'. From this position, consistency between what people know and believe, and what they actually do is no longer the issue. Cynical reason solves the tension before it arises by taking the distance between the two into account. What people do, and what people know and believe can be linked to different aspects of ideology. Žižek distinguishes between constituted ideology, related to what people do, and constituent ideology, which is the ideological framework in which their ideological practices take place (Žižek, 2009c). Žižek poses that 'today, the fundamental level of constituent ideology assumes the guise of its very opposite, of non-ideology' (Žižek, 2009c). In this

chapter, I have argued that the cynicism people employ to create that distance simultaneously creates a disconnection between the constituent and constituted aspects of ideology. Today's consumer culture does not lack ideology, it has hidden it by cynically disconnecting it from the ideological practices in which ideology is manifested and shaped.

In this chapter I have shown how this disconnection between two layers of ideology can be seen in consumer culture in advertising, by using Barthes' concept of myth. Central to the concept of myth is not what is factually and measurably true; rather, myth is about what is perennially true, about what feels true. Myth blurs the line between the two, and advertising is a space where the blurring of that particular line creates a place for myth to flourish. Myth's distortion, its inflection of reality and the way society lets it into its fabric regardless of its being factually accurate are no accident; myth is entirely intentional. It is bound to ideology through its motivation; through myth, ideology is shaped and reinforced. Morality is shaped in myth, and in consumer culture, myth is at least in part shaped in advertising. Barthes' work on the structure of myth allows for a deeper insight into how myth is shaped and manifested in advertising, as I have shown using the examples in this chapter. The examples of Dove and the Body Shop show that brands interact with myth and morality both explicitly and implicitly. The explicit engagement relates to what Žižek calls constituent ideology, through, for instance their support for social issues such as animal welfare, fair trading standards, women's self-esteem and care for the environment, there is also an under-acknowledged engagement with structural, constituted ideology and morality below the surface.

This chapter has shown how the idea that ideology and morality are shaped in consumer culture is grounded in a long theoretical tradition that builds on Marx' work. Marx (Marx, 1884; Marx, Arthur, & Engels, 1974; Marx et al., 2004) argued that in a society that structured its relations through commodities, ideology came to serve two purposes. For those in the economically dominated classes, it came to serve as a veil to hide the alienation caused by the commodification of social life, and for those in power, this deception became the way to keep those without power from recognising that they were oppressed. Ideology, for Marx, was a way of perpetuating the existing

social stratification and relations. Gramsci argued that ideology recreated the existing hegemony not by force, but by creating consent. If only people could see the deception that was creating this consent, Gramsci expected, people would be able to resist the power it had over them and fight the inequality created through it (2014b, p. 381). In consumer culture, advertising can be seen to work in a similar way. Nobody is physically forced to be a consumer, but in practice advertising creates consent to consume. Consumption no longer entails only the buying and using of products. The advertising through which the individual is subjected to consumer culture's ideology, Adorno argues, no longer necessarily bears a relation to the product it aims to sell. It is no longer a helpful tool for potential consumers to understand their product options, instead it has become the pure representation of social power; advertising for advertising's sake (Adorno, 1975, p. 16). Adverts no longer exclusively sell products or the commodified values that Marx and many after him have written about; advertising sells a social order.

Gramsci's expectation was that knowledge and understanding of ideology would be empowering to those oppressed by it. Instead, Adorno and Horkheimer realised, even when people don't believe in the ideology oppressing them, in practice they will go along with it nonetheless; further ingraining the system instead of resisting it (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002). This led Adorno and Horkheimer to see consumers as passive beings. Althusser however, more similar to Gramsci, conceptualises ideology as an active process in which the individuals in it play a role in manifesting and shaping it. He argued that the actions of ideology's subjects are always ideological and therefore shape ideology into the material world. But this is only one part of the process as a whole. The other part is the process by which ideology hails individuals, making them subjects of that ideology (2014, p. 261). Advertising hails people into ideology. For instance by hailing different socio-economic groups into different types of consumption, advertising recreates the existing social stratification. The following chapter will look at the social setting of consumption, exploring the different ways in which consumers are both subjects of ideology and active agents shaping ideology and morality in contemporary consumer culture.

2. From False Needs and Dystopias to Consumption for the Greater Good

Introduction

From the downfall of Plato's Republic to Aristotle's condemnation of making money for money's sake, from the story of Adam and Eve's consumption of the Forbidden fruit, Veblen's conspicuous consumption and the Frankfurt School's criticisms of mass consumption, the narrative of consumption is infused with a negative moral judgement that can still be discerned in contemporary popular culture. Advertisers in particular are judged for evoking a constant state of unlimited desire, of which consumers are seen to be passive victims. For more than 2000 years, the notion of needs has been subject to a heavily moralised discourse. The view of consumption as simply a way of satisfying needs, whether defined as true or false, is limited, and explanations for consumer behaviour come down to reasons of social emulation, envy and the striving for a better social position. While these certainly can be valid answers to questions of why people consume, these are not the only answers, and the question of why people consume should not be the main question asked.

Contemporary scholarship explores the various ways in which consumers play an active role in shaping their identity and the social categories that these identities are a part of, and it explores the social context of this shaping. In the previous chapter, I argued that consumption should be seen as a place where ideology and morality are actively shaped in the act of consumption. In this chapter I look in more depth into what can be learnt when looking at consumption as an active practice, as a process in which values, and, with them, morality, are shaped and manifested in and moved through cultures. Consumers should be seen as active players in this process, and consumption should be seen as constitutive of morality, as much as it is an expression of it. In this chapter I argue that the investigation of morality in consumer culture should go beyond the question of individual consumers' needs. I start by showing how morality is infused in questions of 'needs' and 'desires' and how to live well. Capitalism as a system encourages consumption, but what about when such consumption is deemed 'conspicuous' or damaging to our health? Rather than looking at

consumers as victims, I show how consumers attach meaning to objects and use such meanings to construct identities and shape cultural life. Through the discussions of varied consumption rites of sharing, appropriating, shaping, reflecting and ending, I demonstrate how ideology, myth and morality move through consumer culture in such practices of consumption and meaning-making.

The next section of the chapter focuses on consumption as a social activity and summarises both the identified negative and positive effects in discourses about contemporary consumer culture. I highlight three aspects of consumer culture where morality plays an under-acknowledged role: shopping and sacrifice; taste; and minimalism. Finally I outline how the preceding theoretical discussion informs my research design and suggest how a meaningful analysis considers consumption within a cultural framework. Here I introduce my case studies that form the empirical part of the thesis and explain how each illuminates elements of morality in everyday consumption. Following my interest in Barthes' notion of myth, I elucidate how I use a semiotic analysis to examine the relevant texts in each case study.

The problem with defining needs; the false need fallacy

The familiar truism is that consumption is about individuals' needs and desires. A fundamental way in which morality underlies a good part of consumption discourse stems from this very basic idea that consumption is about individuals' needs. Needs are relative, and defining what an individual needs can only be done from a moral position. In his 'Fable of the Bees', Mandeville (1772) raised the subject of relative needs and desires, arguing that desires are not objective or given, but are linked to subjective elements such as the desirer's social position. To define what falls in the category of basic need, or in that of luxury, he argues, indicates what the moral views of the person doing the defining are. Even Marcuse, (1964, p. 15) who argues fervently that there are true and false needs - true needs being 'nourishment, clothing, lodging' - adds the caveat that these are defined 'at the attainable level of culture'. Needs in the most mundane every day parts of life, such as food, air and shelter, are defined from a moral viewpoint. Food and water are undeniably needed to sustain human life, but this could be

done on a fraction of the average Western diet. When it comes to water and air, needed quality can be discussed. And when it comes to shelter there is the question of whether the bare minimum need consists of a tent in a refugee camp or a house with running water and central heating. The point in raising these questions here is not to try and define what a 'true' need is, but to show how elusive and ambiguous the concept is. This ambiguity means that needs can be interpreted very differently across cultures, different strata of society, and history. Academics throughout the centuries, or in fact millennia, have written about needs and morality from different perspectives.

Aristotle (2009), writing in the fourth century BC, distinguishes between needs, which can be met, and desire, which can never be fulfilled. He connects these to morality in his discussion of chrematistics: the art of acquiring property. He describes having too little or too much property or money as injustices. Having too little is to have an injustice done to you, and having too much money or property means you are acting immorally. The chapter on happiness at the end of this thesis will go into further depth on Aristotle's ideas of justice and the other moral virtues. What is most relevant for this chapter is that Aristotle (1995) expressed his view of chrematistics as an inferior way of spending one's time and energy. He did make an exception, in that he distinguished between two types of chrematistics, of which he saw only one as immoral. The first type is aimed at acquiring what you need to live a good and virtuous life. This type of chrematistics has a natural limitation built into it; according to Aristotle you can have enough of what you need. The goal of practising this type of chrematistics was to reach 'eudaimonia', a Greek word that roughly translates as happiness, but does not have today's connotation of hedonic pleasure. Rather, eudaimonia is reached by living virtuously, contemplatively and healthily. He does not argue for an ascetic lifestyle, he leaves it up to the individual to decide what their needs are. Economic activity that was aimed at providing the necessities of life is not a moral problem for Aristotle, he saw it as natural. The last chapter of this thesis will go into the concept of eudaimonia and consumer culture in depth.

The other type of chrematistics is the kind that he sees as problematic, as unnatural. This type has as its goal to make money, for money's sake, beyond what a person needs to live well, however they define living well. In Aristotle's

view, someone who engages in economic activity just to make more money, beyond what they need, has confused the means and the ends; money is what should be used to live well, it should not be an end in itself. This type of chrematistics influences spheres outside of that of economic activity in what Aristotle sees as problematic ways, he gives the example of the practice of medicine. He argues that the end goal of the practice of medicine should be health, not making money. Aristotle sees this type of economic activity as limitless, because desire is unlimited. If making more money is the goal, the goal is inherently unattainable (Aristotle, 1995). Aristotle's work on needs and desires follows his teacher Plato's (2003) writing in 'The Republic', a story of the decline of a once virtuous and frugal city, 'corrupted by a lust for luxurious living' (Trentmann, 2016, p. 35). The city's welfare was ill-affected when its citizens started to follow their material desires, 'setting in motion an insatiable drive for more that led to war and corruption' (Trentmann, 2016, p. 35). In Christianity, the 'doctrine of the fall' is a central teaching about the evil of succumbing to desire. Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden, which supplied everything they needed. There was one tree, the tree of knowledge of good and evil that they were not allowed to eat from. They disobeyed, after Satan convinced them to eat the forbidden fruit. God banished them from the Garden of Eden and they lived out their lives on earth, knowing the difference between good and evil.

In more contemporary scholarship, in an analysis that mirrors Aristotle's two types of chrematistics, Veblen (1904) distinguishes between business and industry. He poses that industry's goal is to make goods, and the goal of business is to make money. Veblen saw industry as able to contribute to the well-being of the community as a whole, and business as contributing to the well-being of only part of the community, often at the expense of another part. In his eyes, this inequality led to the perpetuation of the existence of the leisure class and their conspicuous consumption. Two millennia after Aristotle's words, the capitalist system that structures Western societies is built on the concept of making money, mostly for money's sake, which led Polanyi (2001 [1944], p. 56) to famously describe Aristotle's distinction between moneymaking and production for use as 'probably the most prophetic pointer ever made in the realm of the social sciences'. Another aspect of Aristotle's distinction between need and

desire has proven an enduring one: the line he draws between 'natural' true needs and 'unnatural' false desires. Natural needs are seen as defined by biology, they are given and therefore real. Desire, in this context, is seen as defined by culture, or as described in the chapter about ideology; by vested social interests (e.g. Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002; Marcuse, 1964), and therefore not a 'true' need (Sassatelli, 2007, p. 78). Not only does the idea that there is a distinction between natural needs and unnatural or cultural desires have an inherently moral base because to answer it one has to define 'need'; for longer than two millennia the way in which economic activity is structured in capitalist societies, where money is made for money's sake, has been steeped in a discourse that frames it as inherently immoral.

Keeping up with the Joneses and the Kardashians

False needs are at the foundation of Thorstein Veblen's still influential work on conspicuous consumption. Veblen is a controversial figure in consumption studies, his best known work, 'The Theory of the Leisure Class' is often critiqued for oversimplifying the complex issue of what a person truly needs and what counts as luxury. Sassatelli (2007, p. 68) argues that Veblen's identification of conspicuous consumption with the display of opulence is problematic because minimalism, asceticism and austerity have at certain moments in history been ways to achieve the goals Veblen attributes to conspicuous consumption. Minimalism is a way of consuming that is suited best to consumers who can afford to throw items out. If they ever needed them again, they could buy them. Less wealthy consumers are often not in a position where they simply re-buy consumer goods that they threw out for the sake of living with as few goods as possible. Nevertheless, his analysis of conspicuous consumption has proven highly influential on traditional and contemporary consumption scholarship. Veblen (1998 [1899]) sees society as divided between groups who need to work, and those who don't. The latter he calls the leisure class. They have the means and the time to 'waste' on objects and pursuits that are not economically productive. This is what Veblen defines as conspicuous consumption and conspicuous leisure. The goal of this kind of consumption is to show that you

have the means to consume conspicuously, and the social status that comes with it.

Fashion is an example of an area of conspicuous consumption. Firstly, having fashionable items shows that someone has the means to buy new items regularly, to keep up with current fashion. Secondly, it shows conspicuous leisure; wearing items such as long layered skirts, corsets or very high heels makes it clear that the wearer has no need for their clothes to be practical because they might need to make a living while wearing them. While corsets and long layered skirts were seen more often in Veblen's time, contemporary women's fashion has ample options for discomfort and impracticality. From stilettos, or even flat shoes that aren't shaped like feet, so called body-con (for body-conscious) dresses that are too tight to breathe in, skinny jeans that make it hard to walk and even harder to sit down, to long acrylic nails that make it practically impossible to do anything requiring fine motor skills. And even now that fashion can come at much lower prices than it will have in 1899, the turnover is quicker; in today's environment of fast moving fashion, things are fashionable for weeks, not years. Another form of conspicuous consumption is vicarious consumption. A contemporary example of this is parents who dress their children up in expensive designer clothes that they will grow out of in a matter of months. But it is not just dresses and jewellery, or luxury items in general that make up conspicuous consumption. Examples Veblen gives of conspicuous consumption include leisure activities such as playing sports, intellectual pursuits and even devout religious observance.

Conspicuous consumption inspires what Veblen calls pecuniary emulation, what we would nowadays call 'Keeping up with the Joneses'. In Veblen's times, the Joneses would be people that shared a physical environment. In the contemporary media-scape, who we are keeping up with is still 'the Joneses,' but it's also 'the Kardashians'. Veblen argues that those who do not belong to the leisure class will consume conspicuously in striving for the social status that the leisure class has. Even Veblen could not have predicted the scale on which this happens more than a century after his writing. The empire and fortune built by the Kardashian family is premised almost entirely on the idea that people want to have what they have. They are famous for starring in a

reality show about their enviable-looking lives, very aptly called ‘Keeping up with the Kardashians’. They make a large part of their fortune by posting on social media about products they use. Whatever they recommend, from facials to hair vitamins, from tablets for morning sickness to make-up, becomes an instant best seller. By 2016 Kim Kardashian, the main protagonist of the family’s show, has earned \$56,000,000 on these endorsements alone (Gerencer, 2016).

Emulation, envy and the striving for social position are no doubt potential drivers for consumption. But, as Sassatelli (2007) points out, they have become a default explanation for consumer behaviour. To limit all discussion of consumption to these elements means creating a blind spot for the many ways consumers interact with the material world, and the various reasons for and effects of these interactions.

***Mad Men* making lies and inventing want**

Advertising has been ascribed an important role in if not outright creating then certainly fuelling these so-called false desires. This idea is part of popular discourse and is illustrated gorgeously in the series *Mad Men*, which aired between 2007 and 2015. Set in 1960’s New York, *Mad Men* depicts the life of Don Draper, the creative director of a Madison Avenue advertising agency. The series is set at the time and place often described as the birthplace of modern marketing and mass consumption, as well as that of the counter-cultural movement that still influences culture and consumption heavily today. *Mad Men*’s storyline incorporates the existence of both these discourses. It serves as an excellent example of how morality and consumer culture are connected in popular discourse, because even though the storyline is fictional, it is written using the work of pivotal figures in both marketing and the critique of marketing and its role in society, such as Dichter (Dichter, 1960, 1971), who is credited with the creation of motivational research that changed the way marketing campaigns have been designed and Packard (2007), who critiqued this new approach of creating desire in consumers. The following is an example taken from an episode in the first season of the series.

Don meets his mistress Midge at her apartment, where she is hosting a party attended by her beatnik friends, one of whom is called Roy. They are all

high, relaxed and lounging around the space. Don takes a picture of Midge and Roy, and as it develops he realises he is looking at two people in love. He tells them, and they deny it. *'That's ridiculous'*, says Midge. *'Love is bourgeois'*, Roy adds. Don; *'You're breaking my heart'*. From across the room, a party guest wearing a fez remarks with feigned surprise *'Dig! Ad man has a heart!'* Midge intervenes: *'The grown-ups are talking'*. Her friend sounds annoyed now *'Don't defend him! Toothpaste doesn't solve anything. Dacron sure as hell won't bring back those ten kids in Biloxi'*. Don calmly blows out smoke and says *'Neither will buying a bottle of Tokaji wine and leaning up against a wall in central station pretending you're a vagrant'*. *'You know what it's like, to watch all you ants go into your hive?'*, asks the man with the fez. *'I wipe my arse with the Wall Street Journal. Look at you. Satisfied, dreaming up jingles for soap flakes and spot remover, telling yourself you're free'*. Don appears to have had enough *'My god, stop talking, make something of yourself'*. This is when Roy adds himself to the conversation. He looks incredulously at Don, and asks *'Like you? You make the lie. You invent want. You're for them. Not us'*. *'Well, I hate to break it to you'*, Don answers, while he gathers his things, *'but there is no big lie. There is no system, the world is indifferent'* (Provenzano, 2007).

'You make the lie. You invent want.' A poignant critique, and an enduring one at that. Today, almost 60 years after critics such as Packard accused Madison Avenue of selling people things they don't need, one only has to open a newspaper to find a story on the damage done by marketing. Tobacco companies who market their wares even though the fact that their products cause serious and often fatal health issues is well known (Press Association, 2017), 'Big Pharma' aggressively marketing medication that is linked to what has been called an 'opioid epidemic' (Solnik, 2017), and soft drink companies who actively fight anti-sugar and anti-childhood obesity legislation while targeting their marketing efforts to children (Kent, 2015), are common targets for journalists. Contemporary marketing literature deals with the criticism that the field faces head on. It teaches marketing students a distinction between the concepts 'needs', 'wants' and 'demands'. Kotler and Keller define a need as a state of deprivation of some basic satisfaction. They give tangible examples such as air, food, water, clothing and shelter, but also name more ephemeral needs, such as

recreation, education and entertainment (Kotler & Keller, 2015, p. 31). They stress that these needs exist in the 'very texture of human biology and the human condition'. Needs, the authors assert repeatedly, are not created by society, and they are certainly not created by marketers. They argue that the criticism often directed at marketers for 'getting people to buy things they don't want' can't be true, as marketers do not create needs. Needs, they argue, pre-date marketing. In Kotler and Keller's opinion, society and marketers do however create what they call 'wants', which they define as 'specific satisfiers of needs'. And if marketers do their jobs well, what they create are 'demands', which are 'wants for specific products'.

From this perspective, food is a need, carrots and cakes are both specific ways of fulfilling that 'need', they are therefore 'wants'. Marketers that are competent at their trade can convince a consumer that buying a pair of £35,900 Tiffany & Co. earrings (Tiffany&Co) will improve her standing in the community, but the need for social status, Kotler and Keller (2015, p. 31) argue, has nothing to do with marketing. When you work in marketing, the distinction is useful. For a marketer or a salesperson on a shop floor, it's good to understand what potential customers' motivations are, and to understand that different wants will fulfil a need. It helps you sell your wares. But the distinction between needs and wants, and the idea that needs are inherent and not socially created, can also serve to absolve the entire marketing profession of any responsibility for the effects of their campaigns. That is not to say that every marketing campaign will have a negative impact on society, but to deny that marketing can be a powerful force in spreading ideas and products that are in fact not beneficial or even damaging to society would be just as one-sided. In this context, it is relevant to note that while marketing is not amoral or apolitical, in almost all cases, its main goal is not to change social reality, but to sell commodities (Sassatelli, 2007, p. 132).

From the 19th century onwards, Williams (1991) notes, the discourse of consumption in general, specifically through advertising, was no longer focussed on the sale of items per se, but on the encouragement of a state of constant desire. Ewen (1976) argues that one of the ways advertising does this is by aiming to make every consumer feel inadequate all the time. Packard's work

focuses on this particular aspect of advertising, and he asks pertinent questions about the moral aspects of practices associated with these goals. His work looks into the use of mass psychoanalysis to guide campaigns of persuasion, to sell 'products, ideas, attitudes, candidates, goals, or states of mind'. Packard (2007 [1957]) investigates the field of motivation research, the investigation by advertisers of the motivations behind choices individual consumers make. Motivation research goes further than the socially acceptable answers people will usually give to questions, probing instead into the subconscious mind. It uses the insight into deeper lying desires to link products to values rather than possible uses. Persuaders, as he calls those in the business of advertising, aim to do this because the difference in products by different brands is often just that: more or less the same product by a different brand. When the products are the same, appealing to the consumers' logic and reason won't suffice. Selling one product as better than the other requires a strategy to impose uniqueness, or at the very least distinguishability onto the product. For Packard, creating what he saw as false needs by tapping into people's unconscious minds creates unlimited desire; the products in no way actually relate to the desires that they are linked to and therefore can't do anything to actually satisfy them.

The success of the beauty industry in creating body 'issues' is perhaps the most visible and recognizable perpetual dissatisfaction created by advertising. Berger puts it very well when he writes that 'The publicity image steals her love for herself as she is, and sells it back to her for the price of the product' (J. Berger, 1972, p. 134). This is something that can be recognised in the examples of Dove and The Body Shop that were used in the earlier chapter on the construction of myth and morality in advertising. The beauty industry's message that no potential customer is ever good enough is pervasive, but does not go uncontested. In the spring of 2015, the company Protein World launched an advertising campaign with the slogan: 'Are you beach body ready?' The image that accompanied the words was a photo of an incredibly fit looking female model with perfect skin and hair. The advertising standards agency received 378 complaints about the advertisement being socially irresponsible for promoting an unrealistic body image, and a change.org petition to remove the ads for that reason received 70,742 signatures (Baring, 2015). On the 2nd of May 2015,

protesters organised the ‘Taking back the beach’ protest in London’s Hyde Park. Many of the posters in the London Underground stations were used as a canvas for protest by women who took pictures of themselves standing in front of the posters, sometimes in bikini, with their middle fingers up, some posters had stickers with the text ‘this oppresses women’ on them, and some were graffitied with words of protest varying from a to-the-point ‘fuck off’ or ‘bullshit’ to longer messages telling readers that their body is fine as it is (Saul, 2015). Notably, the anti-consumerist protest was subsequently re-commodified by several brands hopping on the subversion bandwagon, for instance by the plus size fashion brand Simply Be who drove around Hyde Park during the protests with a van that said ‘every body is beach body ready’ (Alwakeel, 2015), Holland & Barrett did a small-scale campaign in autumn 2016 with the slogan ‘Are you winter body ready?’ (Robertson, 2016), and Carlsberg did an ‘Are you beer body ready’ campaign while the protein world posters were still up (Nudd, 2015).

Packard raises very specific questions about the diverse and far reaching moral implications of the practices of advertisers. He asked:

What is the morality of playing upon hidden weaknesses and frailties—such as our anxieties, aggressive feelings, dread of conformity, and infantile hangovers—to sell products? Specifically, what are the ethics of businesses that shape campaigns designed to thrive on these weaknesses they have diagnosed? (Packard, 2007, pp. 233-234)

What is clear, is that what people need, want or desire can be influenced by things other than natural urges such as hunger, thirst or cold. Cultural contexts do have an effect on what people want to do, have or be. Advertising aims to influence this, and can do this in ways that are direct and open about their goal in greater or lesser degree. There are valid moral questions that can be asked about practices that advertising uses to create a perpetual state of desire, and the effects this has on consumers. The fact that needs and desires can be created, be it by ephemeral cultural traditions or specifically by advertising, does not, however, make them false.

The consumer from passive victim to active agent

The concept of need links morality to consumption because it is near impossible to define need without applying a moral viewpoint to it. When the concept of need is the perspective from which to look at consumption, what emerges is a story of a consumer as victim of powers greater than them. It is a narrative in which Eve and eventually Adam succumb to Satan's insistence on eating what was forbidden, in which consumers in contemporary times are the willing victims of equally seductive advertising, telling them to buy what they know they don't 'need'. Critical theory traditions (e.g. Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002; Marcuse, 1964; Packard, 2007) and certain postmodern theories (e.g. D. Bell, 1979; Gane, 2002; Lasch, 1991) are sceptical, even cynical about consumption, making consumers out as passive, slave-like, infantilised and importantly, without agency to change the increasing hold the market has on their lives and possible life courses. In this context, emulation, envy and striving for social status become the main if not only explanations for consumer behaviour. While these perspectives limit the range of ways to engage with consumption as an academic subject, as Sassatelli (2007) points out, they do underline that consumption has a political aspect to it. Consumption, she argues, can be seen as a 'mirror of our relationships and the larger social structure and its ideologies' (2007, p. 55).

More recent research has looked at consumption from this point of view; that consumption can be political, and that consumers have far more agency in their interaction with material culture than many critical and post-modern theorists will ascribe them (e.g. Barnett et al., 2005; C. Campbell, 1987; Featherstone, 1991; Littler, 2009; Miller, 2008; Soper, 2011). Daniel Miller's (Miller, 1998, 2012) work very clearly shows how consumption is an active process, in which consumers ascribe meanings to commodities, accepting, modifying and subverting the values producers and advertisers aim to attach to them in a wide variety of conscious and less conscious ways. His research shows how consumers across different cultures and throughout history can attach opposing meanings to the same items, for instance to blue jeans, once a symbol of rebellion worn mostly by subversive youth, now associated with conformity and a safe, perhaps even default fashion choice for almost anyone of any age or

social background. His work also shows how global brands are interacted with locally, and come to mean different things in different cultures, going against the idea that globalisation invariably also means homogenisation (e.g. Ritzer, 1993). The following parts of this chapter will look into how consumers attach meaning to objects. They will look at how they use these objects and their meanings to construct identities and in turn, how these objects and meanings play a role in shaping cultural frameworks and categories. In the shaping of these elements of cultural life, morality is manifested and shaped within the realm of consumer culture.

Me; myself and mine

'The pen and the pipe, the clothing, the desk, the house—are myself. The totality of my possessions reflects the totality of my being. I am what I have' (Sartre, 2003 [1943], p. 611).

The contemporary consumer, perceived as freed from the constraints of traditional community, is seen as having the opportunity to 'be their own person', to construct their own identity. There is a substantial body of work on the well-established theory that consumers use their consumption choices as a medium through which to express their identities (e.g. Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1992; Hogg & Michell, 1996; Holt, 1995; Richins, 1994). The type of clothes one wears, the type of car someone drives, the holidays they take, the music they listen to: these consumer goods are seen as more or less reliable indicators of what kind of person someone is. People will choose products and brands not just for their functional value, but also to convey a certain image of themselves to others (Levy, 1959; Mittal, 2006; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988). People's possessions become the context of their lives, serving as props and the set on which their narratives are played out (Ahuvia, 2005; Goffman, 1990). In this conception of the connection between identity and consumption, the connection is a very superficial one; consumer goods and brands are used to communicate, what is constructed is an image of the identity rather than the identity itself. There is however ample evidence that the connection between consumer choices and identity runs deeper.

Sartre explores the relationship between the concepts of having and being in his work *Being and Nothingness*. He initially defines three major categories of human existence: to do, to have, and to be (Sartre, 2003 [1943], p. 597) Doing, however, he argues is transitional. It is reducible in his eyes, as a manifestation or sub-category of having. This leaves having and being as the more fundamental categories. 'Ultimately a desire can be only the desire to be or the desire to have' (Sartre, 2003 [1943], p. 602). The relationship between these fundamental desires is almost inextricably interwoven, and while they can be distinguished from each other, *having* acts in the service of *being*. While Sartre poses that having is not reducible to being, he does argue that the desire to *have* an object, to possess it, is a desire to be related to that object, and in the blurred line between the two, what can be called 'mine' exists in a space not exactly within the self, but also not entirely outside of it (Sartre, 2003 [1943], pp. 609-610). Belk posed that 'A key to understanding what possessions mean is recognising that, knowingly or unknowingly, intentionally or unintentionally, we regard our possessions as parts of ourselves' (Belk, 1988, p. 139). He introduces the concept of the extended self, a metaphor that consists of both the self and what the self possesses, or: that which is seen as me, and that which is seen as mine.

The grey area between self and possessions can be seen when individuals experience loss or damage to something they own as a personal loss (Ferraro, Escalas, & Bettman, 2011; Sayre & Horne, 1996). As Simmel puts it: 'material property is, so to speak, an extension of the ego, and any interference with our property is, for this reason, felt to be a violation of the person' (Simmel, 1950, p. 322). Not all consumer goods become part of the extended self, there are objects that are more likely to fulfil a role in the construction of identity than others (Ferraro et al., 2011). Possessions that play a role in a consumer's life narrative are more likely to be part of the extended self (Csikszentmihalyi & Halton, 1981). Examples are objects linked to accomplishments such as trophies or framed displayed diplomas, or objects that signify important personal relationships such as heirlooms or photographs, and the closer the relation to a meaningful episode within the life narrative an object has, the more important in the construction of identity it becomes (Kleine, Kleine, & Allen, 1995; Miller, 2008). There is scholarship that poses the idea that consumers have a multiplicity of identities,

but a large part of the research on the subject has found that consumers aim to construct one coherent identity with their consumption behaviour, using objects to solve tensions between the identity they have and the identity they strive for, or conflicts between different social roles a consumer may be expected to fulfil (Ahuvia, 2005).

When the construction of identity in consumer culture is considered in this way, as a true formative factor rather than a way of only constructing an outward image, the connection to morality becomes easier to recognise. In the process of constructing an identity, consumers internalise the values, ideology and morality that consumer culture has infused goods with. In doing so, they make these values part of their sense of self and their life's narrative. Consumption then, should be seen as a transformative process, in which ideology and morality are constantly shaped and reshaped through the internalisation and externalisation of values. This means that while the idea that consumers use consumer goods to appear a certain way is certainly true, the connection to identity runs much deeper. The idea that consumers are free from traditional community constraints to bricolage their own identity, to become self made men and women through their choices in consumer culture is a pertinent one, as it speaks to the denial of ideology and morality's role in consumption. This makes the construction of identity in consumer culture one of the spheres of consumption where ideology and morality are under-acknowledged.

G.I. Joe plans a dream wedding as Barbie gets her vengeance

The construction of identity is a sphere where consumption and morality interact because identity is shaped, as Dittmar (1992) describes it, at the interface between society and identity. Consumption, she argues, is located in this same place. The interaction between consumption, identity and society is an active one, Douglas and Isherwood pose that 'consumption is an active process, in which all the social categories are continually redefined' (Douglas & Isherwood, 1996, p. 45). Christine Harold (2004) gives an example of an event where these categories that are central to both the construction of identity and society are redefined in her work on 'Culture Jamming' as activism. It was in a 'prank' played as an act of protest on consumers by an organisation that calls

itself the Barbie Liberation Organization (BLO). Just before Christmas, they switched the voice chips of G.I. Joe and Barbie dolls and put them back onto the shelves of toyshops around the United States. On Christmas morning, little girls opened their gifts of Barbie dolls that growled 'Eat lead, Cobra!', 'Dead men tell no lies!', and 'Vengeance is mine!'. Little boys received military action figure G.I. Joe who exclaimed: 'Let's plan our dream wedding!', 'Maths class is tough!'; and 'I love shopping!'. The organisation used the prank to point out one of the ways that consumer culture perpetuates gender stereotypes, and to challenge the notion that they are biological instead of social categories. What the BLO made obvious was that something often taken for granted, perhaps even seen as natural - boys are tough and girls can't do maths - is in fact something that can be challenged, and is socially constructed and perpetuated. The idea is that if people keep buying girls toys that tell them to go shopping, that is how they will start to see themselves, and boys too will model their ideas of masculinity on these muscular action figures. Underlying these ideas is the assumption that reality is socially constructed.

From the perspective of reality as socially constructed, things are the way they are because societies treat them that way, not because they are that way necessarily or inherently. It follows the logic of the self-fulfilling prophecy, or the Thomas Theorem, which says that 'things defined as real, are real in their consequences'. From this perspective, the gender categories that the BLO prank addressed are not natural; they are constructed by societies, and can therefore be challenged and changed by those societies. Herbert Mead's work explores this concept and its implications in depth. Mead looks at the interaction between the 'self' and society, and how he sees society as constituted by individuals as much as individuals are constituted by society. Activities such as consumption are a way in which this happens, by creating and confirming meaning in society (Mead, 2015 [1934]). Consumption activity, Douglas and Isherwood argue, is 'the joint production with fellow consumers of a universe of values' (Douglas & Isherwood, 1996, p. 45). In their view, consumption uses goods to make the classification of both people and social events tangible and visible. The self, Mead argues, is a part of a person that is not just its body, it is something that does not yet exist at birth, but develops through the years as a person is socialised in his

or her specific cultural environment, through its experiences in that culture and its relations to other people in that environment (Mead, 2015 [1934], p. 135). Berger builds on this thought and describes self and society as 'inextricably interwoven entities' (1966, p. 107). Like Mead, he sees the relationship between self and society as dialectical because the self that is shaped in the individual in turn shapes the society that it was created by. Society's ideas are internalised and in turn acted out by the individual, perpetuating the ideas for others to internalise and act out.

Consumer choices then, are one of the types of actions that move culture, meaning and morality through society. McCracken poses that consumers 'use the meaning of consumer goods to express cultural categories and principles, cultivate ideas, create and sustain lifestyles, construct notions of self, and create (and survive) social change' (G McCracken, 1988, p. xi). It is not just that society imposes the gender stereotypes from the Barbie and G.I. Joe prank example on individuals, the meanings and expectations attached to for instance gender are internalised by individual consumers and acted out by them, in turn reinforcing them.

Consumption set in a cultural frame

Douglas and Isherwood (1996, p. 49) argue that 'all goods carry meaning, but none by itself'. They pose that while each physical object has meaning, that meaning is derived from its relations to other goods, 'just as music is in the relations marked out by the sounds and not in any one note' (Douglas & Isherwood, 1996, p. 49). The meanings that are attached to goods are structured within a culture. McCracken poses that cultures are structured into cultural categories that are then organised by cultural principles in a way very similar to Žižek's (2009c) notion of the relationship between constituted and constituent ideology, which were discussed in the chapter on ideology in consumer culture. Cultural categories, McCracken argues, are the basic distinctions along which a culture structures the phenomenal world (Grant McCracken, 1986, p. 72). Examples of cultural categories present in all cultures are those of time, which is organised into units such as seconds and centuries, but also into sacred and profane time, a categorisation that can also be applied to space. The question of

what is natural and what is not is another culturally dependent category and the cultural categories related to people include for instance those of class, gender, occupation, sexuality, status, race and age. Each culture will decide on the boundaries of these categories and organise itself accordingly. Because of this, things that make perfect sense in one culture, will seem ludicrous in another (Grant McCracken, 1986, p. 72). McCracken describes the cultural categories as the conceptual grid of the culturally constituted world. Even though they are so fundamental to the shape of society, not all categories are easy to discern in everyday life.

Their taken-for-grantedness makes them hard to see, but they are constantly kept intact by human actions, of which consumption is an important one. Cultural principles are what McCracken describes as the other part of cultural meaning, and he explains them as the logic with which the different cultural categories are organised. Like cultural categories, cultural principles serve as the 'orienting ideas for thought and action', that 'find expression in every aspect of social life, goods not least of all' (Grant McCracken, 1986, p. 73). Cultural categories and principles work together to express meaning in consumer goods, one cannot occur without the other. Material goods can't communicate something about a cultural category without also communicating what that category's place in the cultural logic is. It can't just distinguish between genders, it says something about what gender means in that culture. The same goes for the other categories. A material good will carry the meaning by making a distinction between the different categories, but also by saying something about what they mean, what value they have in society. As McCracken puts it, 'when goods show a distinction between two cultural categories, they do so by encoding something of the principle according to which the two categories have been distinguished' (Grant McCracken, 1986, p. 74). Following the work of theorists of social construction such as Berger and Luckmann (1966) cultural categories and cultural principles are given substance and tangibility by consumer goods, and these goods in turn play their part in making up the culturally constituted world.

There are several ways in which morality interacts with consumer culture through cultural categories and principles. One relates to the hierarchy of

cultural categories expressed through consumer goods. The categories and principles divide the phenomenal world into segments, but they also arrange the segments in relation to each other. Through this order they express what occupations, gender or class we see as good or bad, or rather, as better or worse, worth more or less than the other segments (Kopytoff, 1986, p. 70). Another way in which morality interacts with consumer culture through cultural categories and principles is more explicit, more readily recognisable: through advertising. McCracken describes advertising as the conduit through which meaning is moved from the cultural world to consumer goods (Grant McCracken, 1986, pp. 75-76). In this case, the moral values can be intentionally added to a product. Examples include Fairtrade labels, advertising that includes mentions of the product not being tested on animals, anything that makes claims of being an environmentally friendly product, and more of the sort of advertising that claims to be better for animals, people or the environment than other products or brands. The next chapter will go into the concept of ethical consumption in more depth.

The circulation of meaning and the extension of the self

Meaning, values and ideology are shaped and manifested in the culturally constituted world following and reconstituting the framework of cultural categories and principles in different ways, of which consumption choices are an important one. There are a several theorists who have looked in depth at how meaning is attached to and detached from consumer goods. McCracken poses that meaning moves from culture to consumer good through consumption rituals, which he sees as powerful tools for the manipulation of meaning. He distinguished four different consumption rites: exchange, possession, grooming and divestment rituals (Grant McCracken, 1986, p. 78). Sartre describes four main ways in which we extend our selves through possessions: through appropriating of tangible objects but also of the intangible, by creating, by knowing, and by destructing. Belk argues that contamination is another way of extending the self, of which consumption is a part. The different ways in which these scholars describe the ways meaning moves through society and consumers via consumer behaviour can be structured into five modes of movement of

meaning; sharing, appropriating, shaping, reflecting and ending, which will be described in the following paragraphs. These modes are illustrations of how ideology, myth, and morality are constructed in and moved through consumer culture by the everyday practices of consumption.

Sharing

The first mode by which meaning moves through the culturally constituted world is by sharing. For McCracken (Grant McCracken, 1986), this is done through what he calls exchange rituals. He describes gift giving as being about more than a consumer good moving from one owner to the next, because meaning moves along with the physical good. Often the meaning attached to the good, the proverbial 'thought that counts', is the essence of the gift. This can have moral values implicitly; a gift can be an insight into what kind of person the giver thinks the receiver could or even should be. This is often done subconsciously, but especially in the case of children it can be done very consciously. To continue the cultural category of gender as an example, there is a range of gift options for young girls that include Presidential Candidate Barbies (Chaker, 2016), and storybooks about little girls that become engineers (Beaty & Roberts, 2013). Giving these as gifts has a very clear intention of making clear that that little girl is not constrained by the traditional stereotypes she will also encounter, so what is shared in addition to the toy, is the intention to help her break any glass ceilings she may encounter later in life. Kleine et al. (1995, p. 340) point out that the movement of meaning through gift giving is most successful when the receiver sees the gift as a good fit with their identity, which means that there are some restrictions to how well meaning and morality are moved through sharing in this way.

Sharing is not always intentional or even positive, Belk describes contamination as another way of extending the self with consumer goods. Through contamination, he argues, a person extends the self to include another person. Morally, there are good and bad ways of including others in your extended self by contamination. Belk lists Goffman's (1971) mode of interpersonal contamination as examples of ways people can be said to contaminate each other: violation of personal space, touching; glancing, looking,

staring, noise pollution, talking to, and through bodily fluids. Belk adds that interpersonal contamination is also possible through the acquisition of possessions of another. Morality is explicitly present in the discourse of sharing for instance clothes, as the sharing of something close to the body is an indication of a close personal relationship, or interpersonal bonding through the sharing of a meal at a special occasion or as a daily occurrence. In these cases, shared consumption becomes a connection between an individual and their wider cultural context, be it their family through a shared meal or wider community through a shared experience.

Wong and Hogg (2017, p. 1) introduce the concept of the shared self and analyse how consumers construct part of their extended self as a shared space, a space that is shared and co-constructed with a significant other. They found that the sharing of resources such as a house and money played a key part in this construction of a shared self, as did consumer objects given as gifts to each other. In the case of gift giving, they found that the gift giver continued to attach meaning to the given object, even though it was no longer theirs; they maintained a relationship to the object and through it, a connection to the receiver of the gift. The company TOMS, who give a pair of shoes to a child in need for every pair bought by their mostly Western consumers, link sharing and morality through the creation of a relationship between their customers and the recipients of the given shoes. In addition to the shoes they bought to wear, the style these represent, their customers can include the given shoe, and the values that the action of sharing represent as part of their identity.

Appropriating

With the simple act of buying something, a consumer does not fully make the consumer good their own, this happens through what McCracken(1986) describes as possession rituals; as the time and effort consumers spend on taking care of their things, personalising them, discussing them and showing them off. Particularly in the case of taking care of things, maintaining them, cleaning them, there is an undeniable functional aspect to these actions, but they also seem to serve to claim, there is almost a bonding aspect to it, in which the owner draws the meanings from the product that marketing has given it. Taking good care of

your things and avoiding buying new things by the care taken can be a morally motivated consumption ritual, as it can be an expression of values of care in general, or of frugality, or of being conscious of the environmental impact of waste. In general, social media has provided a platform for possession rituals that makes them more visible than they ever were before. Photographing and posting pictures of new possessions, ranging from a new car to a new outfit, or a new combination of clothes already owned, or pictures of a new house or spring-cleaned living room will appear on social media regularly, and the platform's setup invites those who can see the images to comment on them, making them even more interactive. The brand TOMS actively encourages this ritual amongst their consumers, asking them to take pictures of themselves wearing their TOMS shoes, bags or sunglasses, especially when travelling, and to post them online with a TOMS hashtag. This makes the ritual something the brand and the consumer are a part of together. It is in the interaction with others that this ritual links consumption with morality; in showing what you own, what you are proud of, you show others what values you are happy to take on publicly, reinforcing them in the process.

While Sartre (2003 [1943], p. 611) sees the things a person owns as part of who they are; 'I am what I have. It is I myself which I touch in this cup, in this trinket', he does not limit this idea of *having* to tangible objects. Sartre includes the intangible in his concept of having, posing that a person can appropriate by conquering, or mastering. He uses the example of a mountain climbed; the mountain has been conquered, the climb and the view it affords are now the climber's to have (2003 [1943], p. 611). Belk (1988) stresses that this is an important point to make, because it can help us understand how events and for instance public property can come to be seen as possessions, which can contribute to a person's sense of self. An example would be that learning your way around a new city can be seen as 'mastering' it, therefore including it in your extended self. The same applies to goods. Learning how to use equipment like a slowcooker or a snowboard places these objects into the extended self more than simply owning them. The link with morality in consumer culture lies in the internalisation of the moral values that the consumer goods and non-ownable

public property and intangible events carry. If these objects and events carry the meaning into the extended self, the morality becomes part of that unity as well.

Shaping

The third mode of movement of meaning is shaping. Shaping includes the creation and adaption of consumer goods to include them in the extended self. Society recognizes the moral right of creators, from those who have built a snowman to those who have painted masterpieces. Sartre's (2003 [1943]) notion of creating is a wide one, it for instance includes buying as a form of creating as well, and according to Sartre even the state of having money is part of the extended self through the opportunity of extending the self with all the things that it could possibly buy. The idea of creating as a way of adding something to the extended self is a useful concept to have when looking at morality and consumer culture, because there are so many ways in which people are participating in consumer culture that are not strictly about consuming objects. It helps in understanding how anti-consumerism comes to be seen as part of the extended self through the creation of for instance subversive messages, campaigns or petitions, such as with the subversion of the protein world adverts, and the G.I. Joe and Barbie prank, or by choosing minimalism as a style of consumption. But it also helps to see active participation in brand experiences such as events or online interactions as a way of incorporating the values of these brands into the extended self, in addition to owning products by that brand, or even without. The chapter on food discourse will show numerous examples of how this happens; most specifically by the brand Innocent, who ask their consumers to create little hats for their smoothie bottles as part of their annual charity campaign 'the Big Knit'. The chapter on the brand TOMS will show how the brand's encouragement of participation in their events, on- and offline, means that their customers have multiple ways of making the brand part of their identity.

Another way in which consumers include goods and their meanings into their extended self through the mode of shaping is through grooming, either of the self, using goods, or of the goods themselves. Grooming, McCracken (Grant McCracken, 1986) argues, is a way to coax out meanings from goods, when the

meanings are of a perishable nature. He gives the example of somebody dressing up for an evening out, and taking on the properties of someone's most glamorous goods. Or by grooming a consumer good, for instance lavishing a car with much more attention than it needs to run smoothly. The link with morality is with cultural categories such as class and status. Knowing how to adhere to certain dress codes and other more general mostly unspoken rules of style, and having the items to follow it is linked to social status and its accompanying set of ideas about right and wrong.

Reflecting

Reflection is a process that shapes and manifests meaning that takes place both before and during ownership of consumer goods. It consists of the research done before potentially buying a good, and continues during ownership. This research can be about specific functional product qualities, or about the values the brand being considered communicates. It can be about how they produce their products, who makes them, who is impacted by them. It can be focussed on materials provided by producers, but there is ample information for consumers to reflect on that is provided by third parties such as governments, ethical consumption organisations, consumer guides, and review websites of many different kinds. Knowledge, according to Sartre, is another way in which consumer goods are incorporated into the self. He argues that knowing, like doing, is reducible to having; knowledge is something one *has*. 'The known is transformed into me; it becomes my thought and thereby consents to receive its existence from me alone' (Sartre, 2003 [1943], p. 599). When looking at the connection between morality and consumer culture, knowledge plays a pivotal role. Without knowing what a brand or company communicates about themselves or what is known about them, it is impossible to know what the meaning is that their goods carry. The knowledge about these meanings is what makes the meanings move around between society and individuals. But it is not just knowledge about brands, it can also for instance be very relevant to look at how consumers use their knowledge of a particular theme in consumer culture to build an identity.

The values advertising and third party information carries are communicated not just to the consumers of the goods or brands, but also to those who reflect on them in this process. A manifestation of morality lies for instance in how consumers take ethics into account when making consumer choices. This can be about choosing the mascara that is not tested on animals when presented with two similar choices in a shop, or it can be a much more extensive ritual, when consumers take an active role in aiming to unearth as much information as they can to be able to choose the products that are most in line with their moral values. Specific to this mode of movement of meaning, is that there is a way of constructing identity not by owning a good, but by *not* owning it. Through reflection, a consumer can come to learn the meanings associated with a certain good, and choose to extend their sense of self by explicitly not including it. Veganism for instance is a consumer practice with morality at its core and it is an example of a way of constructing an identity that is more about what is not consumed than through what is. Reflection plays a pivotal role in the construction of identity as a vegan consumer; vegans have knowledge about practice in the animal industry, but they will also have extensive knowledge of, for instance, ingredients of everyday foods, knowledge about what they can and can't eat to avoid animal products and this knowledge can be seen as part of the extended self.

Ending

Ending is a mode of moving meaning that involves the end of either the relation to the object, or the building of the relationship through ending the existence of the object either gradually or acutely. When the relation to an object that was part of the extended self is ended, voluntarily or through unwanted circumstances, consumers go through a process of disposition, what Young and Wallendorf (1989, p. 33) call 'the process of detachment from self'. McCracken (Grant McCracken, 1986) calls the actions related to disposition 'divestment rituals', and argues that they are used to purge meaning from goods. He explains that as individuals come to associate consumer goods and their meanings with their personal characteristics, possible confusion between consumer and consumer good ensues. The divestment rituals are used for two reasons; to clear

a previously owned consumer good of the meaning invested in it by the previous owner, or to empty a good that the consumer owns before throwing it out, giving it away or selling it. This is possible because items do not have an inherent meaning, they are polysemous. Different people can have similar consumption patterns, own the same consumer goods, but attach different meaning to them (Holt, 1997).

The purging of meaning is for instance done by redecorating a new home, erasing all the meaning the previous inhabitants had invested in it, or by cleaning and removing all personal items from a car before selling it. Lastovicka and Fernandez have found that there are instances in which consumers dispose of meaningful goods without going through these rituals fully, purposefully retaining the meaning associated with the goods. This happens for instance when goods are being passed on to someone with whom the disposer discovers aspects of a shared identity, who they believe will attach the same meaning to the goods (Lastovicka & Fernandez, 2005, p. 820). Consumer behaviour around the process of disposition sheds light on the changing nature of identity, it shows that consumers can accept and reject meaningful goods into and from their extended self, changing their identity by doing so. This can be because of changes in other areas of life, such as in significant relationships, a new career path or a transition from one life-stage to the next. The reasons for wanting to disconnect with a meaningful good can also be related to the stage of the item, which Kopytoff (1986) argues goes through different phases in its lifetime, with different values being ascribed to it at different times of its existence. In the case of goods that are used up, either gradually by wear and tear, or acutely, in the case of consumables, Sartre describes the 'ending' mode of movement as destruction.

Sartre (2003 [1943]) argues that destruction is also a way of adding an object to the extended self. He argues that through the destruction the object become absorbed into self, and gives examples of 'every day destruction' that occurs when an item is used and wears out, or is used up, A pair of shoes that is worn in, and therefore partly destructed has become part of the extended self more than a new never-worn pair. And in the case of food, when it is eaten and absorbed in a very literal sense; the saying 'you are what you eat' reflects this

idea. Destruction is something that comes up often in moral consumption discourse, mostly in the context of how humankind's (over-)consumption habits are causing the destruction of the planet. The idea of destruction as a way of adding something to the extended self is also present in food discourse. Here notions of planetary destruction are combined with the widely accepted truism 'you are what you eat', making the body and the food someone chooses to put in it subject to a discourse that is deeply and sharply moral.

Consumption as a social sphere

Where the first part of this chapter has focussed on how morality and consumption related to the discourse of individualism, the following part of the chapter will focus on consumption as a social activity that takes place in the social sphere and will therefore look at the social context within which consumption takes place. The structure of the social has changed under the influence of the industrialisation that is associated with contemporary consumer culture. Both negative and positive effects on the lives of people within those structures have been asserted by academic and popular cultural texts. This part of the chapter sets out to give an overview of these texts and the relation between them. It then aims to show how there are multiple consumption discourses in contemporary consumer culture that relate morality and consumption to the social structure in different and largely under-acknowledged ways; through discourse on sacrifice and shopping, taste, minimalism, and finally: happiness.

Community vs. society

The fate of community 'in the wake of modernity, market capitalism, and consumer culture' (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001) is a common theme in both the academic and popular discourse on community. The changes in the way that the social is organised, away from smaller communities, towards larger scale societies, are often described in negative terms. Community, according to classical and contemporary sociologists alike, is under a state of threat. Organising the social into the structure of society rather than community has, according to many scholars, caused not just a loss of meaning and solidarity, but

ill health and large-scale pollution of the planet humanity shares. Society is a modern concept, and as Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) point out, 'the very idea of society was defined largely in opposition to community'. This opposition can be found in the work of classical sociologists such as Durkheim (1984 [1893]), with his concepts of mechanical and organic solidarity, in Tönnies's (2002 [1887]) writing on 'gemeinschaft und gesellschaft', which translates to community and society, and in the work of contemporary scholars like Putnam (2000), in the theory of bridging and bonding capital, which are concepts that relate to the way different types of communities are connected. In the previous chapter, in the discussion about conspicuous consumption, Veblen's (1904) work on business and industry was discussed and related to the two types of chrematistics that Aristotle defined, as discussed in the chapter on ideology. Veblen posed that industry's goal is to make goods, and the goal of business is to make money. He saw industry as able to contribute to the wellbeing of the community as a whole, and business as constructive of society, to the detriment of the solidarity found in community. He connected the inequality that business created to the perpetuation of the existence of the leisure class and their conspicuous consumption, a situation that he saw as immoral.

What these ways of thinking about community have in common, is that one of the two describes a traditional, familial, customary and often rural community with strong personal connections, and the other will concern a more mechanical, impersonal, often urban, even alienating environment in which people are only loosely tied together. The first of the two is nostalgically described as the preferred type. Small-scale community is seen as the more natural and 'grounded' way of living. The second described large-scale, rational and efficient society, characterised by loose personal ties and connections that are made through laws and regulations. Society is seen as a social structure in which a loss of connection, solidarity and meaning has occurred (Jameson, 1983; Lasch, 1991; Leiss, Kline, & Jhally, 1997; Marchand, 1985).

Academic and popular cultural consumer dystopias

Berger, Berger and Kellner (1974) describe modernity and its related rationalisation and disenchantment as causing the 'homeless mind': a state in

which individuals no longer have a solid structure of morality and community to guide them in structuring their lives. Gane (2002, p. 26) goes further; he concludes that without religion, meaning and values disappear from the public sphere. The sense of losing community has become a grand narrative of modernism and postmodernism, and consumer culture plays a large part in this narrative (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Barnett et al. (2005) state that there is *a 'long tradition of criticizing mass commodity consumption as a means of criticizing much wider objects such as capitalism, modernity, the materialism of popular culture and planetary destruction'* (Barnett et al., 2005, p. 12). Lasch (1991) for instance, has articulated the view that consumer culture is linked to a wider onset of hedonism and even cultural narcissism. He believed that in simpler times, *'advertising merely called attention to the product and extolled its advantages. Now it manufactures a product of its own: the consumer: perpetually unsatisfied, restless, anxious, and bored'* (Lasch, 1991, p. 72). Barber (2007) poses the idea that consumerism is the force behind what he calls the 'infantilisation of society', and Putnam's (2000) work on the individualisation of US society, *Bowling Alone*, explicitly points at consumer culture as a driver of the loss of community and civic engagement. Heath and Potter (2004, p. 98) assert that 'the critique of mass society has been one of the most powerful forces driving consumerism for the past forty years'.

The link between consumerism and the loss of community and associated meaning and solidarity is not limited to scholarship by any means. Popular culture has mirrored the pessimistic tones as long as they have been present in scholarly work. *Soylent Green* (Fleischer, 1973), for example, is a film based on a novel from the '60s by Harry Harrison. The film depicts a future in which the world has become overpopulated and polluted due to global warming. *High Rise* (Ballard, 1975) is a novel from the '70s, remade into a film in 2015 (Wheatley, 2015). The story is of a man who moves into a high rise on the edge of London, in which an image of a stratified society develops and descends into chaos when the lower, middle and higher floors start to feud with each other. *Blade Runner* (Scott, 1982) is an example from the '70s, with themes of technological development and the immoral use of corporate power. There are newer films that depict the narrative of modernity and the loose ties of rational and efficient

society as the cause of man's downfall as well. *In Time* (Niccol, 2011) is a film in which money is time, set in a dystopian future where people stop aging at 25. Minutes are the currency in this future, where 'the rich live forever and the poor die young'. In the young adult genre, the *Hunger Games* novels (Collins, 2012) and film series (Jacobson & Kilik, 2012) show the excesses of a highly unequal society as a spectacle in which children fight each other to the death. Illustrative of how uncontroversial the idea of consumption as damaging is. Even Disney's Pixar has a family-friendly dystopian animation in *Wall-E* (Stanton, 2008), the story of a little robot who is left behind to clean up the planet Earth after it has been destroyed by humanity's destructive consumption behaviour.

Consuming more, not less, for the greater good

Consumer culture is widely painted as both a result of and a cause for a supposed loss of meaning and morality, but there is also acknowledgement for the fact that the mass production and consumption that characterise consumer culture are in large part responsible for the prosperity of capitalist societies. They created the capital that was needed for the advances in science that have led to improved life expectancy and much higher living standards are a direct result of it. In this discourse, consumption may be seen as a private vice, but society as a whole benefits from high levels of it. These conflicting perspectives on morality consumption and the social context it takes place in frame academic and popular discourse on the subject. While they seemingly contradict each other in terms of how they see consumption in relation to 'the greater good', they are both founded in truth. It is undeniable that a consequence of industrialisation has led to a re-organisation of social structures, away from smaller 'community', towards larger scale 'society'. It is also hard to deny that mass production and consumption have led to a high living standard. This conflict of consumption as a private vice while simultaneously being of benefit to the public is as old as industrialisation itself. Mandeville's thinking on the subject, expressed in the following - now more than 300-year-old - poem, has formed a foundation for the work of authors such as Adam Smith.

*'So Vice is beneficial found,
When it's by Justice lopt, and bound;
Nay, where the People would be great,
As necessary to the State
As Hunger is to make 'em eat.*

*Bare Vertue can't make Nations live
In Splendour; they, that would revive
A Golden Age, must be as free,
For Acorns, as for Honesty.'*
(Mandeville, 1772)

These are the closing lines of Mandeville's 'Fable of the Bees', written in 1705. The fable is the story of a beehive in which the bees live a prosperous life. The bees however, are not content with the corruption in their hive, and God, to show them what they are asking for, rids the bees of all vice. The hive quickly loses its health and wealth, because as Mandeville argues above: 'Bare Vertue can't make Nations live' (Mandeville, 1772). It is a helpful reminder of the fact that modernity, with industrialisation and mass consumption, is not only the cause of changes in social structures, it is also the reason contemporary societies have the level of wealth they do, and most people living in them have food, housing and medicine of unprecedented quantity and quality available to them. The raising of life expectancy and living standards through, for instance, the availability of clean drinking water, sewers and the near eradication of serious childhood diseases through vaccines are related to modernity as much as the loosening of ties of traditional communities is. So while curbing consumption to ease the negative effects of modernity such as pollution and social disconnection is one way of thinking about morality and consumption, on the other side of that debate there are arguments that society, 'the greater good', is served by high levels of production and consumption.

Adam Smith (1994 [1776]) developed Mandeville's ideas in his *Wealth of Nations* a work that has had considerable impact on shaping the capitalist system that forms the basis for contemporary Western societies. It is perhaps best

known for the concept of the invisible hand, which states that while individuals within a society will work for their own personal gain, a secondary effect of this effort is that the wealth of that society in general grows as well. The individuals don't need to be working with the public good in mind. As Smith argues, they don't even need to be aware of the effect their work has on the public good. Smith's writing is characterised by an emphasis on self-interest and its role in economic relations. He describes the extensive and in his eyes natural occurrence of the division of labour in the capitalist system. In this system, all the actions that are necessary to produce a commodity, such as a coat, are so extensive and diverse that they can't possibly be known to any single person involved in the production or consumption of it. This means that people depend on others, but that 'it would be in vain to expect it from their benevolence only' (Smith, 1994, p. 15). Something should be offered in return; the butcher, the baker and the brewer should be pointed towards what is in it for them, they should not be expected to act out of the goodness of their own hearts. 'We address ourselves, not to their humanity, but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities, but of their advantages' (Smith, 1994, p. 15). Because he sees this as the natural order of things, he argues that government intervention has the potential to disturb the system, creating negative effects on the creation of wealth for society.

Consumption, in both Mandeville's and Smith's eyes, was not inherently moral. The alternative title of the 'Fable of the Bees' is 'Private vice, publick benefits,' and Smith's ideas echo this sentiment that consumption is a vice. Like Mandeville, who argues that vice is beneficial 'when it's by justice lopt, and bound,' Smith poses that self-interest will only serve society's public interest under certain created conditions (Smith, 2002 [1759]). He argues that for the free market to work effectively and for the benefit of society, a publicly-funded infrastructure and education system are necessary, and he believed that 'commercial society should be a moral economy in which self-interest was itself intimately tied to the welfare of others, and would be balanced by benevolence and justice (Sayer, 2003). Only when the moral foundation was taken care of, could the invisible hand work the way Smith predicted it would: to create a consumer society in which everyone would be better off.

Rooted in religion

The connections between morality, consumption and the social structure it takes place in are not just made in these relatively straightforward terms of 'consumption being either good or bad for society or community'. In the chapter about myth, Max Weber's theory about Protestantism having laid the foundation for the emergence of capitalism was discussed. It is relevant here again, as it gives another perspective on the connection between morality, community and consumption. Weber saw the roots of capitalism in orthodox religious community. While the emergence of capitalism was commonly thought of as a result of technological advances, Max Weber (2005 [1930]) opposed this technological determinism with a different theory. He combined the sociology of religion and sociology of economy to formulate a thesis in which religious morality set the scene for and propelled the emergence of the capitalist system. Where Marx saw religion as the opium of the masses, a distraction that made them tolerate their oppression instead of rising up against it, Weber argued that Protestantism, Calvinism in particular, created a mindset that would lay the foundation for the capitalist system's development. In Weber's theory, there are characteristics specific to Calvinism that created the circumstances for the birth of capitalism. The first is anxiety, created by Calvinists not knowing whether they will have a place in the afterlife. Unlike Catholics, who can repent and be forgiven by priests, Calvinists believe that God is the only one who decides whether they are part of the elect. Success in this world is an indicator of possibly being a chosen one, and working hard is a way to gain that success. The Protestant work ethic, Weber poses, is a result of anxiety. It is fuelled by the Calvinist belief that all work is holy, not just the work of nuns, monks, and priests. It doesn't matter what your occupation is, it is your calling and you are doing God's work. Doing your job well became a religious duty, and the wealthy were not exempt from working for the divine glory. The ascetic lifestyle that was expected meant that capital was accumulated, and rather than being spent on luxury, it was reinvested in businesses that continued to grow because of it.

Another characteristic of Protestantism that Weber theorised as being relevant to the emergence of capitalism is disenchantment. Protestantism denied the existence of miracles and turned to science for explanations of the natural

world. This in turn led to scientific advancement and the development of technologies that were used in the growing businesses. Weber also ties the decline of organised institutionalised religion to the birth of capitalism, connecting the rise of Protestantism to eventual secularisation. But with secularisation, the characteristics related to hard work did not disappear. This leads Weber to pose that

'The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order. This order is now bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production which to-day determine the lives of all the individuals who are born into this mechanism, not only those directly concerned with economic acquisition, with irresistible force' (Weber, 2005, p. 123)

A contemporary of Weber, Walter Benjamin, agreed with Weber that there was a continuing line between Christianity and capitalism, but unlike Weber he did not believe this was limited to Protestantism; he saw a role for other orthodox Christian movements too. More importantly, unlike Weber he did not see capitalism as having emerged from Christianity, he saw it as a transformation of Christianity into capitalism. Capitalism, in Benjamin's eyes, had become a new religion (Benjamin, 1996 [1921]). *'Capitalism essentially serves to satisfy the same worries, anguish and disquiet formerly answered by so called religion'* (Benjamin, 1996 [1921], p. 288). Where Weber saw disenchantment, Benjamin saw a transfer of enchantment from the religious to the commercial realm. He likened shops to churches, commenting on their similar structure and the way they were treated as sacral places (Benjamin, 1999, pp. 160, 408). Benjamin describes three characteristics of capitalism as religion, one of which is that it is endless, it has no limits, it is all-pervasive. This is something that certainly still holds; needs, regardless of whether they are defined as true or false are seen as the base of capitalism and they are endless, limitless. It is self-perpetuating. But in light of almost a hundred years of capitalism developing since Benjamin wrote his early thoughts, the other two characteristics show how capitalism is even more of a

religion than Benjamin had or could have foreseen. Benjamin describes capitalism as cultish, as not having dogma. I would argue that capitalism has developed not just dogma, but several doctrines. Like all major religions it has developed into different fractions with different doctrines in different geographies and cultures. The capitalism of a working-class black single mother from inner-city Chicago is going to be different from the interpretation of capitalism of a middle-class French married woman living in a suburb of Cannes. But they are both subject to capitalism nonetheless.

The other characteristic Benjamin adds is that capitalism is the first cult to create guilt rather than atonement. It is important to note here that in Benjamin's native language German, the word for guilt is '*shuld*', which is also the word for debt in the financial sense (Weidner, 2010). The ambiguity created by the two meanings adds an extra layer to the meaning of this claim. Capitalism does indeed create financial debt, but the other meaning of the word *shuld*, guilt, is relevant too. It does create guilt, as a significant part of consumption discourse is about modernity and the ill effects on society and the planet it has had, and continues to have. From this perspective, ethical consumption, as a reflexive reaction to modernity and its mass industrialisation and mass consumption can be theorised to be the atonement that Benjamin did not see. According to Beck (Beck, 1992, p. 22), reflexive modernisation is a reaction of modernity to modernity, where the 'unknown and unintended consequences come to be a dominant force in society'. Modernity, he says, is a social system in which man is concerned with making nature useful, or with releasing mankind from traditional constraints. It is concerned with techno-economic development. Reflexive modernisation is, in Beck's words, a 'radicalisation of modernity, which breaks up the premises and contours of industrial society and opens paths to another modernity' (Beck, Giddens, & Lash, 1994, p. 3).

Beck theorises two stages of reflexive modernisation. In the first, the dangers of modernity are produced but do not yet become public issues. In the second, 'the dangers of industrial society become a dominant feature of public discourse as well as private debates and conflicts, and consequently certain features of industrial society become socially and politically problematic' (Beck et al., 1994, p. 5). During this second stage, society is largely organised according

to the principles of what Beck calls the 'first modernity'; the industrial society in which mass (over-)production is a central feature, but where the norms that organisations are measured by, are increasingly the result of the tendency of self-criticism that characterises the second stage of reflexive modernisation. Organisations are now for instance judged by their care for the environment, their actions around animal welfare and the labour conditions of their employees and people in their supply chain. Ethical consumption can be seen as capitalism's atonement for modernity's sins of pollution and the creation of inequality. It often also aims to atone for the 'sinful' loss of community and solidarity to society and efficiency.

The morality of sacrifice and shopping

An important characteristic of conspicuous consumption is that a higher priced item will be coveted more than a product of equal use or beauty, exactly because it is worth more. When the point is to show that you have a lot to spend, the more expensive object lets you make that point better. The £35,900 Tiffany & Co earrings mentioned in the previous chapter are an excellent example of this. Bataille (1985, p. 119) discusses this phenomenon, arguing that the immense value the jewels represent, and the loss incurred to purchase them, is what gives them their function. Their function is sacrifice.

Bataille argues against the existence of a useful distinction between true and false needs, and instead proposes a categorisation based on the goal of consumption. The first category is consumption that is productive, which constitutes of the use of products to produce what is necessary for the continuation of life and what individuals need to be able to be productive in a given society. The second category is what he calls unproductive expenditure; it consists of games, arts, luxury, but also includes expenditures such as mourning and war. Unproductive expenditure has expenditure as its goal, it is not a means to an end. Expenditures that fall in this category have in common that the loss incurred must be as 'great as possible for it to take on its true meaning' (Bataille, 1985, p. 118).

From the perspective of the (Western) economy as a rational system, based on the premise of creation of profit, of increasing of value, it does not make

sense for loss to be a goal. But Bataille poses that not the creation of profit, but loss has been a base for the circulation of wealth in primitive societies. The contemporary economic system is not, he argues, pre-dated by a system of barter but is instead based on an archaic form of exchange identified by Mauss, who called it 'potlatch', a name borrowed from American native tribes whose practice of the system he found emblematic (Bataille, 1985, p. 121). Put very simply, potlatch is a sequence of gift giving, with the goal of 'humiliating, defying and obligating a rival' (Bataille, 1985, p. 121). The only way to avoid or negate this humiliation is to return a gift of greater value at a later date. Giving to the living is not the only way in which potlatch is possible, it also works by the destruction of one's own property, theoretically donating it to a rival tribe's mythical ancestors. Examples of the practice include the actions of a chief from a North American native tribe the Tlingit, who slashed the throats of his own slaves in front of his rival, who then at a later date reciprocated by doing the same, but to a greater number of slaves. Other examples include the burning down of villages and the destruction of property such as canoes.

The practice of potlatch is linked to festivals, either because it is done on the occasion of personal milestones such as weddings or funerals, or because the potlatch itself is the occasion of the festival. There are examples of spending on these milestones with loss as a goal throughout the ages and from places from all over the world. Trentmann (2016, pp. 48-49) describes how in the late 16th century, the rich salt merchants of Yhangzou were involved in a fierce competition for social status by means of out-spending each other on increasingly extravagant funerals and weddings. The same thing is recorded to have happened in Italy, to a point where local governments put limits on spending on weddings (Trentmann, 2016). These types of laws, sumptuary laws, are used to manage consumption in societies, and they can be seen as an acknowledgement that consumption is not an individual matter, but a concern of society as a whole. In this case the spending was curtailed so weddings wouldn't be put off for too long, which in a society where unwedded couples were not supposed to have children, could eventually threaten the survival of that society. The practice of potlatch can still be recognised in contemporary practices. Weddings are notorious for their high cost; with the average wedding in the UK

costing upwards of £27,000 and rising every year (Hayward, 2014), the link between unproductive expenditure and milestone celebrations can still be seen clearly in today's consumption practices. Ethical consumption choices such as fairtrade or organic items, or products from ethical brands such as TOMS, which are more expensive than their non-ethically branded equivalent products might be, have an element of this type of sacrifice as well.

Daniel Miller argues that sacrifice plays a role in contemporary consumption practices, not just in festivals and milestone celebrations, or by paying more for diamonds or organic apples, but in everyday shopping. In his anthropological study of shopping in a North London street, he found evidence for his theory that all every day shopping is sacrifice. For Miller, consumption and sacrifice are both the spending of something that has been produced. In consumption, it is the spending of money that has been earned, in sacrifice it is the destruction of something that is the result of work; for instance the growing of fruit or the raising of animals. Miller departs from Bataille's views on the subject in his idea that not destruction, but saving, or rather thrift is what makes every day shopping into an act of sacrifice. Thrift, he argues, is not the result of rational economic considerations, it is seen as an action that is good in itself, and is practiced by consumers of all levels of wealth and poverty. Thrift makes shopping into an experience of saving, of the perception of spending less than one could have. The goal of the practice of thrift, Miller argues, is to strengthen the household by keeping resources available within it.

'Thrift is instrumental in creating the general sense that there is some more important goal than immediate gratification, that there is some transcendent force or future purpose that justifies the present deferment. In the absence of any belief in a deity, thrift transcends particular relationships and rises to a higher level that evokes something above and beyond their immediacy' (Miller, 1998, p. 104)

Miller theorises another stage in sacrifice that he also sees in consumption: the desacralisation of that which has been sacrificed, which is the eating of the sacrificial goods, either by priests, or others in the community. The order in which these once sacred goods are consumed establishes a hierarchy, fulfilling

one of sacrifice's functions of sanctifying social order. Miller poses that one of the critiques of consumption is that it establishes a social order between those who produce, and those who consume. Another way in which everyday consumption creates social relations does not necessarily result in a hierarchy but in the imagining, and often idealising, of social roles ('the husband,' 'the daughter,' 'the son') and the relationships between these roles as imagined by the shopper. By choosing items for the people in their household, balancing their preferences and that which the shopper believes they should want, or what they believe is best for them, the shopper constructs these relationships in this everyday act. This is similar to the process of sharing discussed in the chapter about individualism and the shaping of identity; in the act of giving, the giver communicates something about their image of the receiver, and can communicate values that they believe the receiver could or should have. In traditional religious sacrifice, the relationship that is imagined, idealised and created is with a deity. In shopping the relationship created is with the household. Advertisers, while not likely aware of Miller's theory of shopping as sacrifice, do recognise that most shoppers provide for others, and will target consumers in their relationship to others (Baudrillard & Poster, 1975). Both notions of sacrifice, that of waste and that of thrift, have in common that they are seen to create social relationships.

Taste communities

Social class still forms an important part of how society is ordered. More recent empirical research has shown that the strong correlations between consumption choices and class are changing. Where Bourdieu's research showed that upper class consumption strongly favoured high-brow cultural consumption and working classes favoured popular culture, several scholars (e.g. Eijck, 2001; Ollivier, Van Eijck, & Warde, 2008) have demonstrated that diversity of taste, or cultural omnivorism, is also a way in which some actors make a distinction. Another way in which social class as a field is changing positions in the field of society as a whole is that, as Sassatelli (Sassatelli, 2007) points out, in addition to social class, identity, lifestyle and subcultures have become relevant fields as well, in the form of 'consumption' or 'brand communities'. These consumption-based fields are strongly linked to class, but can be analysed as having their own

logic and structure. Consumption and brand communities are very diverse, ranging from a farmers market where a community of sellers and customers emerges for a few hours on a given day in the month or week, brought together by shared values relating to for instance organic, production, animal rights or traditional craft food preparation or support of the local economy (Szmigin, Maddock, & Carrigan, 2003), to an online community of Harry Potter fans who discuss fandom-related subjects with each other in forums without ever meeting in real life.

Consumption and brand communities are often imagined communities, in which the members don't know each other but identify with the other based on imagined shared values and identities (B. R. Anderson, 1995). Muniz and O'Guin (2001) define brand communities as having a shared consciousness, rituals and traditions and a sense of moral responsibility towards the community and its members. Brand communities can emerge from consumer efforts, but increasingly, brands are seeing the commercial opportunities that a brand community can bring them, and are making efforts to create communities around their brands and products. The brand TOMS is a good example of a brand that actively aims to create a brand community, the 'TOMS tribe'. The social aspect of their business model of giving a pair of shoes away for every pair bought differentiates the brand from other commercial brands. As a result they are able to attract customers who already share certain values and morals; who share a habitus. Through communicating with their customers through social media, encouraging participation in community events, off- and online, and by calling their shops 'community outposts', TOMS constructs the narrative of a community in their marketing.

In a process similar to how habitus naturalises elements of history and culture, all fields, including consumption-based ones, are subject to 'doxa', or 'that which is taken for granted'. In Bourdieu's words, 'every established order tends to produce (to very different degrees and with very different means) the naturalization of its own arbitrariness' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 164). Habitus and field therefore interact to create a context for consumption in which morality is not readily recognisable, as it presents social norms, culture and morality as to a large degree 'just the way things are'. In consumption based fields, where

advertisers have a marked influence on the positions and relations in the field, the idea of 'just the way things are' is often evoked, for instance by allusions to a product's naturalness ('no additives', 'for that natural feeling' 'all natural ingredients'), or by invoking a brand's long history ('a recipe in use since 1867'). Advertising that speaks of authenticity, through for instance naturalness, rootedness in a geographic region or a long history, aims to invoke a sense of 'this is just the way things are', creating a space for morality to exist in consumer culture without being recognised as explicitly moral.

This aspect of being taken for granted is also an essential part of how the morality of a field is enforced. Gender and class relations are largely kept in place by what Bourdieu calls 'symbolic violence; the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 167). McRobbie's (2004) work on make-over shows like 'What Not to Wear' shows a good example of symbolic violence in consumer culture. In this show, the two fashionable presenters change a willing participant's wardrobe, make-up and hairstyle, all the while ridiculing them and pointing out, on national television, how the way they dressed was not good enough. Often, the participant is working-class, voluntarily subjecting themselves to the middle-class habitus of the presenters. This acknowledges that habitus as more powerful than their own and cements the morality associated with it as dominant.

The morality of minimalism

'Lagom': it says on the IKEA website (2017), under a picture of a family sitting in the grass, a mother and father with their two young daughters and a dog, looking out over a forest landscape in the warm colours of the evening sun. The story continues:

'It's a simple Swedish philosophy on everyday life that means 'just the right amount'. We believe it's what living a rewarding but responsible life is all about: not denying yourself or sacrificing what you love, while not taking from the planet more than you need. It's just the right amount whether that's food, energy, water or waste. We think it's an idea with the power to change the way people feel about sustainability. To learn how to make a sustainable life at home affordable and easy

to achieve we created our Live LAGOM project, helping our customers and co-workers to make simple lifestyle changes.'

IKEA's 'Live Lagom' project fits in well with the trend of companies getting on the ethical consumption bandwagon. And at first glance, this is a straightforward appeal to ethical consumers, presenting IKEA as an ethical consumption choice. The sentence *'not denying yourself or sacrificing what you love, while not taking from the planet more than you need'* makes it clear that 'using just the right amount' is an appeal to use less, the assumption being that in the current situation, too much is used or wasted. The overt morality in the Live Lagom project is the connection it makes to the environment; using less is more sustainable; *We think it's an idea with the power to change the way people feel about sustainability.* There are a few opportunities for valid critiques of this project. A mass producer and retailer like IKEA promoting the idea of less consumption seems paradoxical and can easily be seen as an attempt to green-wash, or a tokenistic effort to tap into a consumption trend. On the surface the connection to morality is just that; it is morally good because it is an appeal to consume less, or morally bad because the appeal is drowned out by the effect of the mass production by the organisation making it.

A little deeper under the surface, the introduction to the Live Lagom project connects morality to community and consumption in a familiar way; by separating the individual and their social context from each other, and placing them at odds with each other. Lagom is presented as solving a tension between what the individual wants, *'not denying yourself or sacrificing what you love'*, and what their social context needs; *'while not taking from the planet more than you need'*. Lagom is presented as the middle ground between these opposites, as creating a balance between them; it's *'just the right amount'*. In connecting Live Lagom to the notion of an individual's needs, it becomes embedded in the moral discourse around needs, which as the previous chapter has shown, has at its foundation the millennia old framing of consumer 's needs and desires as inherently immoral because they are damaging to society, a discourse in which a focus on material wealth is seen to detract and distract from the 'greater good'. The discourse underlies ethical consumption choices such as the ones IKEA

appeals to, to use less energy, less water, and to create less waste, and initiatives such as 'buy nothing new month', in which people are encouraged to try not to spend on anything new for a month. Adbusters promoted the project 'buy nothing day' on Black Friday, as a reaction to the shopping-mania that shops encourage on the day after Thanksgiving in the US.

This discourse is also linked to trends such as 'minimalism' where individuals aim to own as few material goods as possible, sometimes dramatically downsizing their living space, sometimes taking steps towards living off grid and disconnecting at least partly from consumer society. It was discussed in the previous chapter in the context of conspicuous consumption; living with very few material possessions is easier to do for wealthy consumers who would be able to re-buy items they regret parting with later on. These trends are gaining attention in popular media as the subject of documentaries, TV-series, books and numerous blogs. A popular author on the subject is the Japanese 'organising consultant' Marie Kondo (Kondo, 2014, 2016). With her books in numerous global bestseller lists, she was named one of TIME's 100 influential people in 2015 (Green, 2016). The KonMari method, as her de-cluttering strategy is called, encourages individuals to organise their home with only the things that 'spark joy' left in them. Her approach is rigorous, and readers that follow the method will end up throwing many of their possessions out. While there is a growing popular cultural interest in the phenomenon, the trend of consumers moving away from the material is not new. Postmaterialism, as Inglehart (R. Inglehart, 1981; R. Inglehart & Abramson, 1999; R. F. Inglehart, 2008) calls this move, has been increasing since he started measuring it in the 1970s. Consumption choices such as minimalism, in the shape of de-cluttering or of choosing simpler, self-sufficient living spaces are partly based in the discourse in which needs and desires are immoral because they are bad for the community.

They are also informed by another discourse that connects consumption and morality through the notions of society and community; one that has origins in, and is well illustrated by, the story of the ancient Greek philosopher Diogenes. Diogenes was known for walking the streets of Athens with a lantern in daylight, claiming to be looking for an honest man (Shea, 2010). He never believed he succeeded (Diogenes & Hicks, 1925). Civil society, he argued, was regressive, and

the only moral way of living was to return to live as close to nature as man could. He believed that society and its norms were inherently immoral and he lived by his beliefs; he defecated in the theatre, masturbated in public and urinated on people that asked him to behave properly. He lived in a barrel in the market place, with little to no material possessions. When he saw a boy drink from his cupped hands, Diogenes threw away his only wooden bowl, calling himself a fool for not realising that he had been carrying excess baggage until that moment (Diogenes & Hicks, 1925). An ascetic lifestyle, for Diogenes, was not moral because it was a way of helping society or the community; it was moral because it was a way of rejecting it. From this perspective, rejection of material goods is a rejection of society's norms and through it, society's power over consumers. When people say they want to de-clutter to 'recapture their free-spirited nature' (Masters, 2017), there is an under-acknowledged morality that underlies it, echoing Diogenes' perspective on materialism.

It should be noted that postmaterialism or minimalism are by no means the end or even the beginning of the end of consumerism (Wallman, 2015). For one, part of how minimalism works is the ample availability of goods. People can throw things out when they know that if they ever wanted that (type of) object again, they could go and re-buy it if necessary. Minimalism does however signal a change in consumption with a connection to underlying, under-acknowledged forms of morality. The change is not a move away from consumption, but a move away from consumption of material goods, towards non-material consumption such as the kind of consumption Pine and Gilmore (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, 2014) describe in their work on the experience economy. They see an increasing emphasis on the consumption of experience over the consumption of material goods. Tourist attractions, theme parks, zoos, spas, festivals, coffee bars, restaurants and ride-sharing services such as Uber sell experiences, either exclusively or in addition to their physical products. Brands use the principles of the experience economy to add value to their products, by having a solid brand narrative. TOMS adds the experience value of being charitable, Hilton of luxury and indulgence and IKEA offers the experience of temperance, by consuming 'just the right amount'.

Happiness in consumer culture

The concept of happiness has been defined differently throughout history, and all these different perspectives have left their mark on what is seen as happiness in contemporary consumer culture. What the different historical conceptions of happiness have in common is that they all link happiness to morality in some way. Happiness and morality have been profoundly linked to each other for thousands of years, so it is not surprising to find that when consumers strive for happiness in consumer culture, that morality plays a strong, albeit under-acknowledged role in it.

The goal of living a virtuous life, according to Plato and Aristotle, is to reach what they called Eudaimonia (Aristotle, 2009; Plato & Lee, 2003). Eudaimonia is most commonly translated to English as happiness, sometimes with a caveat that it doesn't have exactly the same meaning as happiness in the contemporary use of the word. Eudaimonia means happiness in the sense of well-being, or human flourishing and has connotations of joy, but not an association with the perhaps more hedonistic pleasure the word can be used to describe in English today (Sellars, 2006, p. 123). In fact, Aristotle argued that 'pleasure' could potentially be detrimental to reaching the type of true happiness that living a virtuous life would bring. For Aristotle, happiness was not a static state to reach, but an activity; happiness is something you do, rather than something you have (Aristotle, 2009, p. 192). Living a virtuous life and reaching Eudaimonia is a goal in itself, unlike all other possible activities, which Aristotle argues will always have Eudaimonia as their eventual goal. Happiness through living a virtuous life therefore, can be seen as the highest goal, desirable for its own sake. Everything else is desirable for the sake of happiness (Aristotle, 2009, p. 192). Happiness, Plato and Aristotle argued, is within human control, as it is in a person's power to choose between virtuous and vicious actions, only virtuous actions will lead to happiness (Aristotle, 2009, p. 46). The virtues that Plato and his student Aristotle defined, *Wisdom, Justice, Courage and Temperance*, have been described as the foundation for European morality, very eloquently by Whitehead, who wrote: 'The safest general characterisation of the European philosophical tradition, is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato'

(Whitehead, 1929, part 2, ch. 1, sec. 1). This chapter will aim to show how these values continue to be the foundation of morality in consumer culture.

Aristotle argued that wisdom, or prudence, forms a foundation for all the virtues, because a person needs wisdom to judge what the right and fair thing to do will be in different contexts. Aristotle distinguished between practical and philosophical wisdom, relating philosophical wisdom to things that can't be changed and need to be accepted for what they are, and practical wisdom to things that a person does have influence over. Sartre argued that knowledge is one of the ways in which consumers incorporate goods and their values into the self. For him, knowing, like doing, is reducible to having; knowledge is something one has. 'The known is transformed into me; it becomes my thought and thereby consents to receive its existence from me alone' (Sartre, 2003 [1943], p. 599). The virtue wisdom can be recognised in the case studies that have been done in the previous chapters. Education for children living in poverty, as the previous chapter has shown, is a key part of the TOMS narrative. There is no 'natural' link between wisdom and shoes; TOMS has successfully created it. And in food discourse, knowledge plays an important role throughout. An example is the practical knowledge needed by vegans, who need extensive and detailed knowledge of foods and production methods to be able to adhere to their chosen diet.

The other three virtues the eudaimonist philosopher defined build on the practical wisdom from this virtue. They rely on his concept of the golden mean, which denotes the right balance between two extremes. The virtue justice for instance, is the mean between being selfish, and being selfless. Justice, in Aristotle's eyes, means that each person gets their due, no one should get more than they deserve according to their merit, however merit is decided, and no one should receive less than they deserve by those same standards. Justice also applies to righting wrongs, when two parties enter a contract and only one party honours it, justice is served when the other party rights the wrong and gives the other party what they are due according to the contract. Justice is about people receiving what they fairly deserve, not less, but also not more (Aristotle, 2009, book V). Aristotle's ideas about justice are the foundation of how justice is thought of in consumer culture. They apply to the concept of meritocracy, where

reward is linked to merit and how this is seen as the fairest way to distribute consumer power. It is also the basis for the sustainability discourse that is an important part of consumption discourse. The discourse of sustainable consumption has at its heart the idea that some consumers are using an unequal portion of the earth's limited resources, and that particular consumer behaviour is seen as an injustice. A so-called 'green' lifestyle that aims to minimise the use of these shared resources is seen as moral.

When defining courage, Aristotle looks to find the balance between over-confidence and cowardice. This means that courage is not characterised by fearlessness, because that leads to rashness. Instead, courage comes from being aware of danger, while having the wisdom and confidence to face it (Aristotle, 2009, p. 49). The previous chapter has already shown examples of how the virtue courage is part of consumption discourse. The TOMS narrative includes view of their customers as adventurous, linking their products to 'off the beaten track' travel, and the act of giving shoes to those less fortunate is described as instilling confidence in the recipients, as empowering.

Lastly, temperance, the fourth virtue, applies when a person has control over their cravings and impulses. A temperate person will not just have a level of self-control, but will not feel the same displeasure as what Aristotle calls a self-indulgent person will feel when that which they crave is unavailable to them. A temperate person will crave things that are wholesome and healthy, a self-indulgent person will crave that which is not 'good' for them (Aristotle, 2009, p. 58). The moral virtue temperance is a big part of consumer culture's discourse of health, specifically in relation to food. It is a discourse that defines, partly based on facts and partly based on moral ideas, what people should and shouldn't crave, by using words such as 'real', 'wholesome' and 'natural' to describe what is seen as good, and 'junk', 'artificial' and 'processed' to describe bad foods. Consuming healthy, 'wholesome' foods is seen as morally good, eating unhealthy junk food is seen as morally reprehensible.

The discourse is based on actual facts, unprocessed vegetables are an objectively healthier choice than processed microwave lasagne that is filled with saturated fats and sodium, but the discourse goes beyond facts and into a moral realm when the effects of eating bad foods are discussed as creating 'disgusting'

bodies. Detoxing is another example of going beyond the facts and into the domain of morality. Detoxing can be seen as a consumption ritual, in which consuming only 'good' foods, will lead to an elimination of the 'bad', the 'toxic' from the body. The body does not have a biological need nor ability to do this in this way, it is purely a moral consumption ritual, in a manner similar to the rituals Mary Douglas has observed and described in her anthropological work on taboos (Douglas, 2002).

Other philosophers in ancient Greece followed in Plato and Aristotle's footsteps when it came to conceptions of virtue and happiness, but developed their foundational notions into their own. The Cynics, the ancient school of thought of which Diogenes was a prominent member, had a more extreme interpretation of what temperance meant. Diogenes (1925), as discussed in the chapter about community, saw living with as few goods as possible as the most virtuous life. His rejection of materialism was a way of reaching happiness. This idea is also evident in the contemporary consumer cultural trends of minimalism, and of the 'experience economy'. Both these trends are a rejection of material goods and have a focus on consuming experiences instead. The consumption discourse on travel, for instance, is rife with references to the idea that 'you can't buy happiness, but you can buy a plane ticket and that's kind of the same thing'. The underlying notion is that it is not so much consumption itself that can't lead to happiness, it is that the consumption of the material can't lead to happiness. The consumption of experience however, such as a visit to the theatre, a theme park, a tropical beach, Pompeii, or the Serengeti, can and does lead to happiness.

Diogenes' contemporaries, the Stoics, formed a philosophical school that strongly agreed with Aristotle in his idea that virtue alone is sufficient for happiness, and they adopted the Cynic idea that that to live in accordance with nature, with little to no material goods was the best way of achieving it (Sellars, 2006, p. 5). For the Stoics, living a virtuous life is not only the sole way to happiness, it is also the only thing with which a person should concern themselves (Sellars, 2006, p. 122). Sellars sums up their position as 'if you want to be happy and to live well, then you should try to become virtuous, for only virtue can bring you happiness' (2006, p. 123). What defines the Stoic philosophy

is their emphasis on the importance of the internal over the external, to a point that they argue that all external objects and states of affairs are neither good nor bad, and outside of people's control and should therefore be of indifference to them. This indifference protects a person from negative emotions caused by assumptions made about what others may think or mean by their behaviour, making one 'impervious to the whims of fate and fortune' (Sellars, 2006, p. 133). The Eudaimonist philosophers that have been discussed in these paragraphs believed strongly that happiness is within human reach, within human power to obtain in this life rather than an after-life, if this life is lived with wisdom, courage, justice and temperance. These same values, and even the idea that materialism can't lead to happiness, are still central in contemporary consumer culture, as the case study of travel guide books brand Lonely Planet will illustrate.

Scripting happiness

Throughout history, happiness, whether that is on earth or in a hypothetical afterlife, was seen as attainable by leading a morally sound life. The early middle ages saw a focus on happiness in the afterlife (Aquinas, 1915; Augustine, 2015), but during the period of the enlightenment, scholars such as Locke (1979 [1681]), Bentham (1996 [1781]) and Rousseau (1979) put the achievement of happiness on earth firmly into human hands, but the connection to living a moral life remained. They differ from earlier thinkers about morality and happiness, in that they did not just see happiness as within human control, they saw morality as a social construct rather than something set in stone by natural or divine laws. Contemporary scholars such as Baudrillard and Ahmed have pointed towards negative effects this sense of control over morality and happiness has for Western societies. Baudrillard argues that societies have aimed to use their sense of control over good and evil, to promote good and banish evil, with what he sees as catastrophic results. An important way in which societies aim to banish evil plays out in consumer culture, in what Baudrillard sees as the transformation of good and evil into happiness and misfortune (Baudrillard, 2005; Pawlett, 2014). By making evil into misfortune, it is turned into a solvable problem. 'Evil' just is. 'Misfortune' on the other hand, can be helped. Consumer

culture presents consumers with a range of solutions for a wide variety of misfortunes of more or less serious natures. There are creams for smaller misfortunes such as acne, and Fairtrade coffee pertains to help alleviate the misfortune of global inequality. Misfortune has been commodified in consumer culture in more ways, for instance in the compensations paid out by states, perpetrators and insurance companies for misfortunes such as crimes and accidental injuries or loss of life (Baudrillard, 2005).

It is often said that happiness is not for sale. A lesson from the chapter about ideology in this thesis is relevant here; it does not matter that this is what people say they believe. If people all act as if happiness is for sale, then that is what the ideology created through practice is. With Baudrillard's argument about misfortune added to this ideology, it can be said that not only is happiness for sale, the avoidance of misfortune has a set price as well. Baudrillard (2005) poses that 'the conversion of evil into misfortune, is the twentieth century's finest industry'. He describes it as 'endlessly profitable: it is a goldmine with a seam running through each of us' (Baudrillard, 2005, p. 145). Baudrillard challenges the consumer cultural idea that it would be preferable or even possible to rid the world of evil. He suggests that the loss of either good or evil would be baneful and dangerous (Baudrillard, 2005, p. 139); good, without evil to keep it in check, would tend towards control, order and totalisation, it needs evil as a symbolic form to 'prevent it from hardening into tyranny' (Pawlett, 2014). In consumer culture this tyranny can be recognised in the obligation to be happy, or to at least 'show all the signs of happiness' (Baudrillard, 2005) at all times. Baudrillard notes how this obligation is closer to immorality than to morality (Pawlett, 2014). Ahmed writes about the same obligation that happiness forms in contemporary culture. With happiness under human control, there is also an expectation of responsibility for it and, like in ancient times, morality plays a part in how happiness should be reached. Where Aristotle argued that happiness would be the result of living a *good* life, defined by the morals justice, temperance, courage and wisdom, Ahmed argues that happiness in contemporary culture is seen as the result of living the *right* life.

Happiness, Ahmed argues, 'involves a form of orientation: the very hope for happiness means we get directed in specific ways, as happiness is assumed to

follow from some life choices and not others' (Ahmed, 2010, p. 54). Her analysis of tropes such as the 'feminist killjoy', the 'unhappy queer' and the 'melancholic migrant', groups that challenge societal norms are constructed as unhappy, even when they themselves report happiness. 'True' happiness is ascribed to those who 'fit in', to those who follow what she calls the right 'happiness scripts'. These scripts can be gender or, for instance, race scripts, which provide 'a set of instructions for what women and men must do in order to be happy, whereby happiness is what follows being natural or good' (Ahmed, 2010, p. 59). Happiness scripts serve to preserve the status quo rather than to give happiness to the people following them. Ahmed argues that 'going along with happiness scripts is how we get along: to get along is to be willing and able to express happiness in proximity to the right things (Ahmed, 2010, p. 59). Under these conditions, happiness becomes more of a societal straitjacket than an ultimate life goal.

Consumer culture has its own happiness scripts that inform people how to be happy consumers, and what kind of happiness is worth striving for. These scripts often illustrate Baudrillard's argument that consumer culture is premised largely on the goal of eliminating misfortune and promoting happiness. Examples of consumer scripts include monthly magazines in which readers are encouraged to lose weight, exercise, socialise, dress well, practise self-care, meditate, use the latest technology, and learn how to bake and decorate elaborate cakes. Some of these scripts are life-stage specific, such as the multitude of magazines aimed at brides to be. Travel guidebooks are a good example of consumer happiness scripts. Their goal is to help those who consume 'travel', or travel consumers, to avoid misfortune. A well-prepared traveller will be able to avoid small misfortunes such as missing out on an attraction worth visiting, or bigger misfortunes such as ending up in trouble with the law in a land where the laws are different from where they call home. Travel guides are happiness scripts in that they construct a version of happiness and lay out the route to that happiness, they specify the behaviours necessary to become a happy travel consumer. In the final chapter of this thesis, the case study of the travel guide brand Lonely Planet will illustrate how happiness and morality are connected and constructed in consumer culture.

Research Design

To show how morality is constructed and perpetuated in both explicit and under-acknowledged ways in consumer culture, I have done several case studies. Two case studies make up chapters of their own, one on the so called 'one for one' brand TOMS, and one on the travel publisher 'Lonely Planet'. A third chapter, on food discourse, consists of several smaller studies, on the Fairtrade Foundation and the Rainforest Alliance, Innocent's Big Knit campaign and the Kirkstall Deli Market. These were chosen because they represent a range of how explicit they are in their ethical goals. The Fairtrade Foundation and the Rainforest Alliance exist purely as ethical consumption organisations and do not have profit goals. TOMS is a company that is outspoken about both its social and commercial goals, making it an interesting case when looking at the interaction between morality and consumption. The Big Knit is a campaign run by the smoothie company Innocent, which is owned by Coca Cola, which means that it is a social campaign by a company that is explicit in its profit goals, and often criticised for the ways they prioritise profit over social goals. The Kirkstall Deli Market case study allows for an investigation of aspects of consumption that can be seen as associated with ethical consumption, such as local consumption, embedded in a consumption narrative that at the surface seems broader and more mainstream. Lonely Planet has explicitly social elements to their narrative in their encouragement for ethical and sustainable travel, but these are not their primary focus. The cases also represent a range of consumption types, with food being a firm part of everyday consumption, shoes being not a daily but still a regular type of consumption, and leisure travel, which most consumers will regard as a more rare consumption opportunity.

I used semiotic analysis on the texts, which consisted of images, written text, both digital and printed materials and a physical environment. Semiotic analysis looks beyond the manifest meanings of what is written or depicted; it is used to analyse the latent meanings of texts. It is based in a constructivist tradition that assumes that discourse is not merely descriptive but that it is formative of our social reality (Maxwell, 2013; Tonkiss, 1998). After gathering the materials per case study, I created lists of connotations and denotations in the categories context, picture quality composition ('reading' direction), camera

position, photographic characteristics like focus, sharpness, and lighting, colour, subjects in the foreground and lastly the background. For written texts, the content of the text was analysed alongside its context, tone of voice and visual presentation (Hall, 1975, p. 23). After creating these lists I added the connotations for each denotation and looked for relationships between connotations forming patterns relating to my theory (A. A. Berger, 2005).

The first case study chapter, on food discourse, is designed to answer three sub questions. For the first question, *How is moral responsibility to the global community constructed in food discourse?*, I analysed online marketing materials of the Fairtrade Foundation and the Rainforest Alliance and supplemented these with materials from brands that carry one of these labels or subscribe to a similar scheme. The materials were analysed and then compared to each other to explore the differences in how they construct moral responsibility to the global community.

The second question, *How is moral responsibility to the national/regional community constructed in food discourse?*, was answered using data created by several organisations and companies; such as the EU geographical protection scheme, the National Farmers Union, the Jamie Oliver brand, and a more in depth case study of the 'Big Knit' campaign by the smoothie company Innocent. An important part of the analysis of Innocent is to show that morality to the national/regional community is co-created in this discourse, in the interaction between the company and its consumers. To show this interaction I used social media data, specifically Instagram and Twitter data that is connected to the brand's ethical consumption campaign 'the Big Knit' by using posts that have at least one of the following hashtags related to the brand and the campaign: #innocent #innocentUK #innocentsmoothies #thebigknit #thebigknit2012 #thebigknit2013 #thebigknit2014 #thebigknit2015 #thebigknit2016 #thebigknit2017 #thebigknit2018.

The third and final sub-question of the chapter on food discourse is *How is moral responsibility to the local community constructed in food discourse?* This question was answered using a small case study of the local food market 'the Kirkstall Deli Market', and will include posts on Instagram and Twitter with at least one of the following hashtags: #kirkstalldeli #kirkstalldelimarket

#kirkstallmarket . To give an indication of scale, at the time of collecting, there were 347 posts on Instagram using #kirkstalldelimarket and 5,502 posts with #thebigknit. Twitter does not give exact numbers of tweets using a specific hashtag.

In the chapter on food discourse, I used social media data that was posted by consumers in addition to materials created by companies, and therefore applied for ethical approval. It was granted by the University with the reference number PVAR 17-073. The main ethical issue addressed in the application was that although the posts to social media are intended by the person posting them to be public, they did not post the information with the specific intention of academic research being done on them, and obtaining informed consent was not feasible in this study. This was addressed by the exclusion of posts that were intended for a limited public. My use of the data did not and will not make any personal information available that was not explicitly intended to be public by the person posting it. The already low risk of the observational study was reduced further by anonymising the data according to the guidelines set in the Data Protection Act and the university's Policy for Safeguarding Data.

The TOMS case study is an in depth study of the sub-question introduced in the second chapter: *How is morality constructed in the definition of needs in consumer culture?* For this chapter I analysed the UK website which includes their webshop, the blog, which is the same for every country they operate in, the event websites for their 'one day without shoes' and other online materials such as emailings and emails related to online orders. I also included printed materials, such as tags, cards, stickers, shoeboxes and bags and visited their UK shop in London, which they call a 'community outpost'. I included the physical environment of this shop in the analysis.

The third case study chapter is on the Lonely Planet. It examines a parallel between the way morality is shaped in religion and in consumer culture, through the sub-question; *What role does happiness play in the construction of morality in consumer culture?* The materials I used for the Lonely Planet case study consisted of three books, each from a different category. They included a country travel guide, specifically the Tanzania travel guide, a general travel book called 'The best things in life are free', and a book about happiness around the world.

Conclusion

The view that consumption's only function is to satisfy needs connects it to a moral discourse that is two millennia in the making. Throughout the ages it has accumulated negative moral judgements that are currently manifested in a discourse about the false desires created by advertising, and the damage this does to the planet. These false desires of consumer culture would leave consumers in a constant state of chasing after an unattainable happiness. The morality of the desires that are created in consumer culture can, should, and is questioned, but this chapter has shown that limiting investigations of consumer culture to this perspective oversimplifies consumer culture. Recognising it as a complex social space where what is seen as good and bad both exist, opens it up to possibilities for richer examinations. This chapter has shown that part of that complexity comes from the fact that consumers play an active role in shaping it, its ideology, its myth and its morality, in many different ways. Consumers should not be seen as passive or even defenceless victims of the desires created for them, their active role in the co-creation of not just their own identity, but that of consumer culture should be taken into account. The case study of the brand TOMS will explore how defining needs is a way in which morality is constructed in consumer culture.

The discourse on consumption in relation to its social context is complicated and can seem paradoxical. Overall, the deeply rooted tradition on framing consumption as inherently immoral means that mass consumption, and with that: mass production, are seen in a negative light. The industrialisation that made mass consumption possible is seen as having caused a loss of the traditional community, and a corresponding loss of meaning and solidarity in the social structure that has left humanity worse off. Industrialisation caused a move from smaller traditional communities to more efficiently organised society, in which the personal ties between people became looser. This is largely presented as a negative development in both the academic and the popular literature on modernity in general and consumer culture specifically. There is also acknowledgement of the fact that industrialisation and mass consumption and the ensuing re-organisation of groups of people as large-scale society rather than the smaller-scale community, have led to advances in science, medicine and to

unprecedented levels of wealth and health of individuals. In contemporary writing about consumer culture, there is a more nuanced view present, one that acknowledges that consumer culture, like any other culture, is made up of both the good and the bad. They are intricately connected as two parts of one whole, and it would be impossible to simply filter out the bad aspects to be left with some 'untainted good' (Barnett et al., 2005).

Other discourses connect morality, consumption and community by making the connection to religion, as Max Weber has done in his work on the emergence of capitalism from the Protestant work ethic. His contemporary Walter Benjamin compared elements of capitalism to characteristics of religion such as its endlessness, its variety of dogma and guilt and atonement. The comparison has arguably grown stronger since Benjamin's time; ethical consumption can be seen as a reflexive reaction to the negative effects of modernity, as atonement for the guilt that mass production and consumption create. Ethical consumption practices are framed as potential solutions to problems such as damage to the environment, global warming, poverty, or the suffering of animals. These problems are grounded in a moral conception of what the world should look like. By using consumption choices as a way to achieve this ideal reality, as atonement for its negative effects such as loss of meaning and solidarity through the loss of community, or the pollution caused by mass production, consumption becomes linked to morality. The following chapter, on food discourse will show how atonement is an important part of the construction of moral responsibility in food consumption discourse.

Ethical consumption is only one of those connections; there are more ways in which morality is shaped and manifested in consumption. This becomes clearer in more contemporary research into the sphere of consumption, in which this sphere is considered a space like any other, where what is seen as good and bad both exist, where morality is both manifested and shaped. This chapter has looked at three aspects of consumer culture in which morality plays an under-acknowledged role, shopping and sacrifice, taste and minimalism. In the section on shopping and sacrifice, the under-acknowledged role morality plays comes to the fore when the structure of religious sacrifice is applied to everyday shopping activities. It then becomes clear that the act of providing for a household shows

similarities with the act of traditional religious sacrifice, and that it results in creating social order, hierarchy, social positions and relationships. Another way of exploring consumption in a social context is minimalism, a style of consumption where consumers choose to consume less. This can be done for reasons related to what would usually be called ethical consumption, to put less strain on the environment for instance. Another way morality comes into a consumption choice such as minimalism is that it is a rejection of the power society can wield through material objects. Minimalism is not anti-consumption; it is a different style of consumption, where the emphasis is on consuming experiences rather than material goods. Lastly, this chapter has explored the historical link between the concept of happiness, morality and consumption, a link that will be shown in the case study of the travel publisher Lonely Planet. While morality is present overtly in discourse connecting morality and consumption, this chapter has shown additional under-acknowledged ways in which morality is shaped and manifested in consumer culture.

3. From Hatted Smoothies to Flat Cap Chefs: Moral Responsibility in Food Discourse

Food and food discourse can be found at the intersection of two discourses. On the one hand, food is deeply personal. Every mode of extending the self through consumption - sharing, appropriating, shaping, reflecting and ending - is relevant to it. The familiar truism 'you are what you eat' illustrates this well. Eating is done to satisfy one of the most basic biological needs. Hunger and its satisfaction are personal. On the other hand, food is also profoundly cultural. The social context in which this hunger is satisfied has great impact on when, how, with what, with and for whom an individual makes food consumption choices. The position of food discourse at this intersection makes it very relevant to the study of morality in consumer culture. It contains many different examples in which morality plays an acknowledged role, and many more in which morality is under-acknowledged.

In contemporary consumer culture, a simple trip to the supermarket can easily become an exercise in ethics. From Fairtrade to packaging, from animal welfare to food scares and 'super foods', examples of acknowledged morality in food discourse from even a simple weekly shop could fill a page. Where these were once seen as alternative, even 'fringe' options, all these moral choices are increasingly part of food discourse in contemporary consumer culture (D. Goodman, DuPuis, & Goodman, 2012). In addition to these acknowledged ways in which morality and food discourse interact, there is a discourse that is largely under-acknowledged. This discourse strongly mirrors the opposition between community and society that can be found in both academic and popular texts, as discussed in the previous chapter. In a consumer culture that is organised into a large-scale society, which is seen as having taken away the solidarity and personal bonds of small-scale community, food discourse recreates the values of community that modernity and its associated mass production and consumption are often argued to have caused the loss of.

This chapter aims to bring structure to the immense variety of ways that morality is woven into food consumption discourse, by considering morality

from the perspective of responsibility. When thinking about morality, there is always a question of whom is this for, who benefits from this ethical consideration? Which is why this chapter considers moral responsibility to three different levels and types of community: the global community; the national and regional community; and the local community. By asking the question *How is moral responsibility constructed in food discourse?* Moral responsibility to the global, national and local community is examined through an examination of the different ways the Fairtrade Foundation and Rainforest Alliance labels construct moral responsibility and how this can be understood through Barthes' notion of myth. In the same way, moral responsibility to the national and regional community is examined through case studies of the NFU, Jamie Oliver's sugar campaign and Innocent's Big Knit campaign. In Innocent's Big Knit campaign, the role of the consumer in the construction of morality is examined through the concepts of prosumption and voluntary servitude. In the final section of the chapter, the construction of moral responsibility to the local community is examined through a case study of the Kirkstall Deli Market.

Global community

The first type of community this chapter will look into is the global community, asking the question: *How is moral responsibility to the global community constructed in food discourse?* Consumer culture connects people from all over the world to each other. Many of the goods consumers in the Western world consume on a regular if not daily basis, such as coffee, tea, rice and chocolate are produced in Africa, Asia and Latin America. For a large part, the farmers growing these foods do so in countries that have considerably less wealth than the countries where these goods are consumed. As discussed in the chapter about consuming for the greater good, this inequality has played an important role in the development of consumer culture, and is partly kept in place because of it (Trentmann, 2016). Increasingly, this disparity is a part of moral food discourse, for instance through ethical consumption options that address the inequality between producers and consumers. This section will analyse examples of ethical consumption choices that atone for consumption's own sins, by aiming to create community instead of society. It will look at food discourse in consumer culture

by looking at the role companies and consumption organisations play in shaping this discourse, and how moral responsibility to a global community is shaped in it.

Trading fairly

For many consumers, Fairtrade is the first thing that comes to mind when talking about morality and consumer culture. According to TNS market research, 77% of consumers care about and trust the Fairtrade label (Fairtrade Foundation, 2017a). Fairtrade is a mark that companies who are signed up to the Fairtrade scheme are allowed to place on their products that are produced in accordance to the standards set by the Fairtrade Foundation (Nicholls, 2010; Nicholls & Opal, 2005). The Fairtrade Foundation constructs a moral responsibility for Western consumers to very distant strangers, by reconnecting these consumers to the producers on the receiving end of Fairtrade (Corbridge, 1998; M. K. Goodman, 2004; Raynolds, 2002; Raynolds, Murray, & Wilkinson, 2007). In its own words, the Fairtrade Foundation aims to create *'better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world'* (Fairtrade Foundation, 2017c). The Fairtrade Foundation very explicitly describes what they call conventional trade as discriminatory *'against the poorest, weakest producers'* (Fairtrade Foundation, 2017c). Trade that adheres to the Fairtrade rules, according to the Fairtrade Foundation, improves their position and gives them more control.

In the contribution to moral discourse that the Fairtrade Foundation makes, the Western consumer has a lot of power over these 'poorest, weakest' food producers. This power, they argue, should be used to create more equality between these groups: *'Our mission is to connect disadvantaged producers and consumers, promote fairer trading conditions and empower producers to combat poverty, strengthen their position and take more control over their lives'* (Fairtrade Foundation, 2017c). The Fairtrade foundation strengthens this moral message in their communication in different ways. The following is a section of a text about cacao farming. It emphasises the inequality that exists, and the way conventional trade exacerbates the problem.

'The international price of cocoa beans is currently rising in response to high demand for cocoa products. As the industry wakes up to a potential long-term shortfall in global supply; disease and age are damaging cocoa trees and the number of farmers is falling because the benefits are so poor that few young people want to stay in the profession - the average age of a cocoa farmer is 50! Farmers aren't benefitting sufficiently from the rise in prices and remain in poverty as their incomes fail to keep up with rising production costs and household expenses' (Fairtrade Foundation, 2017b).

It goes on to say what the Fairtrade Foundation does to address the issue:

'Fairtrade helps to make cocoa farming in places like Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana more sustainable through payment of the Fairtrade Premium to invest in business or community projects so farmers can better provide for themselves and their communities. In 2013-14, cocoa farmers earned more than £8.4 million in Fairtrade Premiums and almost a quarter was invested in directly supporting farming families meet their daily needs.' (Fairtrade Foundation, 2017b)

Other ways in which the moral responsibility that Western food consumers have to producers who live in poverty is made clear, include the campaign 'Don't feed exploitation, choose Fairtrade'. The campaign was designed to 'deepen people's emotional commitment to Fairtrade' (Fairtrade Foundation, 2016), and aims to accomplish this emotional connection through marketing materials with for instance images of third world farmers, with a 'sale' sticker on them, accompanied by the text *'If you knew the farmer who grew your food wasn't paid enough to feed his own family, would you still buy it?'* (Fairtrade Foundation, 2016).

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fig. gc1 (Fairtrade Foundation, 2016)

The Fairtrade Foundation's contribution to moral food discourse creates a moral responsibility to a global community that includes a duty of care to those whose

lives are lived in less fortunate circumstances. Power is located with the Western consumers, who are presented as having both the ability and responsibility to improve the lives of food producers living in poverty through their food consumption choices. The improvement that Fairtrade aims for is based on a morality of equality, in this case between the rich consumers and the producers living in poverty, and autonomy over own choices, for both the consumers, who have the choice to buy Fairtrade, and for the producers, for whom the Fairtrade Foundation aims to create more power over their life choices.

Fairtrade is an important voice in this discourse, but many other brands that sell foods produced by farmers in developing nations subscribe to a similar narrative. This includes both brands that adhere to the Fairtrade Foundation's standards and those that for various reasons don't. Examples include Tony Chocolonely, the Dutch chocolate brand that was discussed in the chapter about community, which became very popular because of their anti-slavery mission (Tony Chocolonely, 2018). Clipper tea, another Fairtrade brand, is very outspoken about its fair trading standards as well. Its slogan is 'natural, fair and delicious'. The brand communicates similar values in a similar way to the Fairtrade Foundation, with text such as 'who is the fairest of them all?', and 'the UK's number one Fairtrade tea company' (Clipper, 2018). Not all brands that communicate their fair treatment of producers in developing countries carry the Fairtrade mark. The financial commitment to Fairtrade can be too big for smaller brands, and there are other ethical trade schemes that brands can subscribe to. An example of this is the Rainforest Alliance.

Sharing the planet

The Rainforest Alliance is a good illustration of another way that moral responsibility to a global community is constructed in food discourse. The focus of the Rainforest Alliance is on environmental issues. They emphasise the fact that the planet is shared by everyone, and that preserving it is the moral responsibility of everybody on it. They don't make the sharp black and white distinction that the Fairtrade Foundation does between 'those in need' and 'those with the ability to help'. The Rainforest Alliance presents the stakeholders as

more equal, in a network in which everyone plays their equally important and own specific part to reach a common goal:

‘The Rainforest Alliance is a growing network of farmers, foresters, communities, scientists, governments, environmentalists, and businesses dedicated to conserving biodiversity and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. We are an international non-profit organization working to build strong forests and healthy communities through creative, pragmatic collaboration’ (Rainforest Alliance, 2017).

Their contribution to moral food discourse is based on a more equal view of producers and consumers. Where Fairtrade puts the power in the hands of consumers, the Rainforest Alliance poses that efforts need to be made by both groups; consumers have the moral responsibility to buy Rainforest Alliance products that in turn, fund the efforts made by producers to produce more sustainably. From this perspective, both consumers and producers have the moral responsibility to help each other achieve environmental goals for a mutual benefit of a better-preserved planet. The environment is also part of other moral food discourses related to the global community. The discourse on vegetarianism and veganism for instance, while its focus is often on the moral responsibility to animals, includes ample reference to the negative impact the production of meat has on the environment, and the moral responsibility consumers have to the global community to limit meat consumption. The Vegan Society is an organisation that promotes veganism in the UK (Vegan Society, 2017a). Their tagline introduces their contribution to moral food consumption discourse: ‘One world. Many lives. Our choice’. It creates a responsibility of consumers to the global community, and emphasises the power over consumption choices that consumers have. On their website, they go on to explain the link between the environment and vegan consumer choices:

‘Why is meat and dairy so bad for the environment? The production of meat and other animal products places a heavy burden on the environment - from crops and water required to feed the animals, to the transport and other processes involved from farm to fork. The vast amount of grain feed required for meat production is a

significant contributor to deforestation, habitat loss and species extinction' (Vegan Society, 2017b).

This environmental connection is explicitly made about the moral responsibility to people, and it is made explicit that it concerns a global community:

'In Brazil alone, the equivalent of 5.6 million acres of land is used to grow soya beans for animals in Europe. This land contributes to developing world malnutrition by driving impoverished populations to grow cash crops for animal feed, rather than food for themselves' (Vegan Society, 2017b).

Veganism is explicitly presented as a solution to the problems the consumption of meat causes for the planet and the global community that inhabits it:

'On the other hand, considerably lower quantities of crops and water are required to sustain a vegan diet, making the switch to veganism one of the easiest, most enjoyable and most effective ways to reduce our impact on the environment' (Vegan Society, 2017b).

Generous brands

Brands also construct moral responsibility to a global community by linking themselves to charitable causes, often in developing countries. Bottled water brands for instance often link themselves to water-related charities. The idea of bottled water is a large part of an environmental debate about the negative impact of single-use plastic on the planet, and the bottled water companies address this in different ways. Belu, a London-based brand, constructs moral responsibility to the global community with reference to the environmental impact of their company, the brand produces all their products in a carbon neutral manner, and bottles their water in what they call 'ethical glass', and recycled plastic (Belu, 2017a). The brand also constructs moral responsibility to the global community in their link to WaterAid; Belu donates 100% of their profits to this charity, which works in 38 countries to improve availability of safe water, sanitation and hygiene, amounting to £2,200,000 between 2011 and 2017

(Belu, 2017b). 'Earth' is a Dutch water, coffee and tea brand that operates similarly to Belu. They explicitly construct moral responsibility of the consumer to the global community as follows:

'Every day 6,000 people die, children in particular, due to the lack of clean drinking water. To support us we don't ask for your money or your help by becoming a volunteer. We simply ask you to drink our products: EARTH Water or EARTH Coffee and EARTH Tea. We donate 100% of the net profit generated by selling these products in order to finance water projects' (Earth, 2017).

Links between brands and charitable causes of this kind do not offer a structural change in the way consumer and producer relationships are formed, like the Fairtrade Foundation and the Rainforest Alliance aim to accomplish. The moral responsibility created in this part of moral food discourse lies heavily with the Western consumers, who are constructed as having a responsibility to help those without access to clean water, with no expectation of any benefit to themselves. The consumers are powerful, in a way similar to the moral responsibility created by the Fairtrade Foundation, but with the lack of an aim for a structural change to empower communities on the 'receiving' end of Fairtrade, or the connection between consumer and producer of the same food, there is an even starker contrast between the powerful consumers and the powerless: a very general and anonymous mass category of 'those who live without access to safe water'. This type of moral responsibility is created throughout food discourse. Other examples are 'Good Spread' peanut butter, a company that gives what they call 'lifesaving fortified peanut butter' to a malnourished child, which the brand claims is both 'Simple and Magical, like peanut butter should be' (Good Spread, 2017). Teapigs is a UK tea brand that gives part of its profits to a charity in Rwanda, from where they source their tea. They describe the relationship they have with the Point Foundation as a commitment to 'giving back' (Teapigs, 2017), which constructs the moral responsibility they have more as an obligation; they have taken from that community, their charitable donations are compensation for that. The tea is not part of the Fairtrade scheme, but they emphasise that in addition to the charitable donations to the Point foundation,

they *'source from well-run, sustainable tea estates and we try to do the right thing when it comes to the environment'* (Teapigs, 2017), which communicates a moral responsibility similar to the one constructed by the Fairtrade foundation and the Rainforest Alliance, but it's constructed with less of a commitment; they are *trying* to do the right thing, rather than committing to a structural long term change. Tilda rice is another example: they run a campaign called 'Mums helping Mums', encouraging Western mums to buy Tilda rice by promising *'For every specially marked pack of Tilda Pure Basmati sold we'll donate one nutrition-boosting supplement to a new or expectant mum in need'* (Tilda Rice, 2018). Table for Two is a non-profit organisation, initiated by and affiliated to the World Economic Forum's Young Global Leaders (Table for Two, 2017). In their contribution to moral food discourse they construct a moral responsibility of care for a global community, specifically for those suffering from under-nutrition or obesity:

'In our world of 7 billion, 1 billion suffer from under-nutrition, while another 1 billion suffer from obesity. TABLE FOR TWO rights this imbalance by simultaneously addressing the two opposing problems through a unique "calorie transfer" program. By partnering with over 700 corporations, universities, restaurants, and organizations implementing our program in their establishments and products, TABLE FOR TWO has served millions of healthy meals to both sides of the "table".' (Table for Two, 2017)

Table for Two's partner organisations serve healthy Table for Two lunches in their canteens or cafeterias. When these are sold they donate the equivalent of \$0.25, which contributes to the provision of nutritious school meals for malnourished children. Wilson (2015) poses that the inequality constructed by Table for Two, a healthy gourmet salad for the Western consumer worth \$6, and a bowl of beans or maize porridge worth \$0.25, is a large part of what is consumed. Part of what the customers in the West buy, is the feeling that their moral responsibility of care or even generosity to the global community is fulfilled.

Moral responsibility to the global community

Moral responsibility to the global community is created by organisations as the Fairtrade Foundation and the Rainforest Alliance, by brands that carry these organisations' marks, and by those that communicate similar values, often in similar ways. The moral responsibility they construct differs in terms of how equal the groups of people within the global community are seen; brands that give part of or all of their profits to charity, such as Belu, Earth and Good Spread, create the signifiers of a 'powerful Western consumer' and a relatively 'powerless people in the developing world'. In the second order of myth, through the way the inequality between these groups is emphasised in their texts, and the solutions they offer to this inequality, these brands create the moral responsibility of generosity. The Fairtrade Foundation still gives more power to consumers in the West than to producers in developing countries, but their aim to create a structural change to the way the global community trades, and their emphasis on trade rather than charity, means that they construct a more powerful section of the community that consumers have a moral responsibility to. In the first order of myth, the Fairtrade Foundation creates a 'powerful Western consumer', but also a Third World Farmer that needs help to help themselves'. In the second order of myth, the relationship between these groups that is created by the Fairtrade Foundation creates a myth, an underlying ideological framework of fair chances, creating a moral responsibility to create those fair chances. The Rainforest Alliance presents the different groups of people in global food discourse as most equal. In the first order of myth the Rainforest Alliance constructs the different parts of the global community as equals with their own expertise and power, who are working towards a common goal. The second order of myth that is created in their communication is a moral responsibility that in this case is more equally shared, it is one of 'we are in this together'. On the surface, the discourses that these brands and organisations create seem very similar. They share a goal of supporting communities in the developing world through consumption in the Western world. Below that surface their ideologies are different, and as a result their discourses create different power relationships between consumers in the Western consumer societies and those benefiting in the developing world.

National and regional community

There is ample scholarship on the link between national and regional identity and food discourse (e.g. C. Bell & Neill, 2014; Del Giudice, 2001; Ferguson, 1998; Ichijo & Ranta, 2016; Sassatelli & Arfini, 2017; Warde, 2009). The nationally-shared meaning attached to foods is one of the ways in which imagined communities are created; national dishes and their shared meaning within a country (and their signifying function outside that country) help delineate communities that one has a moral responsibility to (B. R. Anderson, 1995; DeSoucey, 2010; Nugent, 2011). Moral food discourse has a role in delineating national and regional communities, but also goes further than that. This chapter argues that it also has a role in determining what the moral responsibility of members of that community to each other is. This second part of this chapter will ask the question; *how is moral responsibility to the national community constructed in moral food discourse?*

National economy

Geographical protection

Food discourse in relation to the national or regional community is often directly or indirectly related to the national or regional economy. Strengthening the national or regional economy is seen as a moral responsibility of those in that community. This moral responsibility comes to the fore in different ways, one of which is the geographical protection of foods and drinks, protected by national and transnational laws and trade agreements worldwide. The World Trade Organisation defines a geographical indication as ‘an indication which identifies a good as originating in a specific place (country, region or locality) where a given quality, reputation or other characteristics of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin’ (World Trade Organisation, 1994). These protections exist worldwide; Basmati rice, Darjeeling tea and Tequila are examples of names that can’t be given to products that weren’t produced in named regions (Bowen & Zapata, 2009). In Europe, examples include Greek Feta cheese, French Champagne or Scotch Whisky (European European Commission, 2017).

The European Commission argues that these protections matter both economically and culturally, because they 'create value for local communities through products that are deeply rooted in tradition, culture and geography' (European European Commission, 2017). The geographical protections, they argue, 'support rural development and promote new job opportunities in production, processing and other related services' (European European Commission, 2017). The geographical protections and the labels used to communicate them are largely viewed as effective at reaching cultural and economic goals (Ploeg et al., 2000), but their effects are questioned too. Bowen and Zapata (2009) look critically at the results of the protecting of Tequila and find negative effects on both the economy and the quality of the protected product. Welz (2013) finds that in Cyprus, 'the European Union programme that protects geographical indications favours the large scale industrial producers, rather than promotes the regional diversity and preservation of national heritage it claims to encourage' (Welz, 2013, p. 265).

The moral responsibility that is constructed and communicated in the system of protections of geographical indications is one of protecting national or regional income, and of protecting authenticity. It constructs a moral responsibility to both the 'rightful' producers, who are protected from competition from what is seen as 'inauthentic' versions of their product, and the consumers, who are protected from buying 'false' products. The regulations indicate a moral responsibility to protect cultural signifiers simultaneously belonging to and formative of national or regional communities, and to only let those with a 'rightful' claim to these signifiers benefit from them economically.

Back British Farming

The National Farmers Union (NFU) run a campaign called 'Back British Farming'. It's a campaign aimed at British consumers, urging them to eat food that was grown in the UK, to support British farmers. This is an essential part of contemporary food discourse, but has long been a topic (Trentmann, 2004). The campaign uses visuals of farmers on their fields, of happy consumers and of the British countryside to illustrate the campaign. The Union Jack is prominent throughout the campaign, and a notable image is the Union Jack made of

produce, creating a strong link between the foods and the British national community.

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fig. nc1 (NFU, 2017c)

Textually, the Back British Farming campaign highlights the contribution British farmers make to the national economy:

'The UK food and farming sector is worth a staggering £109 billion to our economy – more than the aeronautical and automotive manufacturing sectors combined – and represents around 3.8 million jobs' (NFU, 2017a).

This creates the first order of myth, in which the act of 'British grown food' is connected to matters of the economy. In the second order of myth, 'buying British food is good for the economy' is connected to the concept of independence. The National Farmers Union (NFU) also constructs a moral responsibility of consumers around the self-sufficiency of the nation, arguing that:

'Britain's farmers and growers supply 61 per cent of the nation's food, and 76 per cent of the sorts of foods that can be grown in this country' (NFU, 2017b).

According to the NFU's voice in moral food discourse, this lack of complete self sufficiency is a negative development, that can and should be remedied (NFU, 2017b). They don't give an explanation, or any arguments or facts to show why it's important that the UK becomes more self-sufficient, making the statement that the country should be self-sufficient seem more grounded in ideology and morality. The statement is a moral one about who should be taking care of whom; the morality that is constructed is that the Brits have the moral responsibility to provide for the Brits. Farming, in the NFU's words, 'contributes to the health and wealth of our nation' (NFU, 2017b). For the NFU, the moral responsibility to contribute to the health and wealth of the nation is carried by

both the British farmers, who they pose are ‘ready and willing to meet the challenge of feeding our growing population’, and the consumers, about whom the organisation says; ‘As consumers, we all have a part to play in securing a positive future for UK farming’.

In addition to the moral responsibility to and through the national economy, the Back British Farming campaign links British farming to high moral standards when it comes to animal welfare and the environment:

‘The Red Tractor logo, carrying the Union Flag, not only shows that food has been produced in the UK but also that it meets good standards of animal welfare as well as respect for the environment’ (NFU, 2017e).

The campaign constructs a moral responsibility to care for animals and the environment, and uses this moral responsibility to create an image of the British farmer as worthy of support.

‘As well as growing and producing the food that we all eat, farmers are custodians of the British countryside, leaders in animal welfare and champions of renewable energy’ (NFU, 2017d).

This constructs a moral responsibility for the consumers to the farmers; because the farmers take care of consumers, animals and the environment, the British consumers should take care of the farmers. In the second order of myth, a narrative emerges that says ‘we should take care of our own’. This fits well with the current political backdrop of Brexit, which has come with a moral narrative in which the United Kingdom should be independent from others, leaning on its own resources to take care of its own, to the exclusion of others.

National health

Jamie Oliver’s food activism

Other contributions to moral food discourse focus on the health of the nation more than on the economy. Jamie Oliver’s well-documented food activism, for instance, makes health and the moral responsibility for it a national issue. Jamie

Oliver's school dinners project's goal was to convince the nation to feed school children healthier school meals (Oliver, 2018). He continues to campaign for a national solution to what he constructs as a national problem:

'In lobbying the UK Government to introduce a strong and robust multi-sectoral Childhood Obesity Strategy, together with medical experts and professionals, Jamie launched a six-point plan to tackle childhood obesity in the UK in November 2015. This plan details a range of proposed policies, initiatives, incentives and community-based interventions, which together create a powerful tool to change the way children access and consume food and drink' (Oliver, 2017).

Throughout the programme he made around it, there is a strong emphasis on the moral responsibility to feed children healthy foods, and to educate them about these healthier foods. Critiques of the wealthy celebrity chef's food activism point out that he ignores the class divide in his programmes, and has created a type of reality TV show that fits into the category of 'shows that try to show working class people how to live up to middle class standards' (Hollows & Jones, 2010; Jackson, 2016). Warin (2011) argues that Jamie Oliver's food activism, from school dinners to the subsequent *Ministry of Food* programme which focussed on teaching people from less wealthy areas of the nation how to cook healthy meals for themselves and their families, are a means of control over bodies in the Foucauldian sense. These critiques are fair, and related to the fact that the moral responsibility Jamie Oliver's food activism constructs is strongly linked to the national community. It is related to the nation's school children, the nation's obesity problem, the nation's health. His most recent big campaign focuses on sugar consumption. This is an extract from the manifesto that announced the campaign:

'I want to see the introduction of a 20p levy per litre on every soft drink containing added sugar – this equates to about 7p per 330ml can. Studies show that this could have a significant impact on health in the UK, potentially reducing obesity levels by up to 200,000 people, and reducing sugary drink consumption by 15%. The levy

could raise revenue of up to £1bn per year to support preventative strategies in the NHS and in schools around obesity and diet-related disease.' (Oliver, 2015)

He constructs sugar consumption as a *national problem* by referring to 'health in the UK'. He doesn't talk about obese individuals; he talks about the reducing national 'obesity levels by up to 200,000 people'. He proposes a *national solution*; a sugar tax, and a *national benefit*; in the TV film (Cooper, 2015) that accompanied the campaign, he highlights the strain on the National Health Service, and the relief to the NHS if the sugar tax would be introduced.

National wellbeing

Innocent's Big Knit

The third way in which moral responsibility to and by the national community is constructed in moral food discourse relates to the cohesiveness of the national community, by addressing the problem of feeling left out of the community. This part of the chapter will look more closely at an example of this, aimed specifically at constructing the moral responsibility of community cohesiveness by fighting loneliness in the elderly. Innocent, the UK drinks brand that was once a small independent company and is now owned by Coca-Cola, runs a big campaign every year in support of Age UK called 'The Big Knit' (Innocent, 2017b). They ask their customers to knit small hats, that they put on their smoothie bottles to sell in winter. They donate 25 pence per hatted bottle sold. The proceeds go to Age UK, who use it to combat loneliness in elderly people in the UK. In 2017, Innocent reported that:

'So far the people of the UK have knitted an astonishing 6 million hats. Together we've raised over £2 million for Age UK and we hope to raise much more in the future' (Innocent, 2017b)

Innocent is an international company, and they run the same campaign in other countries that they operate in. In all cases, the proceeds go to a national charity that helps the elderly in that country. Every campaign is a national one, constructing moral responsibility to the national community. On the surface, the

campaigns address moral responsibility around a vulnerable group; lonely elderly. The moral responsibility that is immediately apparent is to remedy that loneliness, to help that vulnerable group. In the first order of myth, loneliness is connected to 'the elderly'. In the second order of myth, this problem of lonely elderly is connected to a solution that involves buying smoothies with small hand knitted hats.

Loneliness is a specifically social issue; it is associated with the loose ties of society rather than the personal bonds of community. In the previous chapter I argued that capitalism has an element of atonement; ethical consumption can be seen as capitalism's atonement for modernity's sins. In this example, the Big Knit's fight against loneliness can be seen as atonement for capitalism or modernity's sin of creating society over community. The metaphor Žižek uses to describe this type of 'fixing the problem with the problem itself' is that of the chocolate laxative; a solution that fixes a problem caused by the solution itself (Žižek, 2004). The moral responsibility is part of the ideology that is constructed in the Big Knit campaign; a responsibility of the community to be inclusive and cohesive; to be a community, not a society. In their explanation '*How little woolly hats help fight loneliness*', the campaign defines loneliness as not speaking to friends and family:

'Loneliness can be a big problem in later life. As many as 200,000 older people say they haven't spoken to friends or family for over a month.'

The Big Knit started back in 2003 with an idea. We asked some older people, and some younger people, to knit little woolly hats. We put those hats on our smoothies, and for each one sold we made a donation of 25p to Age UK.

The hats on our smoothies raise money for activities at local Age UK centres where people like June and Eleonore can get together for things like lunches and dance classes' (Innocent, 2017b).

The suggested solution is a national effort through the national campaign and the nationally operating charity Age UK, rather than one that focuses on family and friends of lonely elderly.

Prosumption of moral responsibility

In the first chapter of this thesis it was asserted that advertising uses a space between what's true and what's believable. Advertising doesn't simply deceive consumers, it changes perceptions of truth, knowledge and reality (Boorstin, 1992, p. 211). Advertisers can't do this alone, they rely on audience participation; advertisers and advertisement's audiences create the space for myth in consumer culture together. What the example of the Big Knit shows, and in the following chapter the case study of the TOMS brand will illustrate, is that it's not just that they create the *space* for myth together, it's the actual myth that is co-created by advertisers and their audiences; by producers and consumers. The concept of co-creation through the merging of the roles of producers and consumers has been a part of the academic literature on consumer culture since the seventies, when McLuhan and Nevitt (1972) suggested the possibilities electric technologies would give consumers to produce would lead to a change in the strict division between producers and consumers.

The term prosumer was coined by the futurist Toffler (1981) in 1980. Since then, the concept has been taken up by key theorists in the social sciences, amongst them Henry Jenkins (2006), who has written the theory of convergence culture based on the idea of the two roles merging. Their theories apply to consumer items, but the concept of prosumption can be used to analyse the co-creation of myth as well. In the chapter on consumers as individuals, several modes of movement of meaning through consumer culture are discussed, of which 'shaping' is one. The mode of shaping includes the creation and adaption of consumer goods to include them in the extended self. It draws on Sartre's (Sartre, 2003 [1943]) notion of creating, which includes not just the physical creation of an item, but the buying of an item as a way of introducing a consumer good and its values into the extended self. The co-creation of the myth means that they 'own' it in a way that they wouldn't if they were passive consumers of it. Through prosumption and the extension of the self through it, not only do the

consumers become part of the brand and its myth, the brand and the myth become part of them.

The moral responsibility that is constructed in the Big Knit, of the community to be inclusive and cohesive, is created in their text, their images and, importantly, it is also constructed through the structure of the campaign. The organisation for the Big Knit campaign is characterised by its thoroughly participative and interactive nature; the campaign itself is inclusive and cohesive. From the very introduction of the campaign, Innocent presents it as an inclusive effort, made possible by the consumer's buying of smoothies and knitting of hats:

'If you've ever bought a smoothie or knitted a hat, thank you for being part of the Big Knit. You're a legend' (Innocent, 2017b).

Innocent have made the choice to ask their customers to knit the hats, rather than buying mass produced hats to put on their bottles. The inclusion of consumers in this way makes the campaign distinctively interactive and it connects the campaign to the concept of community, and to the idea of something unique, personal, and 'lovingly hand-made', strengthening the construction of the moral responsibility to be inclusive and cohesive. The groups involved in the construction of the campaign, outside of Innocent and Age UK, are the consumers who buy the smoothies, consumers who knit the hats, and the elderly who benefit from the donations generated by the campaign. While Innocent leads and organises the campaign, it could not exist in its present form without the active participation of all of these groups. These five groups co-construct the Big Knit in a way that is similar to the concept discussed above of prosumption; by productive consumption. In the prosumption of the campaign, the moral responsibility that is constructed in it is also prosumed.

The prosumption applies clearly to the knitting of hats, but that is not the only way it occurs. The campaign has a large social media presence, with the brand and the consumers posting text and images about the campaign on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Consumers are creating the bulk of the online content about the campaign, involving their

audiences and the brand in online interaction about Innocent, the Big Knit and Age UK. Consumers are also a part of the communication by Innocent. Knitters who have created a lot of hats or have for instance organised events for others to knit hats are featured on the Innocent Big Knit website, and on cartons of smoothies with portraits and short introductions of their knitting efforts. This is an example of an introduction of a knitter on the campaign website:

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fig. nc2 (Innocent, 2017c)*

Hina "The Big Knit is a way to give back to the community, help others and enjoy ourselves along the way."

'Hina is the director of Bluebird Care Lambeth. She introduced her team to the Big Knit last year, and she's even managed to get her 10-year-old son into knitting. Hina learned her skills from her mum, who always made her sweaters — "with zig-zag patterns and bobbles all over, my friends were always well jel", she claims — and this year she's started early, recruiting all of her staff to create 100 little hats' (Innocent, 2017c).

In the introduction, giving back to the community is emphasised and constructed as something that is enjoyable to do. It also brings in an intergenerational connection that strengthens the moral responsibility as constructed in the campaign, with Hina learning from her mother, and teaching her young son. The community aspect of the campaign comes to the fore in other introductions of knitters as well, for example in the introduction of Bella, who says, *"When you knit these little hats you become a part of a big community – it's so friendly and welcoming."* And Gemma, who says *"It's a huge community effort. Everyone gets involved."* (Innocent, 2017c).

The Big Knit on Instagram

The company also showcases consumer involvement in their social media posts, of which this image and text taken from Innocent's Instagram feed are

illustrative. In the first, the company posts a picture of a card that was sent with knitted hats, by a 100 year-old lady who calls herself 'G'. The text that innocent posted with the image reads:

'Innocent Huge thanks to 100 year old G for sending us some brilliant #BigKnit hats, along with this excellent card: "Dear friends, It's that old lady again. Yes I have just celebrated my 100th birthday. Hands not as agile now so not as many as other years. Hope you will be able to use them. Do you like the three little rabbits? Would have liked to have made a few more of them, but time has caught up on me. Success to your promotion. Regards, G"'

The post invites a lot of interaction, with people commenting on it, 'liking' it, and sharing it with their own followers. Comments on the post by consumers are supportive of the brand, applauding G for knitting the hats, and Innocent for organising the Big Knit:

'I'm sure you get applauded on a daily basis for the huge impact you've made for the elderly with the big knit, both in terms of monies raised but also for giving people a reason to keep on knitting, and I just wanted to say here I think it's fantastic. Keep up the good work #innocent

'What a cute lady'

'forgot my hat today but this makes me super warm. G is a superwoman!'

'This is adorable'

'Brilliant, such a lovely note, person and rabbits. Hope G is getting to feel the 'virtual'[heart emoticon]'

'I just got some socks from Innocent and I'm squealing this is the best Christmas present ever'

The brand replies to many of the comments, adding to the interactive aspect of the campaign and its construction of moral responsibility. These are a few of the many replies:

'Thank you very much. Your kind words are massively appreciated, we'll do our very best to keep it up'

'Merry Christmas, Kate. You can choose between whether it's a late present or a REALLY early one'

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fig. nc3 (Innocent Instagram, 2017)

Consumers also post their own Big Knit images to social media. The following is an Instagram post by a consumer who has bought a hatted smoothie, accompanied by the text *'Thank you to the human who knitted this hat, it brightened my day and its for such a good cause #ageuk #innocentsmoothie #thebigknit'* (Instagram, 2017)

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fig. nc4

The post thanks the knitter, emphasising the role the knitters' efforts play not just to Age UK and the lonely elderly but in brightening her own day. It also calls Age UK a good cause, and because it ends with hashtags, Age UK was able to see the post and interact with the poster by 'liking' it. All these actions taken together strengthen the campaign and the moral responsibility of inclusiveness and cohesiveness it creates. The next example is an Instagram post by a knitter, who posts about an interaction with Innocent after she has sent them hats; an image of the card she received from Innocent thanking her for her participation.

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fig. nc5

The text she posts with the image is:

I always look forward to these handwritten thank you cards from @innocent after taking part in The Big Knit! #thebigknit #crochet #project #ageconcern #charity."

The interaction continues when Innocent replies to the text with another thank you: *We couldn't do it without your hard work, Alex. A big thank you from all of us for joining in with the Big Knit.*

Another interaction takes place in the comment section of this post, between the poster and an Instagrammer who is not a fan of the brand because of their link to Coca-Cola:

'Do you know that @innocent are almost wholly owned by Coca Cola? Killer Coke? Nasty company, they kill people: killercoke.org. '

A comment like this on a post so clearly linked to the Big Knit campaign could distract from the moral responsibility the campaign creates, as it aims to call the company out for unethical behaviour in other areas. In the continued interaction however, the original poster addresses the issue raised with thoughts of her own. The following post shows how cynicism lets her negate the tension between the fact that *she knows* that there are other -perhaps better- things she could be doing, *but that she will still* support Innocent and their Big Knit campaign:

'I do! It's not at all ideal- if I had the money I'd just donate directly to Age Concern, but as it stands the only thing I have to contribute is a skill through which Innocent can raise money on my behalf. We try to live as ethically as possible, but sometimes you have to side with the lesser of two evils I think, and the fact remains that elderly folks are freezing and starving to death every winter (more so now we have full Tory austerity), and Age Concern relies on the thousands raised by Innocent to help combat that.'

Her comments return the focus of the interaction to the Big Knit and the moral responsibility of inclusiveness once again.

Visuals

On the campaign's own website, the visuals support the narrative of inclusiveness, not just by who they portray, but by how they are portrayed. Innocent's style is very 'innocent', a bit tongue in cheek, informal and personal, and this style is part of the Big Knit as well. For instance, photos of people are presented on the website as if they are taped to a page of an old-fashioned photo album, invoking the same connotation of something 'lovingly handmade' that the hats do.

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fig. nc6 (Innocent, 2017b)*

Images of unique hats that have been sent in are also showcased on the website, with 'hand drawn' designed frames.

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fig. nc7 (Innocent, 2017a)*

The 'handmade' designs give the campaign a personal feel, making it look accessible and informal, as if it's something anyone could participate in. The whole campaign places a lot of emphasis on the active role of the consumers and on the elderly who benefit from the campaign. For both these groups the benefits are made clear; the consumers get to participate in a fun and quirky campaign, they get to be part of a community effort, and they get to consume smoothies with fun little hats that make them feel good about themselves. The lonely elderly get to participate in the activities that Age UK organises for them with the money donated by Innocent. The campaign doesn't openly acknowledge the benefits to Innocent, which in terms of marketing content generated, consumer attention, brand building and even bottom line revenue from increased sales as an effect of the campaign, could potentially be sizeable. The understandable lack of attention for the benefits to Innocent, and through their corporate structure, the benefits to the multi-national company Coca-Cola, means that the commercial nature of the campaign remains under-acknowledged. The consumers who participate in the campaign do so for their own benefit, for the

benefit of the lonely elderly, for the benefit of the national community as a whole but also for the benefit of the company that organises it. There is an element of what de la Boétie (1975) called voluntary servitude, of consumers who voluntarily serve the company, without full acknowledgement of why they volunteer their time, skills and effort.

Moral responsibility to the national and regional community

This section of the chapter argues that food discourse, in addition to its role in constructing national community, has a role in determining what the moral responsibility of members of that community to each other is. This section of the chapter aimed to answer the question: *how is moral responsibility to the national community constructed in moral food discourse?* Through looking at different voices that shape national food consumption discourse, it is found that the answer is multi-faceted and links moral responsibility to the national economy, to the nation's health, and to the national community's cohesiveness.

One way moral responsibility to the national community is constructed in food discourse is through reference to the national economy. This can be done in reference to the concept of authenticity, by using regulations to protect both the cultural significance and the income of producers of foods and drinks that are designated to be authentically from a certain nation or region. The national economy is also a part of the construction of moral responsibility to the national community in food discourse through a discourse of self-sufficiency of that nation. The ambition to be self-sufficient in terms of food production, as the NFU argues the UK should be, is a moral one; it constructs a moral responsibility for the British people to take care of the British people. The NFU's 'Back British Farming' campaign also constructs a moral responsibility around animal welfare and care for the environment, but they position this responsibility as a supporting argument to their main argument that the British Farmer is worthy of support; because the farmers take care of consumers, animals and the environment, the British consumers should take care of them.

Another way moral responsibility to the national community is constructed in food discourse is with reference to the nation's health. Jamie Oliver, a celebrity chef and food activist uses his national podium to create a

moral responsibility around health. He specifically relates it to national health rather than personal health, by linking health choices to national initiatives such as school dinners and national food education. He also argues that the effects of the nation's unhealthy eating habits are national problems by linking the resulting ill-health to the National Health Service. A solution he offers is a national one too, as he proposes a sugar tax.

Moral responsibility to the national community is also constructed in 'the Big Knit' campaign by Innocent. The campaign supports Age UK in their goal to fight loneliness in the elderly in the UK. Loneliness is a social issue more than a personal one; as it's a problem of being disconnected from community. Through the commitment of fighting loneliness, the moral responsibility that is constructed in the Big Knit campaign is a responsibility of the community to be inclusive and cohesive. The company Innocent runs the campaign, but it could not exist in its current form without the active participation of consumers, in a way that is similar to what Jenkins (Jenkins, 2006) calls prosumption. The campaign is shaped by productive consumption. In the prosumption of the campaign, the moral responsibility that is constructed in it is also prosumed. With the co-production of the campaign by consumers and the company, there is also an element of voluntary servitude. Consumers can't be said to be 'duped' into participating, they can be seen to do so for their own benefit and in line with their own values; cynicism lets them dissolve any tension between what they know and believe, and what they do. But the fact that the benefit of their voluntary service to the company remains under-acknowledged means that there is also an under-acknowledgement of the power the company has in influencing the construction of moral responsibility.

Through the use of images and text, both in interactions and in the campaign media created by Innocent, the moral responsibility to the national community to be inclusive and cohesive is constructed in a way that places that responsibility largely on the shoulders of the women in that national community. Firstly, through the use of knitting as a focus of the campaign, knitting can still be seen to be a female pastime more than it is associated with masculinity. On the website, every single knitter that is introduced is a woman. There are knitters from different ethnicities, ages and life stages, but they are all women. It is also

done through the use of soft colours, mostly pinks and purples, and soft looking knitted textures as a background for the website. The website also introduces a number of the elderly who participate in the Age UK activities that fight loneliness, and bar one, they are all female. There is diversity of ethnicities, but not of gender. Without openly acknowledging it, the campaign constructs the moral responsibility of inclusiveness and cohesiveness, which is essentially a moral responsibility to care for all members of a national community, with the women in that community. Commercially-rooted food discourse is motivated to aim itself at women. If the goal is to sell items, it makes commercial sense to aim the communication at women. While the division is not as strict as it has been, they remain largely the ones who make every day food purchasing decisions for their families (D'Souza & Taghian, 2017; Granot, Greene, & Brashear, 2010; Miller, 2012; Rhode, 2014; Silverstein, Sayre, & Butman, 2009). As a result, the moral responsibility that is constructed in a moral food discourse is shouldered by women too.

Local community #eatlocal

The third level of community that this chapter will look at is the local community. This last section will examine how moral responsibility to the local community is constructed in food discourse, by analysing the online mediation of the Kirkstall Deli Market. This local food market takes place once a month on a weekend, every month from March until November, in the ruins of Kirkstall Abbey, in North Leeds. The market is organised by Leeds City Council, and as such, has a small part of the council website dedicated to it. The largest online presence the Deli Market has however, is on social media. This analysis will focus on the publicly available tweets and Instagram posts, with hashtags that link to the event, such as #kirkstalldelimarket, and #kirkstalldeli. The social media posts that this section of the chapter analyses are made by producers, consumers, and the market organisation, which results in a rich multi-perspective view of food discourse that relates specifically to the local community. It acknowledges that at this local level, consumption and production are harder to distinguish as two separate spheres. They are intricately connected, not just by laws of supply and demand, but by a shared culture,

values, morals, and especially in the case of local food discourse, a shared physical space. This connection is what comes to the fore in the online mediation of the Kirkstall Deli Market. The market is a physical space where producers and consumers come together, and that connection is continued in online spaces such as Instagram and Twitter. In line with the ethics approval granted for this research, the images taken from consumers' social media is presented anonymised, and are therefore not referenced. Social media posts taken from companies' social media are referenced as such.

In the social media posts that relate to the Kirkstall Deli Market the hashtag #eatlocal is one of the ways used to show support for local consumption, by both producers and consumers, as shown below:

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fig. lc1

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fig. lc2

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fig. lc3

Food discourse about 'the local' is often spoken about in terms of the length of the food chain. A global food chain that grows foods far away from the places they will be consumed is the topic of ethical discussion about the negative effects of such a system. There are two different main categories in which these negative effects are argued to fall; the environment, and social cohesion. When long complex food chains are spoken about in terms of the environment, this is for instance done in terms of 'food miles'; the miles food travels between where it is grown and where it is consumed and the energy that these food miles cost, as well as the negative environmental effects of the packaging that is used when foods are shipped long distance (Norberg-Hodge, Merrifield, & Gorelick, 2013). Consuming locally produced, and therefore seasonal food is seen as a solution for these issues (O'Connell, 2013). These issues are part of the discourse on social

media related to the Kirkstall Deli Market, for instance in this post by a consumer who implores their audience to eat seasonal food:

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fig. 1c4*

The other main category that the argued negative effects of long and complex food chains in a global system of production and consumption fall into is social cohesion; the complexity of the food chain is said to cause an alienating disconnection between the producers, their products, and consumers. In reaction to these discourses, there is a growing demand for local food (Furman & Papavasiliou, 2018). Eating food that is produced locally is argued to be a solution to the negative effects on the environment and social cohesion. The disconnection between consumers and producers is also part of the reason that there is an increase in distrust in the food system. The complexity and opacity of the system means that it is not possible for consumers to make their own value judgements about the food being produced in terms of quality or even safety. This distrust is fed by the regular occurrences of 'food scandals' in large-scale agriculture, which are widely covered in the media. (D. Goodman, 1999). In spite of government and experts assuring the public that perceived health hazards have no scientific basis, this distrust continues to be firmly rooted in food discourse (D. Goodman, 1999). Foods that are grown closer to home are seen as safer, because there is less opportunity to introduce food hazards such as e-coli, salmonella or for instance GMO and pesticide residue (Halweil, 2002). Consuming local foods leads to a shorter, simpler and more transparent food chain, where consumers can use their own value judgments about foods (Renting, Marsden, & Banks, 2012).

These themes within food discourse relate to the local, because the local production of food is seen as a solution. The moral responsibility that is created in that part of the discourse is not specifically to the local level of community, which is what this part of this chapter will look at more closely. Local, like regional, is an ambiguous term; in this chapter, 'local', will refer to local community at the level of for instance city, town, neighbourhood or village. In

contemporary food discourse, moral responsibility to the local community is constructed in relation to creating and maintaining a cohesive and thriving community. In the material analysed here, this is done along three main themes: the economic, local identity, and personal connections. The economic aspect includes the moral responsibility that producers and consumers have towards each other; the consumers have the moral responsibility to buy from the producers so they can make a living, and the producers on the other hand have the responsibility to provide a diversity of high quality, safe products for the community to consume. This range of products available is part of how a local community forms its local identity, which is how the moral responsibility to provide a sustainable market in this discourse connects to the moral responsibility to create space for local identity. That is not to say that the range of products available need to have a historical link or other deep roots in the community. As this chapter will argue, the community is able to make a very diverse range of products its own. This, the chapter will aim to show, is because at the local level, the people that produce the food, and the personal connections between producers and consumers are significantly more important in the construction of moral responsibility to the local community. The remaining section of this chapter will look at these moral responsibilities in turn.

A Local Livelihood

Current academic literature on local food systems focuses mostly on locally grown produce, and the selling of that produce to local consumers (Bauermeister, 2016; Mount et al., 2013). Food discourse encompasses more than that, and in the ambiguous spirit of the word 'local', the foods at the market are often local only because they are prepared locally, rather than grown there, or because they have any deeply rooted traditions in the area. This is reflected clearly in the social media posts related to the Kirkstall Deli Market. The stall that sells quesadillas and the stall that sells Yorkshire pudding wraps (Leeds is located in Yorkshire) are both treated as equals in terms of the moral responsibility that is constructed to the local community. The first part of this responsibility is economic; it is to create a sustainable market that benefits both the local producers and local consumers, two parts of the same local community.

What's different to the economic aspect at this level of community and the moral responsibility created to it, is that there is a stronger and more readily apparent mutual interest involved. The producers and consumers are both conceived of as part of that same local community. Local consumption is for the benefit of the producers, but also the consumers: there is overlap between these two categories - local producers will also be local consumers - and because a sustainable market place for local producers has the direct result of wealth remaining in that community, to be spent on the local community, and it will result in a more diverse and unique range of products on offer to that same local community.

Online, in the mediation of the Kirkstall Deli Market, the responsibility to the economic welfare of the local community is constructed in a few different ways. The market organisation has a short text on the council website that aims to persuade local consumers to visit the market, by emphasising the local aspect of it. They do this by highlighting the setting that is so unique to the local community; the Kirkstall Abbey ruins, and by specifically calling the vendors at the market 'local businesses' that sell 'local produce':

Join us at our outdoor markets in the picturesque 12th century ruins of Kirkstall Abbey. With over 40 unique stalls each day you can enjoy a Saturday or Sunday afternoon browsing hand-made crafts and local produce from across Yorkshire in a glorious setting whilst supporting your local businesses (Kirkstall Abbey Markets, 2018).

On social media, specifically Instagram and Twitter, local producers that sell their foods at the market and local consumers that visit the market take part in the discourse that shapes moral responsibility to the local community by showing their support for the concept of local consumption. The most obvious way they do this is by using hashtags such as #buylocal, #shoplocal, #supportlocal and #supportlocalbusiness, linking their posts to the theme of buying local to support local businesses.

The consumers who visit the market play an important part in shaping this part of the discourse. The hashtags are not used only by producers who have

a clear benefit to gain from people shopping local, the consumers are imploring their audience to #buylocal as well. Often this is done in a post where the picture shows the food bought locally, or shows off the market in a good light, for instance with a picture of a blue sky over the scenic setting of the market. The persuasion can be found in the other textual parts of the posts as well. For instance:

'Was down at the Abbey today for the Kirkstall Abbey Deli Market: fantastic market of local independent retailers, on the last weekend of every month 12-3: get yourself down there if you're in the area! :)'

There are ways in which the discourse constructs a moral responsibility to the local economy and therefore the thriving of the local community without using the exact word 'local'. The hashtag #supportsmallbusiness is used to convey the same message as the #buylocal hashtags, often by combining it with other hashtags that link it clearly to a defined location. In the post pictured below, the combination of the hashtags #supportsmallbusiness, #Leeds and #Kirkstalldelimitmarket make it part of the discourse that creates a moral responsibility to a specific local community. The word 'independent' is another example of how the discourse around food shapes responsibility to the local community. Independent, or 'indie' are often used to denote smaller businesses that aren't part of a chain, and the discourse constructs these businesses as worthy of consumers' support. The local community is seen to benefit from and have the responsibility to support them, exactly because they are independent; their independence makes them more a part of the local community, and it also makes them more vulnerable as they lack the support that a business that is part of a national or international chain would have.

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fig. lc5

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fig. lc6 (theyummyyank Instagram, 2015)

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fig. lc7 (Harewoodfoodanddrink Instagram, 2017)*

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fig. lc8*

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fig. lc9 (Leedsgin Instagram, 2017)*

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fig. lc10*

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. lc11 (theyummyyank Instagram, 2016a)*

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. lc12*

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fig. lc13*

Producers use social media to communicate their appreciation for their customers, of which the posts below are examples:

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fig. lc14 (JT's Emporium, 2017)*

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. lc15 (Cryer&Stott_Markets, 2017)*

Consumers in turn, use social media to show support to the producers, saying how happy they are for their success at the market. In the post below, the

producer posts about selling out on the first day, and a consumer answers with 'Wow. Well done. So happy for you. Xxxx'.

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fig. lc16 (Thebottledbakingco Instagram, 2016)*

The producer who posted this message with an image of their stall in which they sold beverages at the market, links their product with 'local love' and makes it very explicit that participating in the Kirkstall Deli Market is, to them, a wonderful way of participating in the community. The image is anonymised because it was posted from a private rather than a business account.

*'Well that's it! The last Kirkstall Abbey Market of the year. Big love to everyone who came down and filled themselves with mulled wine and local love. Here's to another wonderful year in the community. (Ft Gary the dog and all the joy he brings)
#thehopbox #kirkstalldelimarket #kirkstallabbey #mulledwine #kirkstall
#stancillbrewery @peddlermkt'*

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fig. lc17*

The three main participants in the Kirkstall Deli Market and the online discourse linked to it, are the organisers, the consumers and the producers. These three groups together create a discourse in which moral responsibility to the local community is created. This is done by calls to visit the market to support local producers. These calls are accompanied by images and texts that paint the market, the producers, and the foods they sell in a positive light. The producers strengthen the discourse in which buying local is a positive action by publicly thanking their customers on social media, a message that can be strengthened by congratulatory messages in reply from consumers, confirming local consumption as a positive contribution to the community.

Identifying with Yorkshire puddings and quesadillas

In the wider food discourse in which the Kirkstall Deli Market discourse takes part, the economic aspect of local consumption is argued to be important to the local community not just because of the increased financial means that remain in the community, but because of the effect it has on the diversity of products that are available in that community. The range of products available has many reasons for being relevant to members of the community, but one of them is the effect it has on the construction of local identity. This relates to traditional local products, but also to foods that are relatively newly introduced to it. The relationship between local community identity and food has long been a topic in academic literature, and it is generally recognised that this relationship is a dynamic one (D. F. Bell & Valentine, 1997). Supporting the local food businesses means that the community has the range of products available that is uniquely 'them'. Not only the products that have deeply rooted ties to the community are considered part of the local identity, although these types of products do play a role. In the case of the Kirkstall Deli Market discourse, there are a few foods that have ties to different levels of local, sometimes to the region, sometimes to the city. There is for instance a stall that sells a contemporary interpretation of the Yorkshire pudding, serving it as a wrap with a roast in it. Images of it are shared with the quintessential Abbey ruins in the background, such as this example from Twitter:

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fig. lc18

Kirkstall Abbey is a landmark that is well known locally, and using it as a backdrop for the market ties the whole market to the local identity. This is reflected in the images taken there by both consumers and producers: often the Abbey is prominently featured. Other local organisations will come out in support of the market, using images of the Abbey.

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fig. lc19 (Kirkstall Bridge, 2017)

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fig. lc20 (Leeds Dock, 2017)

There are producers who link their brand or their products directly to the local community, in the case of Leeds Gin for instance. Not only their name, but their logo links their branding to the city, they use the city's symbol of an owl in their online and offline communication. Stickey's, a local honey producer, names their products after the location the honey was produced. The pictures they post include images of their jars, labelled with names such as Yorkshire Heather Honey, Leeds Summer Honey, and Wakefield Spring Honey.

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fig. lc21 (Leeds Gin, 2017)

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fig. lc22 (Stickeys honey, 2017)

The product does however not need to be related to Yorkshire or Leeds. As can be seen in for instance Daniel Miller's (Miller, 1998, 2012) work that was discussed in the earlier chapter on individuals in consumer culture, consumption is an active process, in which consumers ascribe meanings to commodities. They accept, modify and subvert the values advertisers aim to attach to them in different ways. His research shows how consumers across different cultures and throughout history can attach opposing meanings to the same items and how in the local interaction with global brands, they come to stand for different things in different cultures. In a similar way to how consumers can extend the self with consumer goods (Belk, 1988), communities can shape their identity by accepting 'foreign' goods into it as their own. Consumers find ways of embedding the more international offerings of the market, such as Mexican quesadillas and American brownies into a local narrative. This visitor to the market for instance, includes three photos in her tweet, one of a Yorkshire Moor, one of a quesadilla that is being eaten at the Kirkstall Deli Market, and one of a brownie that was bought

there but is being eaten at home. She connects the images with text written in Yorkshire dialect, describing her typically Yorkshire morning's activities as *'Ramble on t' moors, @thedilladeli and home for the @Kirkstalldeli haul and a brew.*

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fig. lc23

The link between an international, in this case Italian, food and Yorkshire is also made by a producer who trades under the name 'Olianas'. The first way in which they do this is by tweeting to the Kirkstalldeli (which makes it visible to people following that particular feed) about the gold and silver awards they won in an international cheese competition. The hashtag they use, #yorkshirepecorino constructs them and their product as both local and as Italian.

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fig. lc24 (Olianas, 2017)

The same is done in their bi-lingual tweet after the last market day of the year in 2017; *'And from @Kirkstalldeli is a grazie Mile and see u in 2018'*. The image accompanying this text is of a group of people in a selfie, two of which are wearing Yorkshire flat caps. The construction of this producer as both local and Italian is re-affirmed by the reaction to the tweet; *'A flat cap chef? #properyorkshireman #sardinia'*

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fig. lc25 (Olianas, 2017)

Not all foods that are available at the market but don't originate from the local community are embedded into a local narrative in this way, they are often also presented as exactly what they are; foreign. The image below for instance, is by a visitor to the market who is singing the praises of 'Smak!', a stall that clearly advertises themselves as 'the Polish kitchen'.

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fig. lc26

The findings from the analysis of the Kirkstall Deli Market discourse go against a specific thread in the academic literature on local food consumption, which views the connection between local identity and food as strongly influenced by what they have termed 'defensive localism'. They argue that the choice to consume local foods is not based on positive consumer community participation such as consumption based on a perceived duty of care, but rather on a more negative idea; on a celebration of parochialism and exclusion of that which is seen as 'foreign' to the community's values (MacDonald, 2013; Winter, 2003). The discourse analysed in this chapter section has shown that such exclusion is not a necessary part of local food discourse. Cynicism successfully addresses the discord between Yorkshire and pecorino, flat caps and chefs, Yorkshire puddings as wraps, and a Polish kitchen in a Yorkshire abbey, leaving little to defend against.

The moral responsibility that is constructed in food discourse related to the Kirkstall Abbey Deli Market is not to exclude foods that are not tied to the community, it's to create a thriving market place that has a diversity of products available. That range of products is connected to the construction of local identity. For Leeds, this includes a combination of local foods, foods that are a mix between local and foreign kitchens, and foreign foods. What they do have in common is not just that they are produced locally, what is most relevant is that they are brought to the market by producers who have some sort of tie to the local community. The moral responsibility to creating and maintaining local identity links the economic aspect that facilitates this, to the subject of the third moral responsibility to the local community that is constructed in food discourse: to create personal connections.

Connecting to the local

As the current academic literature indicates, globally, the food chains have become long, complex and opaque (Norberg-Hodge et al., 2013). The connection

between producers and consumers has all but disappeared in this complexity. Food discourse often emphasises the negative effects of this disconnection. The disconnection between consumption and production is seen as a cause of dislocation and dis-embedding of local communities, and as causing a loss of local identity and sense of community (Feagan, 2007; Kimbrell, 2002). Local food systems, facilitated by local markets or farm shops are presented as a possible solution to this state of alienation. It's the problem that Marx (1971) saw as being partly created by commodity fetishism - the structuring of human interaction through commodities - solved by commodity fetishism. Food, it is argued, can be a connecting factor, tying members of the community together through connections between consumers and producers (Feagan, 2007). This theme of the market place as a social space where consumers can connect with each other and where personal connection between producers and consumers is possible is prominent in the online mediation of the Kirkstall Deli Market. Through this part of food discourse, a moral responsibility to the local community is created. It is the moral responsibility to create cohesiveness, by forming personal connections between producing and consuming members of the community

The scene for the market as a social space is set in many of the social media posts. Consumers post pictures of themselves enjoying their food and their time at the market as a social activity, with groups of friends or with family. The market organisers actively encourage people to come and enjoy the market as a family. On their webpage on the council website they have a picture of the market on a sunny day, with a family with a stroller in the foreground, and while there is not much text on the page, they do include the information that baby change facilities are available at the market (Kirkstall Abbey Markets, 2018).

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fig. 1c27 (Kirkstall Abbey Markets, 2018)*

Throughout the online mediation of the Kirkstall Deli Market, the emphasis is very much on food consumption as a social activity rather than a practical necessity. The organisers tweet encouragement for consumers to come visit the

market on market days, and these tweets will often include references to the market as a family day out, as a social event to be enjoyed with others.

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fig. lc28 (Kirkstall Deli, 2017)*

Other community organisations also promote the market as such:

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fig. lc29 (Kirkstall Forge, 2017)*

Consumers who visit the market post images and text illustrating their visit to the market as social as well, referencing family and friends they came with, or posting images of family events such as Mother's Day spent at the market, such as in this post:

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fig. lc30*

Personal connections between consumers and producers

The idea of the intersection between consumption and production as a social space that is relevant to the local community is something that big multinationals aim to tap in to. Starbucks for instance, have several community initiatives in which they try to connect with the local communities that they are physically located in, by offering space, time and coffee to community groups and local charities (Starbucks, 2018). Big supermarket chains such as Tesco and Sainsbury's have community impact programmes in which they support local community groups and charities. Sainsbury's has a commitment to local communities on their website: 'We'll support our local communities in relevant and impactful ways and generate over £400 million to charitable causes by 2020' (Sainsbury's, 2018). Tesco advertises their Community Champions programme: 'We are really proud to work with hundreds of charities and local community organisations with the help of our Community Champions' (Tesco, 2018).

The language they use to describe these programmes reveals two important differences between the connection that the big chains have with the local community, and the connection that the local producers and consumers have. The big chains have a relationship of 'support'. They take on a supportive role to local communities, but that leaves them outside of those communities; they facilitate rather than participate. The language of support also places them in a relationship to the local community that is inherently unequal; they have the choice to support, or not to; the choice is entirely up to them. The inequality in the relationship is also created by Sainsbury's by communicating the large amounts of money generated, and in the example of Tesco, that they work with hundreds of charities. The online discourse around the Kirkstall Deli Market shows a contrast to this inequality, where the producers and consumers are constructed as equal participants within the community. It can be seen in the communication on Twitter by the market organisation, thanking both groups for their participation:

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fig. lc31 (Kirkstall Deli, 2017)*

A considerable part of the Deli Market discourse is about the personal connections that consumers and producers make both at the physical market, and online through social media. This is partly what the Fairtrade Foundation tries to do in their communication materials when they introduce a farmer and their family, to make that personal connection (Fairtrade Foundation, 2016). While this is possibly effective in making a point about the category of person that the foundation aims to help, the consumer knows that they are not likely to be buying from that specific producer when they buy Fairtrade products, so that farmer remains a symbol rather than a person with whom they can connect personally like they can at the Kirkstall Deli Market. The online mediation of the market shows the connections in different ways, for instance in the descriptions of traders by the market organisation as friendly:

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fig. lc32 (Kirkstall Deli, 2017)

It can also be seen in this tweet by a producer, calling their customers lovely, and saying they are looking forward to seeing them:

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fig. lc33 (Little Bubble Box, 2017)

The same producer also had a friendly interaction with a customer on Twitter:

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fig. lc34 (Little Bubble Box, 2017)

These friendly interactions between producers and consumers can be seen throughout the online mediation of the market. Another way in which the traders are constructed as accessible, as ‘real’ people with whom a personal connection can be made rather than as distant businesses, is by the inclusion of their families in the discourse. For instance by posting images of family members with them at the market, by posting about how their family or their family roles have influenced their products, or a post made by a producer’s sister, encouraging consumers to visit her sister’s stall at the market.

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fig. lc35

---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. lc36 (theyummyyank Instagram, 2016b)

---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. lc37 (Hedgebotherer Instagram, 2016)

Another way in which the Deli Market discourse constructs consumers and producers as equal members of the local community is by showing both perspectives on the market, both from the consumers' point of view, and from the producers side, a view from behind their stall, with their customers in it.

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fig. lc38 (theyummyyank Instagram, 2014)*

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. lc39 (Bloombakers Instagram, 2016)*

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. lc40 (Slowrisebagels Instagram, 2017)*

Rousseau at the market: the myth of authenticity in food discourse

Part of the Kirkstall deli market discourse are images that are associated with the concept of the 'noble savage'; for instance of hard graft all through the night, cooking on coal fire, and foraging food.

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fig. lc41 (leedsbreadcoop Instagram, 2014)*

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. lc42 (Hedgebotherer Instagram, 2016)*

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. lc43 (Yorkshire_pizzaco Instagram, 2015)*

For Rousseau (1984 [1712-1778]), the primitive man's life was an authentic way of life: close to nature and in a small close-knit community. Rousseau's ideal of authenticity links it closely to the discourse in which modernity and its associated consumer culture is seen as having caused disconnection between

those sharing a social structure, and this is the view that has become a central part of contemporary culture in general (C. Taylor, 1991). Consumer culture in general has taken up the idea of authenticity as Rousseau related it to the primitive tribe's unspoilt way of life (Goldman & Papson, 1996), making authenticity into a 'cornerstone of contemporary marketing' (Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry, 2003, p. 21).

The concept of authenticity in consumption discourse is not immediately obviously an example of morality in consumer culture in the way that for instance Fairtrade is. But it is as much a reflexive reaction to modernity as the earlier examples of explicitly ethical consumption. The choice for an electric car, body wash that's not tested on animals, and Fairtrade coffee are reflexive reactions to certain perceived symptoms of modernity; pollution, cruelty to animals and global inequality respectively. The central role authenticity plays in marketing in general and in food marketing specifically, is the reflexive reaction to the perceived symptom of large scale society and its mass produced sameness, of products and consumers alike. Items that are mass-produced in factories are seen as artificial, consuming them means extending the self with that artificiality. Authenticity becomes the antidote to this. In this context, authenticity has become an essential part of the myth that creates community in food discourse. Earlier in this chapter, it has been argued that the length and complexity of the global food chain has led to alienation. The consumers and producers at either end of this food chain are too far removed from each other to form a meaningful connection. Part of the alienation between consumers and producers is that the food chain has become complex and opaque; it is much less likely for consumers to know exactly where their food is from, or how it was produced. In a local food system, part of how producers and consumers connect is through a transparency in the shorter food chain. Producers offer a view into the production of the food, which creates a sense of openness and authenticity, which supports making the personal connections needed for community cohesiveness.

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fig. lc44 (Thebottledbakingco Instagram, 2017)

---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. lc45 (Bloombakers Instagram, 2017)

---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. lc46 (Roops_leeds Instagram, 2017)

Authenticity is an important characteristic of the connection between the local producers and consumers. It is what sets that relationship apart from the alienating relationship they have with non-local producers and big chains such as Sainsbury's and Starbucks. The concept of authenticity plays a big part throughout food discourse and it is especially prominent in the Kirkstall Deli Market discourse. It can be recognised in the construction of local identity, where foods with different levels and types of connection to the community are brought into a narrative of what is seen as authentic in and to the local community, but it is present in many other ways. The use of the word 'real' for example, is used to describe specific food like bread, or food in general. Denotations such as 'artisan', and 'home made' are used in the same way and to the same end; to evoke a sense of authenticity, such as in the following Instagram posts:

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fig. lc47

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fig. lc48

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fig. lc49

Consumer capital and the foodie habitus

Bourdieu's theory of the habitus argues that taste is not an exclusively personal matter, but should be seen as the embodiment of a person's social environment, that is simultaneously formative of that social environment. Consumption

choices that are made based on taste, are therefore formative of the social context, its culture, myth and morality. Bourdieu argues that people who share a habitus, or are part of the same 'field' will try to make a distinction within that field, using their different types of capital. He defined social, economic and cultural capital, and Sassatelli has argued that there is a fourth type of capital; 'consumer capital'. As discussed in the chapter about consumption in the context of the social environment, she suggests that

'consumer capital may be conceived of as the result of previous consumer experiences, which are themselves linked, but irreducible, to class and formal education, involving the workings of large mass oriented institutions both within the market (such as global brands and mass media) and without it (such as social movements)' (Sassatelli, 2007, pp. 95 - 96).

The presumed middle-class habitus of visitors of the average deli or farmers' market is something to take into account when thinking about how morality is shaped through the discourse surrounding these types of events; those with a lower than average income will find it hard to afford paying four pounds for a loaf of artisanal sourdough bread, and that needs to be kept in mind. But the cost of products is not the only thing that affects who visits and who does not. Consumer capital is a concept that shows that there is more to it than that. Lifestyles and subcultures, Sassatelli argues, are central to social identities that have been shaped in the context of consumer culture, with the use of consumer capital, in much the same way that social class historically has done and to a large degree still does. The consumer cultural identity of the 'foodie' is an example of this. A foodie's consumer capital will include knowledge of what is seen as 'authentic' and be able to use that knowledge to make a distinction within the foodie field, and also to exchange that consumer capital for other types of capital, weaving consumption choices into the social fabric where morality is shaped and manifested.

One of the things habitus does, in much the same way that Barthesian myth does, is that it normalises, even naturalises elements of the field; the conventions of the field are presented as 'just the way things are'. In the field of

the foodie habitus, this idea is evoked through associating foods or methods of preparation as 'authentic'. The associations behind it, of the romantic Rousseauian concept of the primitive man who forages for food that is then cooked on fire, are naturalised and consumed together with the artisanal sourdough bread. This creates a space for morality to be shaped and perpetuated in consumer culture without being explicitly recognised as such.

The moral responsibility created to the local community is to create a cohesive and thriving community. This is done in three intricately connected ways. Buying local food to create a sustainable market is a responsibility consumers have to local producers, who in turn carry the responsibility to offer a diversity of products to local consumers. This range is part of how the local community creates and maintains a local identity, which incorporates influences from outside of what is traditional to it, and makes them its own; through forming personal connections between local producers and local consumers as equally participating members of the community, these connections are characterised by authenticity.

Conclusion

The economic is a relevant factor in the construction of moral responsibility to all three of the analysed levels of community. The early 20th century economist Fetter (1905) already asserted that consumers vote with their pennies, and this remains one of the most prominent ways in which morality interacts with consumption. By spending money on a product, a consumer chooses to enter a relationship with a producer. This producer can be physically and socially far removed from the consumer, or it can be their neighbour. This relationship can have different power dynamics, and these will depend in part on how trade systems are organised, but as has been shown throughout this chapter, these power dynamics also depend on how these relationships are constructed in the mediation of consumer culture. These dynamics are important because they help define who has a moral responsibility to whom. The fact that this economic factor is relevant across these three levels also illustrates one of the reasons it's impossible to be a perfectly ethical consumer. Money can only be spent once,

which means that consumers have to make moral decisions about who to enter that moral relationship with: potatoes grown by a local farmer, or the Fairtrade rice grown by a farmer in Asia?

The second thread that can be found through more than one level of community and the construction of moral responsibility to it, is authenticity. The concept of authenticity is an entirely social construct, and this chapter has shown that it is used to construct moral responsibility to communities. It does this by giving products, production methods, people and relationships between people a morally loaded connotation of 'truth', or 'realness'. Responsibility to the global community is constructed in part by showing images of the farmers who the foundation aims to construct that moral responsibility to, giving them a face, with the goal of making them a 'real' person rather than an abstract idea to the consumer. At the national level authenticity is used most explicitly in the trade schemes that protect products that are deemed authentic. Even if there is no objective way of telling champagne produced in Champagne from that produced in a neighbouring region, only the first is deemed to be authentic, and a moral responsibility to the community of that region is constructed alongside a moral responsibility to the other communities that have products protected in the same way. At the local level, authenticity is used to construct the foods that are produced and consumed as more authentic and therefore better, and the personal connections between local producers and consumers as more 'real' than connections to non-local producers.

The moral responsibility that is created in food discourse is gendered. As pointed out in the case study of Innocent's big knit, which is a very clear example of it, the responsibilities that are constructed in food consumption discourse are designed in a way that results in them being carried more by women than by men. As women remain to shoulder most of the responsibility for everyday household shopping, of which food is the largest part (D'Souza & Taghian, 2017; Granot et al., 2010; Rhode, 2014; Silverstein et al., 2009), women are still the ones making the majority of food consumer decisions. This means that they are the ones making the moral decisions that form an integral part of consumption. Brands are very aware of this division of labour, and consequently, their communication is, while not exclusively, mainly aimed at female consumers. As a

result, the moral responsibility constructed in that communication, is aimed at women more than at men.

What connects all the ways in which moral responsibility is constructed in food discourse that this chapter has looked at is that they are ultimately all about cohesiveness of a level of community. It's what connects buying Fairtrade products and the accompanying moral responsibility to create better levels of equality globally to buying smoothies with knitted hats and the moral responsibility to fight loneliness in the nation's elderly. It connects the moral responsibility to form authentic personal connections over locally baked and instagrammed bread, to the moral responsibility to the nation's health by advocating for a sugar tax. This chapter shows how morality plays a role in food discourse; all the moral responsibilities identified in it are characterised by their common end goal, which is to form a cohesive community.

4. TOMS: Giving shoes and selling morality

On the surface, the morality in the discourse created by a brand that is as explicitly ethical as TOMS is would seem obvious. In this chapter's analysis of their communication I aim to show how there is a layer below that surface in which ideology is created. By analysing this layer, I aim to make clear that there is much more to the ideology that the brand creates and perpetuates. Through the question *How is morality constructed in the definition of needs in consumer culture?*, this chapter explores the different ways acknowledged and under-acknowledged manifestations of morality take shape in consumer culture and looks at whether these manifestations affect contemporary consumption patterns. I do this by analysing them through Barthes' structure of myth and focusing on how the brand's communication defines needs for the different groups they interact with.

The brand

TOMS is a brand that presents itself strongly as an ethical brand. The brand's origin story finds the founder - Blake Mycoskie - in Argentina, where he is struck by the fact that children are going about their day barefoot. He decides he wants to provide these children with shoes, and comes up with the idea that a for-profit company would be a more sustainable way to do this than the more traditional charity models, because he wouldn't have to rely on donations. From this idea, the company TOMS is born. For every pair of shoes that is sold, TOMS gives a pair of shoes to a child in need. While the company started with shoes as its only product, they have since branched out and provide other basic needs such as sight-saving surgery linked to the sale of sunglasses, safe birth kits linked to the sale of handbags and clean and accessible water linked to the sale of Fairtrade coffee. Most of these people that receive TOMS help live in the Global South, but they do also have programs that give to children in the United States, where the brand is originally from. TOMS is not a person, but comes from the word 'tomorrow' in the TOMS motto 'Shoes for a Better Tomorrow'. Since their start ten years ago they have branched out to other countries and now sell their

products in Europe and the more affluent countries of the Middle East (Blake Mycoskie, 2012).

The combination of a social and a profit goal makes the company an odd creature in both the world of business and that of charity, as they seem to be paradoxical. The idea of combining charity and business is not unique though, many businesses have programmes that have a social rather than a profit goal, and likewise, charity organisations are taking cues from the business world on how to be effective in giving aid. Other combinations of the two worlds include initiatives such as venture- or entrepreneurial philanthropy (Rath & Schuyt, 2014), where donations are given to organisations that have social rather than profit goals. Micro credit is another example, it is an initiative in which small loans are given to third world would be entrepreneurs, to support them in setting up their own business (Ahlin & Jiang, 2008). While not unique, as a company that has these two seemingly paradoxical goals, TOMS makes a very good case study for the analysis of morality in consumer culture. They are one of the first companies to operate in this way and have done so very successfully in terms of both profits and brand value, and in reaching the social goals they have set for themselves. They are a leader in the field of social entrepreneurship and their commitment to creating and telling their story provides a rich source of material for analysis.

Two genres

In chapter 2 of this thesis, Mandeville's poem about the beehive's banishing of evil and the ensuing chaos illustrated how important both that which is seen as evil and that which is seen as virtuous are to the functioning of social structures. This interweaving of both that which is seen as the good and what is seen as the bad applies to consumer culture as well, and much of contemporary scholarship on consumer culture acknowledges that they are both part of a whole, and simply identifying and banishing the bad elements, to 'leave some untainted good' (Barnett et al., 2005, p. 10), would be impossible. TOMS is a brand that has both these elements of consumer culture, those that are often perceived as bad, such as the mass production, the pollution of shipping their products, the profit goal and the resulting inequality, and the fast fashion element that leads to high

volumes of waste. It also has the parts that are seen as good, for example their focus on helping those in need, the attention they bring to the plight of others, their bringing together people from different parts of the world, and their message of care. TOMS is a fantastic example of how these two parts function as parts of a whole, and how one is inextricable from the other.

While TOMS is a for-profit company, it has what they call 'giving to people in need', otherwise known as charity, at the core of its business model. As such, their marketing draws on two genres: commercial marketing communication, and the non-profit charity genre. TOMS is very explicit about both its social mission and the fact that it is a for-profit company, and explains why they see that combination as something that is a more sustainable way of offering aid as they don't have to depend on donations, they generate their own income to spend on their social goals. Implicitly, it is of course only sustainable as aid if it is also sustainable as a profit generating company that can keep delivering that aid. This combination of drawing on a social as well as on a profit goal to inform a company's marketing communication is not unique to TOMS, but they do it in a very clear way, giving weight to both more equally, rather than their communication being mostly commercial with a mere tokenistic mention of a sustainable practice in the Corporate Social Responsibility report.

The charity and commercial genres can look very similar, but the charity genre does have certain characteristics that can be distinguished. Examples of typical visuals of charities that have similar goals to TOMS are of children with some indication of hardship. Another familiar image in this kind of charity context is the young mother, who is often portrayed with her infant, also with indications of hardship. The following examples were taken from the websites of three of the biggest children's charities in the UK, all from the home page of the charity. Fig. g1 is a screenshot of the Oxfam website, fig g2 is a screenshot of an image in a carousel on the UK Unicef homepage, and fig g3 is taken from Save the Children's homepage. Fig. g4 and fig. g5 are examples of images that share characteristics with the first 3 examples, but these were taken from the TOMS homepage. Similar characteristics are that both sets of images show indications of poverty. The most striking difference between the two sets of images is that the people in the second set are smiling and are shown as having received help.

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fig. g1 (Oxfam, 2016)*

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. g2 (Unicef, 2016)*

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. g3 (Save the Children, 2016)*

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. g4 (TOMS, 2016i)*

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. g5 (TOMS, 2016i)*

Visually, the combination of the two genres is not hard to find in TOMS marketing communication. On the website TOMS has two main menu items at the top of every page: 'shop' and 'how we give'. 'Shop' predictably leads to the web-shop where the potential customer will find the TOMS products sorted into categories 'women,' 'men,' 'kids,' 'gift cards' and 'sale', exactly as one would expect a web-shop to be organised. 'How we give' leads to the sub-items 'improving lives' and 'our blog', and has a wealth of information on how TOMS improves lives. The physical TOMS shop, or as they call it 'the TOMS community outpost' in London has the same kind of images that you see on the website in it, large prints of TOMS employees with smiling dark-haired children. Their marketing materials, including the commercial items like the packaging and price tags, all have images on them that are closer to the charity genre than to the commercial genre. The same goes for the digital communication around a sale; an order confirmation will have a picture of two black girls in school uniforms. The shoes the girls are wearing are what TOMS calls their 'giving shoes', the shoes they give away can be recognised by their simple black design.

The accompanying text links the two genres as well; with the title line in bold: *'Thank you for your order and being part of the movement!'* (fig. g6).

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fig. g6 (TOMS, 2016r)

At first glance, this combination seems paradoxical. Certainly, there are some contradictions; TOMS commercial communication is aimed at selling shoes to people who almost certainly already have more than one pair and don't need them for protection from foot disease, and the same goes for their sunglasses, bags and coffee; they are consumer items, bought not just for protecting the feet, but also for instance to keep up with fashion, for comfort, or in the case of TOMS shoes, to show an ethical awareness. TOMS communication that draws on the charity genre is aimed at persuading people of the need for shoes for children in need, the need for eye care for people in countries where it is not normally accessible to everyone in need of it, and the need for support for midwives so that they can help expectant mothers give birth healthily. The seemingly contradictory nature lies in the fact that one goal of persuasion is related to self-interest, and the other is related to selflessness. The context of a long history of debate and discourse around the issue of consumption as either moral or immoral sharpens this contrast.

The use of the commercial and charity genres, and their underlying commercial and social goals, has attracted critique and criticism of the company and their branding. These critiques can have to do with the company being judged as a charity, with their aid being judged as inefficient (Hackel, 2013). It would for instance be more efficient to build latrines to prevent hookworm from spreading, rather than giving shoes to avoid the bacteria getting to the feet of children walking through fields that are used instead of latrines (Favini, 2013). Others have investigated the effect of free shoes on local shoe markets in El Salvador, one of the TOMS giving sites. Their assumption was that the effect would be negative, as similar research on the effect of food and second-hand apparel giving had found negative effects for local businesses. Instead, they found that in their experimental set-up that while the children used the shoes

often, there was no significant effect on the shoe market in El Salvador (Wydick, Katz, & Janet, 2014). A criticism that is related directly to the use of the charity genre in their communication materials is that TOMS uses what has been called 'poverty porn' (Horan, 2016). Poverty, or development porn is described as using visuals of the misfortune of others, in effect exploiting their situation to increase donations to a cause (Mittelman & Neilson, 2011). Even though the brand's combination of the pursuit of profit and charity is critiqued widely, the brand is successful. Cynicism allows consumers to negate the tension between the two genres. The narrative that is created by the brand resonates, even if consumers could claim that they 'don't really believe'.

There is a difference between the images of misfortune that charities tend to use and the ones TOMS selects. Charities will tend to focus on the misfortune that needs to be solved, they are chosen to make the viewer feel uneasy. TOMS images are chosen to make the viewer feel good, the pictures are mostly of children that are happy, they are playing, they are in school, they look healthy, or at least on their way to health. There is something to be said for the idea that that is also not a fair representation, as instead of presenting those who live in poverty as perpetually miserable and in need, which is a misrepresentation tilted towards one end of the scale, TOMS perhaps glosses over the misfortune by presenting a romanticised image of people living in poverty, tilting the scale all the way to the other end. Another critique comes from Wilson (2015), whose work on one-for-one initiatives such as Table for Two is discussed in relation to morality in food discourse in the previous chapter, has pointed out that 'one for one'- type brands like TOMS sell inequality with their products for their customers to indulge in. TOMS has published a giving report in 2013, a 23-page illustrated report that explains what TOMS gives, where they give, how they give and why they do it (TOMS, 2013). There is one stark example in this giving report that is an example of how this inequality is created and used to contrast the two, it is a line about the type of shoe the children in need are gifted; *'We don't give glitters or wedge styles to children. Promise. Not to say they wouldn't like them, but the shoes on children's feet are designed for everyday wear'*. The line illustrates clearly that there is a difference between the shoes for the people that buy them, those shoes are fashionable, a luxury and the shoes for the children in

need are just the opposite: they are necessary items. As asserted in the second chapter of this thesis, the definition of needs requires moral consideration.

The charity and commercial genres have more in common than might be obvious at first glance, as they are both aimed at persuasion. As such, for profit and non-profit organisations tend to use strategies to persuade their audiences that look superficially different but are at base level very similar. The difference lies partly in playing on different parts of people's image of themselves, and will aim to tune in to different kinds of 'wants' that the potential customers or donators have. Charities will focus on the wrong they are trying to right in the world. They will persuade by showing or otherwise pointing out the difference between how the world is and how it should be, which could be anything from showing the world with a stray puppy in it and the world with a puppy in a happy home, or a world with and without people living in poverty and all the hardship that comes with it. Commercial organisations follow the same mechanism, but usually stress a problem on a more personal level, more along the lines of showing you the difference between yourself as you are now and the person you could be if you buy their product, which can be anything from being a better parent than you are now because you drive their much safer car, to being a better-looking person because you use their superior skin cream. The similarities between the two genres are why companies can draw on both these genres, and it can look reasonably seamless; it stops being entirely clear where one starts and the other begins. Both genres rely on cynicisms' ability to dissolve tension between what people believe and what people do; a consumer doesn't have to believe their skin will look like the model's unblemished complexion to buy the cream, in the same way that someone doesn't have to believe that a puppy or a child will really have a better life to make a donation to a charity promising to work towards those things. Using elements of both genres is one way of combining morality and commerciality in a way where the distinction between the two becomes a little more blurred. Some forms of morality in consumption will be obvious, but others are less explicit. The following paragraphs will look into this in more depth.

Acknowledged manifestations of morality in TOMS marketing communication

Morality is a very clear and obvious theme in TOMS' narrative and it is here that the first order of myth is constructed. The different ways that brands connect themselves to these moral themes are easily recognisable in TOMS marketing communication. The most obvious of course being the focus on the 'one for one' aspect, the giving of a product or service to a person in need when a TOMS customer purchases a TOMS product. But there are other overt links to morality in their marketing communication, for example in the corporate social responsibility statement, and in the description of where and how TOMS source their coffee; fairly and sustainably, as you would expect from a brand like TOMS. These familiar ways of connecting morality to consumption are what I'll call 'acknowledged manifestations of morality' in marketing communication; they are explicit and easily recognisable as moral themes and they are clearly linked to the brand in the brand's communication materials. The acknowledged forms of morality follow 3 themes, 'giving' being the central one. The other two are 'sustainability' and 'working conditions'.

Giving

With every product you purchase, TOMS will help a person in need. One for one.

This sentence can be found on most marketing materials TOMS uses, from shoeboxes to the website. It is their clear and simple message about what they stand for as a company, they are upfront about their values. The morality is clear and acknowledged; there are people in need, and TOMS helps them when their customers make that possible. This commitment is a large part of what the company is, and they communicate it clearly; giving is part of the very fabric of TOMS as an organisation.

Sustainability

TOMS links the moral theme sustainability to their brand through their corporate social responsibility statement, in which they give some details about the materials they use for their shoes and shoeboxes:

We offer shoes with sustainable and vegan materials and are working to expand these offerings. These shoes include natural hemp, organic cotton, and/or recycled polyester and these materials are used on the upper, liner and/or the insole cover (instead of our standard suede insole). All of our shoe boxes are made from 80% recycled post-consumer waste and are printed with soy ink (TOMS, 2016e).

TOMS is also involved in several shoe industry related organisations that work in the field of sustainability:

Currently, we are members of the AAFA (American Apparel and Footwear Association) and are active participants in their Environmental and Social Responsibility Committees. We are also members of Textile Exchange and are working with them to support our efforts to use more sustainable materials. You'll find TOMS® at sustainability conferences and industry gatherings, sharing best practices within the world of sustainable design and responsible operations (TOMS, 2016e).

The vegan materials do get a little more attention outside of the CSR statement, as it's made clear in the shop which of the shoes are vegan, with digital tags in the web-shop, and as a separate page in the shop where only the vegan products are offered.

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fig. a1 (TOMS, 2016ab)*

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fig. a2 (TOMS, 2016o)*

Working conditions

The third acknowledged form of morality that TOMS links itself to is 'working conditions'. TOMS addresses the common concerns conscious consumers will have about a company that mass-produces in countries known for less than

stellar working conditions in their CSR statement. They specifically mention slavery and human trafficking as something they are working to avoid.

As we've disclosed previously in our Giving Report, our shoes are made in China, Ethiopia and Argentina. We are aware of the challenges associated with overseeing a global supply chain and our global staff actively manages and oversees our suppliers and vendors to ensure that our corporate responsibility standards are upheld. On an annual basis, we require our direct suppliers to certify that the materials incorporated into our products are procured in accordance with all applicable laws in the countries they do business in, including laws regarding slavery and human trafficking. We also clearly define appropriate business practices for our employees and hold them accountable for complying with our policies, including the prevention of slavery and human trafficking within our supply chain (TOMS, 2016e).

Under-acknowledged forms of morality in TOMS marketing communication

Apart from the openly acknowledged link between TOMS marketing and morality, there is another way in which morality interacts with TOMS marketing which is less overt. There is a morality that underlies decisions on whom to help, where to help, and how to help, and this morality is not readily recognisable. In the following part of this chapter I will look at how the second order of myth is created in TOMS' communication. By looking at the way the brand defines needs, by how it answers moral questions of who is deserving of help, and how those defined as both in need of help and worthy of it are aided. These under-acknowledged forms of morality shape not only TOMS marketing. They influence all brands' ethical marketing decisions, whether they make a smaller scale effort occasionally by donating to a charity on an ad hoc basis or have a more structural connection to social goals. TOMS is a good case study to look at these under-acknowledged forms because their structural commitment and communication about it is illustrative of the way these forms influence contemporary consumption patterns. The following paragraphs will look into

how TOMS helps, whom TOMS helps, where TOMS helps and finally at what is in it for their customers.

How to help

The way TOMS helps can be categorised into four main themes; 'health', 'education', 'economic', and the more elusive 'confidence'. These themes are very similar to the way that most Western charities operate. The themes are not mutually exclusive, in fact they are all parts of a very recognisable narrative. The average consumer will be very familiar with the notion of helping people who live in poverty to become financially better off by helping them with health issues, educating them, and then creating jobs for these healthy and educated people. The end goal is often formulated as helping people become independent. Confidence is something that is less often seen as an explicit way to help, but it fits the narrative of helping people through economic empowerment very well. The following sub-paragraphs will look at how TOMS marketing shows how TOMS structures the way they help around the themes 'health', 'education', 'economic', and 'confidence'.

Health

Health is a very central theme to TOMS marketing. All four of their 'giving products' are spoken about in terms of what they mean for the recipients' health. Shoes are related to health by introducing TOMS audiences to several diseases that people who don't wear shoes, especially in tropical climates, are vulnerable to. This is done explicitly in the overview of 'what your purchase (shoes in this case) supports', where 'improved health' is the number one point, illustrated with a symbol of a medicine bag.

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fig. h1 (TOMS, 2016f)

In the giving report the link is made explicitly too, with quotes such as:

Shoes help protect children's feet from cuts, infections and diseases. When children are healthy, they can attend school, fight minor illnesses and grow up to reach their potential (TOMS, 2013, p. 5).

And: Shoes act as a simple barrier, providing an extra layer of protection against soil transmitted infections. The combination of disease fighting drugs and new shoes pack a one-two punch against Neglected Tropical Disease for children – Rick Santos, president and CEO of giving partner IMA world health (TOMS, 2013, p. 4).

The giving report gives some more specific information on jiggers, podoconiosis, hookworm and tetanus; diseases that are prevented by shoe-wearing and has illustrated them with symbolic representation of the disease carrying bugs.

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fig. h2 (TOMS, 2013, p. 5)*

On the website TOMS explains what they are doing to fight one of these diseases, podoconiosis, in more depth:

Podoconiosis

So far, your purchases have helped TOMS invest over \$2 million in fighting podoconiosis. Podoconiosis (podo, for short) is a debilitating disease that causes painful swelling of the feet and legs due to irritants found in certain countries' soils. Podo is easily preventable and treatable with basic foot hygiene and shoes. Since TOMS Founder Blake Mycoskie encountered people suffering from podo on a 2008 trip to Ethiopia, TOMS has joined professionals in multiple fields to work toward eliminating the disease. According to the World Health Organization, about 4 million people are infected with podo, and most of them live in Ethiopia.

SINCE 2008, TOMS HAS:

- *Advocated for podo's inclusion on the World Health Organization's Neglected Tropical Disease list*
- *Supported treatment for over 11,000 Ethiopian podo patients*

- *Provided prevention education to over 500,000 at-risk people*
- *Supported the formation of Footwork: The International Podoconiosis Initiative*
- *Helped hire Ethiopian shoe shiners to make custom shoes for podo sufferers*
- *Produced Giving Shoes in Ethiopia since 2009*
- *Partnered with IOCC to help Ethiopian children protect themselves from the disease (TOMS, 2016n).*

Another way the health theme is brought into the narrative is in the description of countries where the shoes are produced. Most descriptions include a reference to a local health issue and how TOMS is addressing it.

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fig. h3 (TOMS, 2016ae)*

TOMS also describes the shoes as a way to get children to health screenings, or the ways in which TOMS shoes are integrated into broader health programmes where they are looked after and that help keep them healthy. This is communicated in visual charts that give an overview of TOMS giving impact, and for instance in the profiles of the children that shoes are given to, such as in the blog story on an eleven year old boy from Nicaragua:

Since 2012, Jose Julian has received seven pairs of TOMS Shoes as part of Feed the Children's Child Development Program. Jose Julian attends the community-feeding center where he receives meals and other types of benefits, like shoes and school supplies. Each day he is provided with a warm meal so he can get the proper nutrients to grow to be strong and healthy (TOMS, 2016g).

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fig. h4 (TOMS, 2016g)*

When a customer buys a pair of sunglasses from TOMS, they help restore someone's sight. This can be done by giving a pair of prescription glasses, but can

also go further than that, for instance by performing cataract or trachoma surgery. On the website this is visualised with a birds eye picture of medical staff in medical green scrubs performing surgery. The viewer is looking over the surgeon's shoulder, as if they're right there performing the surgery with them, making the viewer feel involved in this procedure.

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fig. h5 (TOMS, 2016h)

The third product, the TOMS handbags, are linked to maternal health in their marketing as follows; *TOMS Bags purchases support our Giving Partners in delivering the vital materials and training needed to help provide a safe birth regardless of the facility* (TOMS, 2016p). They go on to specify that:

Infection is a leading cause of death for mothers and newborns worldwide. By providing clean birth conditions and skilled attendants, nearly half a million of lives can be saved. TOMS Bags purchases support our Giving Partners in delivering the vital materials and training needed to help provide a safer birth, regardless of the facility (TOMS, 2016p).

These texts are accompanied by images of smiling expectant mothers, being seen to by a medical professional, or being instructed on the importance of hygiene.

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fig. h6 (TOMS, 2016p)

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fig. h7 (TOMS, 2016p)

The four themes of under-acknowledged manifestations of morality are not mutually exclusive, and often their effect on each other is made explicit. Just as health is linked to education when it concerns children, health is linked to economic opportunity when it relates to adults. This quote is an example from an

article on the TOMS blog, which contains the story of the product developer behind the safe birth kits:

Our challenge is to help people see that a healthy mom and baby create an economically sustainable community. Healthy mothers can work, and mothers with healthy babies can accomplish more and help others in the family. Health allows everything else to happen (TOMS, 2016a).

The story is illustrated with pictures of hospitals and the birth kit itself, which has medical equipment in it.

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fig. h8 (TOMS, 2016a)

The fourth TOMS consumer product and donation combination are coffee and water respectively. *Each bag of TOMS Roasting Co. Coffee provides 140 liters of safe water, a week's supply, to a person in need (TOMS, 2016ac).* TOMS links the product to health explicitly in the following text in the website:

Safe water. More than 780 million people don't have access to safe water systems. That's why we're working with Giving Partners that have expertise in water, sanitation and hygiene to help create sustainable water systems in seven countries, from the same regions where we source our coffee beans. The World Health Organization recommends 20 liters of safe water per day for adequate health and hygiene (TOMS, 2016ac).

In the overview image of how the purchase of TOMS coffee and the linked gift of water helps, health is listed as the first point:

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fig. h9 (TOMS, 2016ac)

Education

Education is the next main theme around which TOMS giving is organised. Shoes are linked to education on the website, and the link is expanded upon in the giving report. Education is presented as a key solution to end poverty, the logic being that educated children will be able to make a difference in their own and other's lives by earning a livelihood when they grow up. There is no intrinsic link between wearing shoes and being able to attend school, that link needs to be created. TOMS does this by linking shoes to different things that help children get to school that have something to do with shoes. The main way they do it is by referencing rules around uniforms that are required for school attendance, as TOMS reports that many countries have rules for wearing shoes to be allowed to attend school.

Shoes can help kids enroll and stay in school because they are often required for school attendance in many countries. And every year of school can increase a child's future earnings by 10%. Education is the key to mobility and vital to breaking the poverty cycle (TOMS, 2013, p. 7).

On the website, the story about Jose, the 11 year-old boy discussed earlier in the paragraph on health, also links his TOMS shoes to his education, because the health he has gained because of wearing his TOMS shoes now helps him to get better grades.

Prior to receiving new TOMS Shoes, Jose Julian had some rubber boots but found them uncomfortable to wear. Jose Julian's mother says that since receiving his first pair of shoes, Jose Julian is a healthier and happier child. The shoes protect his feet from injuries and have helped to improve his school grades. Jose Julian is an outstanding student and aspires to be a doctor so he can help others who are ill. Jose Julian loves to be active outside in his shoes, but has also found success by winning speech and poetry contests! (TOMS, 2016g)

Access to education is one of the points listed in the overview of what the purchase of sunglasses achieves. In the giving report, TOMS poses that they have

learned that: *Restoring sight restores independence, economic potential and educational opportunity. Individuals can return to school or work* (TOMS, 2013, p. 16). In the same giving report, the story of a 15 year-old boy who regained his sight after cataract surgery funded by TOMS ends with: *Since regaining his sight, Jose is determined to go back to school. When he grows up, he wants to be a doctor* (TOMS, 2013, p. 20).

Providing access to safe water is linked to education in for instance the interview with Ned Breslin, the CEO of water for people, which is the organization TOMS has partnered up with in their safe water venture.

What is the impact of providing clean water to communities in need?

The impact of water on people's lives is significant. Once water and sanitation are secure to where people can expect it every day — and are free from the burden of collecting water — they can free up their lives to do other things. People can go to school and economies strengthen. That's when countries actually can start to really develop (TOMS, 2016ad).

The connection between TOMS shoes is illustrated further in the story on Romelly, a 10 year-old girl in Liberia, who according to the report lives with her family in a community with many challenges.

"Getting good drinking water in this town is a problem," Romelly explains. And for the kids, there's no decent playground. But Romelly does like going to the local public school, where she's an enthusiastic student in the fourth grade. Along with her fellow classmates, Romelly received new TOMS Shoes from Giving Partner ChildFund, which distributes shoes alongside other school materials as part of its Child Friendly School Program. Further, ChildFund also works towards improving health and sanitation in the community. In most communities where ChildFund works, children walk long distances to schools and even to playgrounds. The distribution of TOMS Shoes is the first of its kind in these communities, and teachers report that TOMS has generated a new kind of feeling in children: they are eager to go to school (TOMS, 2013, p. 6).

The link between TOMS and education is also made using visuals, with children pictured in school uniforms, either in classrooms or outside, and of images of, for instance, a blackboard, as a symbol for school.

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fig. e1 (TOMS, 2013, p. 7)

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fig. e2 (TOMS, 2016j)

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fig. e3 (TOMS, 2016q)

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fig. e4 (TOMS, 2016c)

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fig. e5 (TOMS, 2016c)

Economy

As we've seen in the previous paragraphs, TOMS emphasises health, education and access to safe water as conditions that make it possible for people to work, to earn money to improve their lives. Apart from TOMS creating those conditions, the TOMS narrative includes two main ways of improving lives through 'making money' that make up the economy theme. The first is to create or support economic opportunity, and the second is what they themselves call 'social enterprise'. The following paragraph will look at both, starting with social enterprise.

TOMS itself started as a reaction to a feeling that charity wasn't as effective as enterprise could possibly be. TOMS' founder Blake Mycoskie was convinced that providing help through economic enterprise was more sustainable and would be a better solution than depending on donations. This is

a crucial part of the TOMS origin story, as it is the reason that the business model is as different from conventional for-profit businesses. This part of the TOMS narrative is the subject of the book *Start Something That Matters* (Blake Mycoskie, 2012), written by Blake Mycoskie. In it, he tells the story of how he built the company and gives advice on how to start a similar company. On the website, TOMS say that they support social enterprise through this advice and their Social Entrepreneurship Fund. They define social enterprise as:

A social enterprise is a business created to further a social purpose in a financially sustainable way. Social enterprises:

- *Provide income opportunities for people living in developing countries.*
- *Have a double bottom line and reinvest income from sales into the business of improving lives.*
- *Can be expanded or replicated to include additional products or communities (TOMS, 2016q).*

They position themselves as leaders in the field with these words:

When TOMS started, there weren't many companies like us. Since then, there has been an emergence of innovative organizations that are continuing to inspire social entrepreneurs and enterprises around the world. Today, we're honored to serve as a leader in the field and look forward to encouraging other like-minded companies for years to come (TOMS, 2016q).

The second main way in which economy is a part of the TOMS narrative is the creating and support of economic opportunity.

We've helped create jobs by establishing manufacturing and sourcing our coffee beans in the same regions where we have an established Giving presence. We produce our Giving Shoes in Argentina, China, Ethiopia, Haiti, India and Kenya (TOMS, 2016o).

Our factories

TOMS has always been committed to serving countries that have the greatest need, no matter the challenge. One of the greatest challenges we've faced in getting shoes to children in need is customs clearance - or the logistics of getting shoes from Point A to Point B. In some of the countries where we've seen great difficulty, our TOMS Giving Supply Chain team has decided to help by not only providing shoes to children in need, but also by creating jobs and establishing a manufacturing facility in those countries (TOMS, 2016o).

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fig ec1 (TOMS, 2016o)*

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fig ec2 (TOMS, 2016i)*

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fig ec3 (TOMS, 2016b)*

On the TOMS blog, there is a post from January 15, 2015 (TOMS, 2016b), written by the director of Giving operations, and it tells the story of his trip to Haiti, to visit the TOMS factory near Port au Prince. The story focuses on the fact that TOMS has created jobs and the impact this has on the workers and their family. He tells that the need for jobs existed before TOMS started the factory, that they were fulfilling a wish from the devastated community:

Just one week ago, Jan. 12, marked the five-year anniversary of the devastating earthquake. I heard a story where Bill Clinton visited Haiti shortly after the earthquake and asked what he could do to help- the answer he received 'jobs'. It was unbelievable to think that the foresight existed to create something sustainable.

The article also implicitly addresses some of the critiques TOMS has had about putting local shoe manufacturers out of business by giving away free shoes:

Over the last year, TOMS was able to work with our manufacturing partner, LXJ Golden Pacific to manufacture shoes in Port-au-Prince. A shoe industry did not exist prior in the city.

He stresses that it wasn't an easy thing to get off the ground:

Going into this tremendous project, I was proud that TOMS would make a commitment to help improve Haiti, and encourage other companies to do the same. We all knew it was going to be a tall order. We faced challenges just about every step of the way — from getting reliable sources of electricity and water, to training a staff that has never manufactured shoes to learning local laws and cultural norms — all to ensure operations ran smoothly every day.

The following part of the story is about the impact it has had on the employees and the people that depend on them:

But it wasn't until meeting our employees that I truly understood the impact of what we were doing. One factory employee, Carmita, cares for nine children in her family. Prior to working for TOMS she did not have a consistent job and mostly worked a variety of different day jobs to help make ends meet.

As I learned later, many people in Haiti often live off credit, some for their entire lives. Carmita's husband shared the story of the day she received her first paycheck. Carmita went back home to her family with her first paycheck. Not only was it the first paycheck from our factory, but also the first paycheck she received in her life. With her children back from school, the entire family circled together, hugged each other, shed some tears and celebrated. When asking her children what they wanted, her daughter responded immediately with "Candy!" with a big smile.

The last part of the article has the following quotes that link economic opportunity and the improvement of lives explicitly:

I truly appreciate being a part of an organization that allows others the opportunity to create a better life for themselves and their children.

Thanks to our manufacturing partner and our wonderful Giving Partners who reach the children of Haiti, and my unbelievable team that rolls with every punch and fights fires every day to make sure we stay in the business of improving lives. Without them and our customers, we wouldn't be able to do what we do.

Note especially the use of the words; 'the business of improving lives'. TOMS also tells their audience about how they support economic opportunity by buying products, and highlight the story of the people they support in this way.

Meet Josephine, a no-nonsense mother of eight children who owns the family-operated farm where our Rwanda roast beans come from. As buyers of sustainably sourced coffee beans, it's important for us to get to know our farmers personally and learn their amazing stories. Josephine lost her husband in Rwanda's genocide, but harbored a fierce determination to make a better life for her family. As one of the few female farm owners, she's turned her operation into one of the best-performing farms in the region (TOMS, 2016o).

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fig ec4 (TOMS, 2016o)*

Confidence

A fourth theme, which is not as prominent or perhaps as important as the first three themes but nevertheless noteworthy is confidence. It's a theme that's visible in the images in the website, sometimes made explicit such as in fig c1. Other times it's in the texts, where confidence and empowerment are given as ways to improve health and wellbeing, such as in the giving report:

A better tomorrow. although it's less measurable, our Giving Partners consistently tell us how new shoes instill a higher sense of self-esteem in children. Some Giving Partners organize youth leadership programs in which students help educate the

community on health and hygiene while providing shoes to younger children. Confident kids are more likely to stay in school and contribute to their communities (TOMS, 2013, p. 8).

And in the same report, it is mentioned in the story of Fabiana, a 12 year-old girl from Peru, who TOMS says is more confident because of her shoes, and they quote a doctor who links confidence to health.

For Fabiana and many other children, new shoes don't just mean improved physical health and protection from the elements. They offer a new sense of pride and improved self-esteem. "Good health is improving how a person feels about themselves" says Dr. Sandra Arbaiza, OBI's Director of Operations for Peru. "Good health can come by good medicine, but it can [also] be given in the form of a canvas shoe" (TOMS, 2013, p. 8)

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fig c1 (TOMS, 2016i)*

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fig c2 (TOMS, 2013, p. 8)*

Whom to help?

The question of whom to help is a moral one, because it is really a question of who is deserving of help. 'Who is worthy of aid?' is a question being asked and answered in the TOMS narrative. The answer does not require a stretch of the imagination. While looking into the ways TOMS helps, it also becomes clear *whom* TOMS helps. Children are definitely the biggest and most important category of people the company strives to help. They are featured prominently on all levels of the website and all other marketing materials, in images such as figure w1, and many of the other examples used in this case study so far. Another important category of people they help is women. Most explicitly this is seen in the birth kits donation linked to the sale of handbags, which also help newborns, visualised in the TOMS narrative such as in figure w2. But it also comes to the

fore in other instances, for example when TOMS chooses to profile successful female coffee farmers on their website. This is not to say that TOMS helps women more than men, but the choice in whom to communicate about is quite consistently female. The same goes for the factory worker whose story is used in the article on the factory in Haiti. The symbol chart about production says that the employment ratio is 50/50 male/female, but in their communication the emphasis is on the women, and the role they play in providing for their children. It is very hard to find any images of men who are receiving help in the TOMS marketing materials, and of the few images found, only those relating to the factory story in Haiti were of young men. Figure w3 shows a man too, but elderly and in need of medical treatment. But even when the subject is 'sight giving' and medical treatment, the focus is on children and women, with the more in depth profiles showing individuals from these categories, for example the story of Ansha, shown in fig. w4.

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fig. w1 (TOMS, 2016i)*

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fig. w2 (TOMS, 2016a)*

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fig. w3 (TOMS, 2016h)*

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fig. w4 (TOMS, 2016d)*

Imagine opening your eyes finding everything blurry. For Ansha Ali — a 65-year-old mother of five and grandmother to 17 in Ethiopia — and others that suffer from visual impairment, the loss of vision can be devastating, preventing them from taking part in daily activities like work, school or tending to a home. Ansha began to lose her vision over two years ago, before becoming totally blind in both eyes due to cataract (TOMS, 2016d).

At least in the presentation of their brand and the way they help, adult men are under-represented as a category. The groups of people that are presented as being on the receiving end of help are people who are presented as having been in need, as having been deserving of help. The fact that adult males are not represented as such communicates that they are either doing well enough to not need help, which would seem unlikely in the environments TOMS gives aid, or that they are less deserving because they should be able to fend for themselves. What's also interesting to note in relation to whom receives TOMS help is that they state explicitly that the help they give is 'neutral'; that they do not select who is in need based on ideology, be that religious or political: *TOMS products and services are provided to help people in need. Our partners do not distribute them with any religious or political affiliations* (TOMS, 2016s).

Where to help

The question of where to help is a moral one too, as it relates to who is seen as being in need of help, and of what kind. By putting a country on the map (see fig. wh1) of giving locations of a company like TOMS, that location is presented as needing, as weaker than the countries where the TOMS customers are from. The United States are on the map as well, but the kind of help offered there is considerably different, as it comes in the form of sports shoes to motivate children to be active, and in support for anti-bullying programmes (TOMS, 2016ae). In their definition of social enterprise, TOMS specifies that it concerns 'developing countries', a term that can be seen as an indication of TOMS view that the countries where help is being offered are seen as unfinished, or as in the process of reaching their potential.

With the support of TOMS customers and Giving Partners, TOMS Giving has reached more than 35 MILLION PEOPLE across FIVE CONTINENTS (TOMS, 2016ae).

TOMS stresses that their help has reached people all over the world, including their home country of the United States. The website doesn't specify exactly

where TOMS helps at the moment, but the 2013 giving report lists all the 64 countries they helped in at that time and visualized their 'giving locations' on a world map. TOMS doesn't say much about why shoes are given where they are, only that

Where we give is driven by the needs our Giving Partners identify on the ground. We work closely with them to add new communities and countries where shoes will have the greatest impact (TOMS, 2013, p. 15).

From looking at the map, most of the countries where TOMS gives are in the Southern hemisphere, while there are some locations in the east of Europe as well, and as mentioned, the United States.

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fig. wh1 (TOMS, 2013, p. 15)*

How TOMS presents their consumers

TOMS presents a specific image of their customers in their marketing communication. As expected, the 'giving' is an important part of that description, as TOMS often highlights that their customers are essential in making their giving possible. The giving is the acknowledged manifestation of morality in how TOMS constructs their type of customer, and while it is presented as an essential part of who their customers are, they are given other characteristics as well. These characteristics can be organised into five themes that make up under-acknowledged manifestations of morality. The following paragraph will show how TOMS customers are not only presented as good because they make giving possible, but because they are presented in a context of 'community', 'adventure', 'humility', 'pro-activeness' and 'inspiration'.

Community

TOMS customers are addressed as a collective rather than as individuals. TOMS calls their customers 'Tribe members', who are, just like the people who work at TOMS, a part of the TOMS Tribe. This is how they describe a TOMS Tribe member:

A TOMS tribe member is someone who goes the extra mile for others in need, has giving back woven into their DNA and shares inspiration in order to start a movement to create positive change (TOMS, 2016t).

The word 'Tribe' conjures up the same associations that were explored in the chapter about food discourse, in the section about authenticity discourse at the Kirkstall Deli Market. There, the Rousseauian ideal of authenticity was constructed in consumption discourse through images of foods cooked with foraged ingredients, and cooking on fire, and artisan bakers working hard through the night. In this case, the word tribe works in a similar way. TOMS could have chosen any word to describe a group of customers, but they chose to use a word that has associations of a primitive close-knit community that lives in accordance with nature. By doing this, they construct an image of their customers as a solid community, illustrating the way consumer culture constructs close-knit community as an antidote to large scale impersonal society.

The idea of the Tribe lets TOMS make their customers feel as if they are part of the company, or 'movement' as they call it. This inclusivity creates brand loyalty, but it does more; when you are part of a collective, that collective also becomes a part of you, you're invested in it. TOMS customers are people who identify with the brand on more than just a fashion sense level, they share or have overlapping world views and this connection is used to bind people to the brand. One of the ways this is put into practice is by reiterating the message of customers being part of the brand, for instance in blog posts on the website. The following article that was posted on the blog in 2014 is an example of how TOMS addresses their customers as part of the movement while making it clear that it includes all their customers who have ever bought a TOMS product, not just a certain group of super fans or active voluntary brand event organisers.

TOM is not a single person, it is the idea that the decisions we make today can echo into the future. If you believe in finding adventure while building a better tomorrow, you're TOM. If you shop consciously, volunteer with an organization that is changing lives, take part in creating a sustainable future or help raise

awareness of issues affecting lives across the globe – you are TOM. If you purchase a pair of TOMS shoes, include TOMS Roasting Co. in your daily ritual, add TOMS Eyewear to your outfit of the day or send a special gift from TOMS Marketplace – you are TOM. We're in this together. #IAMTOM (TOMS, 2014)

The article is illustrated with photos of people holding up TOMS flags with hand written modifications to say #IAMTOM (TOMS, 2014).

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fig. c1

fig. c2

fig. c3

fig. c4

Another example comes from a double customer profile in a different blog post (TOMS, 2015b), where TOMS asks two customers the question ‘When did you join the One for One movement?’ From their answers it becomes clear that the action that makes them part of the movement is owning a TOMS product, and that the reasons can be ideological or comfort related.

Kellyn: I first heard about TOMS when I saw the AT&T commercial (I believe it was 6 years ago, 2009). I remember seeing it right after I had gotten back from my first service trip to Nicaragua (I've taken 4 since then). My heart immediately lit up and I thought, "Wow! There's a company that cares about the same things that I do." I received my first pair of TOMS for Christmas that same year. They were the gray ones that had facts about poverty printed across the canvas. I still wear them from time to time even though I have plenty of other TOMS to wear (although I've since DIY-ed them into sandals).

Cheryl: I always wanted to get a pair of TOMS because I kept hearing how comfortable they were. Finally, last year, I went to a TOMS event and bought five pairs. One year later, I now have 13 pairs and counting!

Owning and wearing a TOMS product are not the only way customers can act on their TOMS Tribe membership. Tweeting and Instagramming something that

you'd like to share with the brand or other customers can be done by using the hashtag #TOMSTribe. The hashtag is very popular and has been for years, with people sharing links, images and other information that they think of as TOMS related with each other and the brand. Another way for people to get involved is the organisation of events, which links to the next theme; pro-activeness.

Pro-activeness

TOMS has a few ways of motivating its customers to be pro-active in spreading the word and does so under the banner 'start something that matters'. As discussed in the 'how to help' part of this case study, TOMS founder Blake Mycoskie wrote a book with that title, published in 2011. It is a book with the story of how TOMS came about, and a guide with a plan to start something that matters yourself which can be a smaller project or starting a company along the same model. TOMS has a social enterprise fund to support people who have a good plan to do so. On a more accessible level, TOMS encourages the members of the TOMS Tribe to organise events around the brand, or to incorporate the brand into their existing events. According to the company, this is a popular way for customers to be involved in 'furthering the movement': *1000+ SUPPORTER-LED events occur annually. Helping further our movement and raise awareness about TOMS Giving* (TOMS, 2016t). A lot of these events are 'style your sole' events, where small or large groups of people hand paint a pair of TOMS shoes for themselves or as a 'double give' when they paint shoes to give to someone in need locally (TOMS, 2015a). These events are an example of one of the ways the customers not only become an active part of the brand, but they are extending the self with the brand and its values at the same time (Belk, 1988; Sartre, 2003 [1943]).

Adventure

The third theme that can be identified in TOMS marketing communication relating to their customers is 'adventure'. Not just by using the word adventure a lot, but implicitly by presenting their customers as people that are up for going into the unknown, whether that be by 'starting something that matters' and taking risks associated with entrepreneurship, or by being open-minded, taking in new experiences. Most specifically this can be found in the link they make with

travelling. They do this in the look and feel of their website, printed materials and shop, where they use simple materials as concrete, untreated wood, bare metal, covered with ethnic patterned flat woven carpets, and more broadly with the initiative of 'Traveling TOMS'. The effort the brand makes to have their customers play an active part in linking travel to TOMS is by persuading them to use the hashtag #travelingTOMS on social media: *Share where your TOMS are taking you by tagging your photos with #travelingTOMS!* (TOMS, 2016aa) Notably, in this formulation, people aren't just wearing their TOMS while travelling; their TOMS are taking them places.

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fig. c5 (TOMS, 2016aa)*

Emphasise and giving depth to this theme, TOMS published six profiles of people travelling in their TOMS (TOMS, 2016u, 2016v, 2016w, 2016x, 2016y, 2016z).

The series was announced as follows:

We are constantly inspired by where people go in their TOMS, and how they show gratitude in their travels and their day-to-day lives. This month, we're following six people as they report their #travelingTOMS stories (TOMS, 2016y).

The profiles consisted of an introduction, some personal details: name, hometown, occupation, hobby, and the answers to seven questions:

- Where are your TOMS taking you?
- What are some little things you're thankful for everyday?
- What are some ways you're spreading gratitude?
- Tell us what your "go-to" pair of TOMS is
- What are you listening to?
- What inspires you?
- Tell us what you enjoy most about traveling.

The profiles are all illustrated with multiple pictures, of which these are a selection of typical images:

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fig. c6 (TOMS, 2016u) fig. c7 (TOMS, 2016x)

fig. c8 (TOMS, 2016u) fig. c9 (TOMS, 2016y)

fig. c10 (TOMS, 2016u) fig. c11 (TOMS, 2016y)

fig. c12 (TOMS, 2016x) fig. c13 (TOMS, 2016y)

fig. c14 (TOMS, 2016x) fig. c15 (TOMS, 2016w)

The questions and their answers link TOMS to the theme of adventure, but also to inspiration and humility, which will be explored further in the next two paragraphs, after a closer look at the answers on travelling. What the answers have in common is that travelling is an enriching experience; it is seen as an experience that makes you a better person.

It's so cliché, but the saying, "Travel is the only thing you can buy which makes you richer," is so true. You can't put a price on new experiences, meeting new people, foreign places and cultures and gaining a worldlier perspective (TOMS, 2016y).

A fresh perspective. There is no better way to find appreciation for different cultures, or one's own, than to travel this beautiful and vast earth. Every time I go anywhere, my eyes are looking outward, and my thoughts are going inward. I guess you could say that travel is synonymous with personal growth and that is something I'll always be grateful for (TOMS, 2016x).

Gratefulness is another subject that can be found throughout TOMS marketing communication and it is also very explicit in these interviews. It is part of the theme 'humility', on which the next paragraph will expand.

Humility

In the interviews, the subject of gratitude comes to the fore, and it is part of a broader theme of humility. It can be found in TOMS description of Tribe members; for instance in this quote: *As a TOMS tribe member, you aspire to be part of something bigger -helping others and giving back - while letting inspiration guide your efforts and involvement* (TOMS, 2016t). Specifically the 'being part of something bigger' is something that TOMS focuses on throughout their entire narrative. They use the phrase 'We are one' often, which helps create that idea of everyone who has something to do with TOMS, be it the children in need or the people buying shoes is part of one big whole, and that implies that everyone is just a small and humble part of it.

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fig. c17 (TOMS, 2016i)

In the traveling TOMS interviews, two questions are about humility in particular; the question 'What are some of the little things you're thankful for every day?', and 'What are some of the ways that you're spreading gratitude?' The answers are about being able to do a job they are passionate about, the places they live, and the people in their lives:

There is always, always something to be thankful for. Everyday I wake up, I am so thankful for this wonderful city I live in; the creative culture, the never-ending greenery and the kind people that fill it (TOMS, 2016z).

My heart is in community, not competition. I believe that we need to elevate our industries and encourage one another. My favorite quote is "A candle loses nothing from lighting another candle." I truly believe that if we pour into one another with intentional, present relationships, the world can be a little brighter (TOMS, 2016w).

Another way TOMS brings the theme of humility into their marketing communication is in their yearly event 'one day without shoes'. It is a worldwide,

off- and online event in which TOMS asks their customers to take a picture of their bare feet, with or without their TOMS shoes in the shot, and post them to instagram with the hashtag #withoutshoes (TOMS, 2016l). The images below are the emailing TOMS send out surrounding the event, and the webpage that the emailing links to.

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fig. c18 (TOMS, 2016k)

---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. c19 (TOMS, 2016k)

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fig. c20 (TOMS, 2016m)

Inspiration

The fifth theme that is distinguishable as an under-acknowledged manifestation of morality is 'inspiration'. It includes instances of what inspires customers, such as in the travelling TOMS interviews, where one of the questions was: *What inspires you?*

People who are constantly striving to make a difference and impact this world in a positive way. People with hearts bigger than their chests and a passion that overflows. People who make ethical choices and put others before themselves no matter what they are doing (TOMS, 2016z).

Seeing people enjoying their lives to the fullest and living out what they truly want to do. I find so much inspiration in seeing that from others (TOMS, 2016u).

I think what inspires me most is being able to witness people come fully alive, to truly embrace this one beautiful life we are given(TOMS, 2016w).

The answers are varied, but are mostly about the way the actions of others inspire them. And that is something TOMS asks their customers to do with others as well:

When people ask, share the TOMS Giving story. Let them know that you stand for creating positive impact, and influencing others to think about new ways that business can improve lives and the world around us (TOMS, 2016t).

TOMS offers all these different ways of participating in what they call the 'movement', the TOMS Tribe, Traveling TOMS, the Start something that matters book and activities, Style Your Sole events, one day without shoes. These are all ways of inspiring others, of spreading awareness of the TOMS giving story. With the spread of that story, people are co-marketing the TOMS products offered for sale. They become part of the brand, and at the same time, the brand becomes part of them, as they extend the self through the co-creation of it (Belk, 1988; Jenkins, 2006; Sartre, 2003 [1943]).

Consuming servitude

The typical TOMS consumer, in the way that TOMS presents them, fits the description of the concept of the 'prosumer'. As also explored in the previous chapter in the section about Innocent's Big Knit, social science has been theorising about the merging of the roles of producers and consumers since the seventies, when McLuhan and Nevitt (1972) suggested that electric technologies would give consumers unprecedented opportunities to produce. Toffler (1981) is the one who called this new role the prosumer. Henry Jenkins (2006), has written extensively on the theory of convergence culture, in which the prosumer plays a key part. The idea of the prosumer is that they co-create the brands they are fans of, by actively participating in shaping the images and spreading these images using the means available to them, which can be offline, but in TOMS case it's seen mostly online, with consumers using social media. The co-creation applies specifically to the brand experience, not the product itself. But the brand experience is arguably an essential part of what TOMS sells.

When looking at this process more closely, the idea of TOMS consumers co-creating doesn't hold up as well as it does at first glance. Because while there is certainly something to be said for the fact that TOMS consumers happily and eagerly share their love for the brand, offline as well as online and that they co-create the experience the fans have of participating in what TOMS like to call the 'TOMS movement', they do so within the limits set by TOMS. TOMS guides the way consumers participate to the point where they have created a social media marketing team of thousands of unpaid workers. In all the ways TOMS offers consumers ways to participate, they also guide the sort of contributions they would like to see and consumers don't tend to stray from those guidelines. For example, the hashtag #TravelingTOMS. Theoretically, every kind of tweet or Instagram post can have that tag, TOMS has no definite way of controlling that. But the images that are posted with that hashtag are all very similar to each other. This doesn't happen naturally, there aren't thousands of people who inherently have the same idea of what type of picture should be tagged with it. They are all similar because TOMS sets the example and people follow it. The six profiles on Travelling TOMS consist of five profiles by professional photographers and one TOMS social media channel manager. The images that illustrate the profile are square, like Instagram photos are, and their look can be recreated using popular Instagram filters. The compositions are ones that can be easily copied with a mobile phone camera. They are accompanied with an explicit invitation to share and tag photos:

Where are your toms taking you? We would love to see where your TOMS take you and how you spread gratitude in the places you go. Tag your photos with #travelingTOMS on Instagram and Twitter. Thanks for letting us be part of your adventures! (TOMS, 2016aa)

Another example are the 'Style Your Sole' events that are organised by consumers, but done so with substantial support from TOMS, in the form of guidelines, templates, social media images that can be used for publicity, and help to bring everything into the TOMS style (TOMS, 2015a). In the 'One Day Without Shoes' campaign, TOMS prescribes what photos should look like, and

gives examples that people follow. And this raises questions, because if TOMS has no actual power over what people are posting in their name, why do people follow these guidelines, instructions and do they play within the rules set by the brand? This question has been asked before, albeit on a more fundamental level. Why do people abide by the rules? This was the question asked by Étienne de La Boétie in 1577, in his at the time radical essay 'The politics of obedience, The discourse of voluntary servitude' (de la Boétie, 1975). The mystery of civil obedience is central to the essay which deals with why people, in all times and places, obey the commands of the government, which always constitutes a small minority of the society? While the essay is about government, the question and his suggested answers are just as relevant when looking at the system of consumer culture, where the power is also concentrated in a small minority that would lose it if people could or would stop giving them this power. Or as de La Boétie puts it;

The fundamental political question is: why do people obey a government? The answer is that they tend to enslave themselves, to let themselves be governed by tyrants. Freedom from servitude comes not from violent action, but from the refusal to serve. Tyrants fall when the people withdraw their support (de la Boétie, 1975, p. 39).

Regardless of whether or not you agree with de La Boétie's assumption that liberty is the natural condition of the people, his analysis of how servitude is fostered raises some interesting points. His first is that people serve because they don't know any better. Habit, learnt behaviour, but also an acceptance of servitude as fate as theirs as it was their fathers'.

'Thus custom becomes the first reason for voluntary servitude. Men are like handsome race horses who first bite the bit and later like it, and rearing under the saddle a while soon learn to enjoy displaying their harness and prance proudly beneath their trappings (de la Boétie, 1975, p. 59).

People are trained to adore rulers, de La Boétie argues. Intelligent, clear minds and far sighted spirits who are not 'like the brutish mass, satisfied to see only what is at their feet' (de la Boétie, 1975, p. 59), have a chance of breaking the mould. Education and personal development are a necessary condition according to de La Boétie. For these educated individuals, slavery has no satisfactions, no matter how well disguised (de la Boétie, 1975, p. 59). The 16th century's writer's next point has a very familiar ring to it. Similar to what for instance the Frankfurter Schule scholars (e.g. Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997), or the philosopher Aldous Huxley (1932) argue in their work, De La Boétie poses that

'Plays, farces, spectacles, gladiators, strange beasts, medals, pictures, and other such opiates, these were for ancient peoples the bait toward slavery, the price of their liberty, the instruments of tyranny. By these practices and enticements the ancient dictators so successfully lulled their subjects under the yoke, that the stupefied peoples, fascinated by the pastimes and vain pleasures flashed before their eyes, learned subservience as naïvely' (de la Boétie, 1975, p. 64).

In de La Boétie's exploration of voluntary servitude he makes another relevant point with interesting parallels to consumer culture in general and ethical consumption like TOMS presents in particular. It is the way in which 'tyrants, in order to strengthen their power, have made every effort to train their people not only in obedience and servility toward themselves, but also in adoration' (de la Boétie, 1975, p. 69). The intuitive answer to the question why consumers are so happy to be so involved in a brand's marketing is that it makes them look good. Looking good is part of it, but the reasons for wanting to look good are more complicated than simply wanting immediate appreciation in the form of likes. In the case of TOMS, it could be argued that it will also make people *feel* good, they are after all, campaigning for a good cause as well. In TOMS case the way the brand has adopted aspects of the charity genre is, I would argue, a major reason for consumers' willingness to participate in the marketing communication of an essentially for-profit brand. The part of TOMS communication that draws on charity genre gives people a way to indulge in posting about their new shoes, in showcasing their taste in the Bourdieusian (Bourdieu, 1984) sense of the word;

as in indicator of what group or class in society one belongs to, their habitus, in a way that would otherwise possibly be seen as in bad taste. Very concretely, it could be seen as acceptable to promote a good cause by posting a picture of your new shoes, while posting just a picture of new shoes could be seen as a display of materialism or consumerism that would be frowned upon by those who share the habitus of TOMS fans. The logic of the Bourdieusian field that TOMS fans find themselves in will allow displays of charitable giving more easily than displays of 'simple' consumerism.

Conclusion

This case study's aim was to explore and analyse the different ways acknowledged and under-acknowledged manifestations of morality take shape in consumer culture and look at if these manifestations affect contemporary consumption patterns. It has focused on three main perspectives, that of the production of the narrative, the narrative itself, and the way the consumers participate in the creation of it.

From the perspective of the production of TOMS' communication it has become apparent that TOMS draws strongly on two genres that at first sight seem paradoxical to each other. The self-interest of consumers at the heart of one genre, and the community's interest at stake in the other. Because of this contradiction TOMS has garnered a great deal of attention in the media. Examples of this attention include articles published by TIME (Frizell, 2014), CNN (Shambora, 2010), the Huffington Post (B Mycoskie, 2015), the BBC (Gibson, 2015), The Guardian (Kasperkevic, 2014), the Telegraph (E. Anderson, 2015), The National Geographic Society (Geographic, 2015), and high profile fashion magazines such as Elle (Sidell, 2010) and Vogue (Conlon & Berrington, 2016). From the perspective of the brand's narrative, it becomes clear that the use of these two genres leads to two types of manifestations of morality in consumer culture, one acknowledged and one under-acknowledged type. The explicit acknowledged manifestations are about themes that are familiar to charity and to ethical consumption; giving, sustainable business and working conditions. The under-acknowledged manifestations are the ways TOMS helps, by supporting health, education, economic opportunity and confidence. And this

is where it becomes apparent that the underlying for profit structure of TOMS is not the only capitalist thread in their narrative. Their giving and their presentation of giving is structured along familiar capitalist themes.

TOMS gives aid to those in need in the way that is familiar to a Western audience; through the creation of the necessary conditions for an economy like the Western capitalist states have. The same goes for whom to help; the groups that a Westerner would describe as vulnerable are described by TOMS as in need; women and children are seen as deserving, they are seen as vulnerable and as worthy of help. Men are implicitly presented as being supposed to being able to support themselves. This promotes the idea that people are possibly responsible for their own difficult circumstances, and it takes responsibility away from the overarching structures in which these difficult circumstances exist. Placing this responsibility with individuals fits the Western idea or even ideal of individualism.

From the perspective of the audience, or rather the way TOMS presents the audience and their participation, it can be learnt that consumers participate in creating a brand, but that it is too much of a stretch to call them prosumers. They are strongly limited by the brand, not because TOMS has actual power over what their consumers create, but because consumers seem more than willing to voluntarily follow TOMS' lead. The question about this type of voluntary servitude can be seen as a continuation of the question that was already asked in the sixteenth century by a radical French writer who asked 'Why do people obey a government?' The answers he poses to his own question resonate with consumer culture, and in the case of TOMS I would like to pose that the Bourdieusian field in which people place themselves and in which they aim to make a distinction, makes for a complicated version of the sixteenth century tyrant, in which power, adoration and servitude have all become more diffuse.

5. Happiness on a 'Lonely' Planet

Clap along, if you feel that happiness is the truth

(P. L. Williams, 2013)

In contemporary consumer culture the connection between happiness and consumption is commonly made by claims of superficiality. True happiness, it is said, cannot be bought. Hedonistic pleasure, on the other hand, is perceived as widely available through indulgent and conspicuous consumption. In consumer culture, hedonism is a common link between morality and happiness, as is the term 'well-being' (Ahmed, 2008, 2010; Davies, 2015). On the surface the latter seems less judgmental than the connection to hedonism, but well-being denotes a similar level of superficiality when it comes to consumer culture and happiness. The consumer cultural idea of a deeper, true happiness that comes from the parts of life that are seen as existing outside of consumer culture, such as family and community, and a superficial, if not artificial happiness that can be reached through consumption has deep roots in history.

This distinction within the concept of happiness, between a true and a superficial or false happiness facilitates an under-acknowledgement of morality in consumer culture. This chapter shows that the link between happiness and consumer culture is far more complicated than the simplified view that connects consumption to hedonistic pleasure allows for, and goes much deeper than the link that is made through the concepts of, for instance, well-being. I explain how morality is in fact the *essential* connection between happiness and consumer culture. As already explored in the second chapter of this thesis, the concept of happiness has historical links to virtuous living. This chapter is a case study of the large international travel brand Lonely Planet, which is illustrative of how the connection between morality and happiness is made in contemporary consumer scripts.

Case Study - Lonely Planet

The link between morality and happiness is still made in contemporary consumer culture. On the surface, happiness is moralised in consumer culture; often represented in the adage 'money can't buy happiness'. It can be seen in the TOMS chapter too, where one of the consumers is quoted on the TOMS website saying that 'it's so cliché, but the saying, "Travel is the only thing you can buy which makes you richer," is so true' (TOMS, 2016y). It shows that the idea that spending money can lead to happiness is seen as shallow, it can even be seen as a misunderstanding of happiness. The 'happiness' that money can buy is seen as short-lived and hedonistic, it's about instant gratification, about greed and self-interest. In short, not the right kind of happiness, perhaps even an immoral kind of happiness. This chapter shows that beyond that superficial link between happiness and consumer culture as immoral, morality plays a large part in how happiness is constructed in consumer culture. I aim to do this with an in-depth analysis of the brand Lonely Planet. By analysing this brand, I show that Lonely Planet offers not just travel advice, which is an instruction in how to consume, but that in that advice is embedded an instruction on how to be a moral human being. On the surface, the Lonely Planet books, with their narrative of 'off the beaten track' adventurous travel seem to promote individualism and the idea of 'going your own way' more than that they are an instruction in morality; the following analysis shows how Lonely Planet provides guidance on how to consume, how to be happy, and on how to be moral.

The choice for Lonely Planet as a travel brand to analyse is based on the fact that they are the world's largest, most established and best known travel guides publisher (Publishers global, 2018). Lonely Planet is a large international travel media company, founded in 1973 by Tony and Maureen Wheeler. Their core product consists of travel advice, given in country and region specific travel guides, magazines, books, a website and several apps. While they started as a shoestring 'off the beaten track' niche company, they are now a large multinational mainstream travel advice publisher, with a large following both off and online: They have printed more than 145 million guidebooks, they have more than 200 travel writers on the road, their guidebooks cover more than 95% of the globe and they publish books, magazines and digital content in 14

languages. The brand's reach is not limited to their books' and magazines' readers, their social media is followed by 13 million people (Lonely Planet, 2017).

The analysis of the Lonely Planet brand consists of discourse and semiotic analysis of text and images and draws on three different types of Lonely Planet books. The first is a travel guide, namely the Tanzania guide. The second is a travel advice book called 'The Best Things in Life are Free', which is a book on attractions and things to do across the world that cost little or no money. The third is a book called 'Happy', which contains ways of creating happiness from across the world. By analysing these three books, I aim to show that Lonely Planet offers not just travel advice, which is an instruction in how to consume, but that in that advice is embedded an instruction on how to be a moral human being. The analysis elucidates how Lonely Planet provides guidance on how to consume, how to be happy, and on how to be moral.

Happiness by Lonely Planet

Maureen Wheeler, one of Lonely Planet's founders, is the author of the foreword in the book 'Happy'. In it, she argues that travelling to find happiness is probably always doomed to failure, *'because happiness comes in those moments when you are not consciously trying to be happy. The moments of sheer joy come when you forget yourself and focus on something other than your own feelings or desires or goals'*. But travel, she also argues, give great opportunity to do just that:

Travel takes you to places in the world that are heart-stoppingly beautiful, exposes you to scenes of horrific deprivation and challenges you to accept and understand that the world is composed of both. But the moments that remain with you, when you look back and remember your wanderings, are those moments when you simply allowed time to unfold. Watching a sun set or rise, wandering around a ruined city or ancient temple, meeting someone who is as curious about you as you are about them, exchanging impressions with other travellers, these are all part of the everyday travel experience, and yet these everyday incidents will be the fragments that make up the whole journey, that stay with you and inform or change your perspective when you return to that other, 'real' life.

Wheeler distinguishes between the excitement of travel, and the happiness of travel:

The opportunity to look at another culture, to see the world from another viewpoint, to see yourself as someone foreign, is the adventure of travel. The freedom, the sense of possibilities, the absence of the routine mundanity of normal life, is the excitement of travel. But happiness in travel comes from the moments when you are aware of how lucky you are to be in that place, at that time, and how wonderful the world is.

Stoically, Wheeler describes happiness as something that is part of a person's internal world, but unlike the Stoics, she acknowledges that someone's context does matter in the experience of happiness. This interpretation can also be seen in the book's introduction, where happiness is presented as a highly individual experience: *Happiness. One word, nine letters, roughly seven billion definitions, one for each person on the planet.* The introduction goes on to specify exactly how much of happiness is due to external and internal factors according to unnamed researchers:

Researchers are learning a lot about the intersection between emotions and neuroscience. Everyone's level of happiness is about 50% genetically determined (what the experts call your 'happiness set point'), a further mere 10% comes from external factors, and the rest comes from how we perceive our circumstances. Yes, money buys us some happiness they say, but only to a point where we have security – a roof over our heads, a doctor when we're sick, a bit of entertainment now and then. Travellers take note; almost a dozen recent studies agree that experiences bring more long-term happiness than do possessions.

Lonely planet, in the introduction to their book about happiness, aligns itself with the idea that happiness can't be bought. It references the high rate of depression in consumer cultures;

So, if we're so smart about happiness, why isn't everyone on the planet who has reached this level of security perfectly happy? Across the developed world, people have better medical care, fewer preventable diseases and longer life spans than ever before. In the United States, the pursuit of happiness is a constitutional right. But while many Western countries top the lists of overall happiest countries, many also rank highest in individual rates of depression and other mental health disorders.

They also specify that possessions will not do much in the way of creating happiness: *The same researchers who study happiness will tell us it's not the flashy car or the new shoes that will make us happy in the long run. Instead, it's aspects of human lives that are closely linked to morality that cause happiness, according to Lonely Planet: In fact, those expectations do us a disservice. Instead, they've found that it's some of the most basic aspects of life found in every culture that brings us the most joy – connection, mindfulness, gratitude, play. Travel is specifically linked to these more moral ways of reaching happiness than buying a 'flashy new car': Whether you've travelled halfway around the world, to the nearest national park or a heritage street festival in your own city, you've probably felt it, that feeling of...was it happiness? Belonging? Joy, perhaps. Athletes might call it flow, and spiritual masters might tell you you've glimpsed the faintest echo of enlightenment.*

By arguing that happiness can't be bought, but that travel experiences can create a context for happiness, Lonely Planet seems to be either unaware or in denial of travel as a consumer good, but there is no doubt that the consumption of travel, even on a shoestring, is very much part of consumer culture.

Happy colours

Colour, like any other semiotic sign, can be arbitrarily linked to meaning. Colours can therefore mean different things in different times, places and cultural contexts (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2002). For this analysis, the colour yellow is of particular interest. The cover of and most of the images inside of the book 'happy' (fig.y1) are yellow, fitting with the common Western association of this

colour with optimism, sunshine and happiness. The colour is a key colour in the *The Best Things in Life are Free* book as well, every city is introduced with a yellow map (fig. y2), and when the book uses graphs (fig. y3), yellow is the main colour for those as well.

These images have been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons

fig. y1 (P. L. Williams,
2013)

fig.y2 (Albiston et al.,
2016, p. 71)

fig.y3 (Albiston et al.,
2016, p. 298)

So merry and bright

While the colour yellow is dominant in the imagery used in the *The Best Things in Life are Free* book, other bright colours help to create an association with happiness as well. A large portion of the photographic images used consist of bright primary and secondary colours, and cover the whole spectrum. The brightness and variety of the colours strengthens the sense of happiness throughout the book. Images b1-24 are all taken from *The Best Things in Life are Free* (Albiston et al., 2016): *These images have been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons*

Happy faces

The other way in which the images in the book create and strengthen the association of travel consumption with happiness is by showing ample images of happy people, visualising happiness most directly. The images below (fig. hf1-13) are all taken from *The Best Things in Life are Free* (Albiston et al., 2016): *These images have been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons*

Lonely planet virtues

Aristotle defined the moral values wisdom, courage, justice and temperance, and these values have continued to be the foundation of Western morality throughout history. This analysis of these Lonely Planet books shows that they are still an integral part of consumer culture. These consumer guides contain references to these moral values throughout, instructing consumers how to behave morally to reach happiness through the consumption of travel.

Justice

Aristotle defined the moral value justice as the finely balanced mean between selfishness and selflessness. From this perspective, a good person knows the middle between these two, and will not take too much, nor too little. Doing either of these things would result in unmerited inequality, which Aristotle saw as immoral. The moral value of justice as the mean between selfishness and selflessness has remained central to Western societies, even when the subject of discussion is not overtly moral, such as in the case of in travel consumption, or travel writing. Justice, however, is a very strong underlying theme in Lonely Planet writing. In both the general travel tip book *The Best Things in Life are Free* and in the Tanzania guidebook, the subject of justice underlies a lot of the advice given. Justice, in Lonely Planet writing follows Aristotle's idea of selfishness and selflessness, and the guidebook gives explicit advice on how to avoid being either of these.

Don't be selfish

References to and instructions on how not to be a selfish travel consumer come in different forms in the guidebook. They can be categorized into the themes; considerate travelling, 'good' ways of spending money, donations, and volunteering. When it comes to being a considerate travel consumer, instructions are straightforward, such as tips on how to not take up too much space as a traveller, for instance in the descriptions of local taxis, dalla-dallas: *'If you have a large backpack, think twice about getting on a dalla- dalla, especially at rush hour, when it will make the already crowded conditions even more uncomfortable for the other passengers* (Fitzpatrick, Butler, Ham, & Hardy, 2015, p. 385). There are explicit instructions on responsible travel, for instance in the guidebook's chapter 'Understand Tanzania & Survival Guide':

Tourism is big business in Tanzania. Here are a few guidelines for minimising strain on the local environment:

- *Support local enterprise. Buy souvenirs directly from those who make them.*
- *Choose safari or trek operators that treat local communities as equal partners and that are committed to protecting local ecosystems.*

- *For cultural attractions, try to pay fees directly to the locals involved, rather than to tour-company guides or other intermediaries.*
- *Ask permission before photographing people.*
- *Avoid indiscriminate gift-giving; donations to recognised projects are more sustainable and have a better chance of reaching those who need them most.*
- *Don't buy items made from ivory, skin, shells etc.*
- *Save natural resources.*
- *Respect local culture and customs.* (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 358)

The last of these guidelines is about being respectful of local customs. All others these are related to consumption directly, they are about how to consume, and what (not) to. The instruction on asking permission for photographs is linked to consumption a few pages after this overview is given, where the instruction is as follows: *Always ask permission first before photographing people and always respect their wishes. In many places, locals will ask for a fee (usually from Tsh1000 to Tsh5000 and up) before allowing you to photograph them, which is fair enough* (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 370). Natural resources should be used sparingly, consumption of items such as ivory should be avoided entirely, and when you do spend, there are guidelines on how and where to do so to be a responsible traveller. Money should go to local communities, to those that protect the ecosystem, to those that treat locals as equals. These guidelines return throughout the guidebook, which describes several initiatives that they see as creating positive change for Tanzanians. The cultural tourism programmes offered in Arusha for instance, are discussed in terms of community empowerment:

Numerous villages around Arusha (and elsewhere in the country) run 'Cultural Tourism Programs' that offer an alternative to the safari scene. Most usually centre on light hikes and village activities. Although the line is sometimes blurred between community empowerment and empowering the enterprising individuals who run them, these programs nevertheless provide employment for locals and offer an excellent chance to experience Tanzania at the local level (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 160).

The description ends with a reference to the other end of the scale concerning justice, which dictates 'don't be selfless': *Payments should be made on-site; always*

ask for a receipt (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 160). Another way in which travellers are urged not to be selfish is the way tourist spots are presented with a warning about overdevelopment and a request for awareness and action by the travel consumer to limit the negative effects of this trend on community resources:

At the northern tip of Unguja, Nungwi and Kendwa are the epi-centers of tourist activity. Flanked by long, sandy beaches they are well supplied with burgeoning budget and luxury accommodation, restaurants, bars and dance-til-dawn full-moon parties. While there's no denying their buzz or picturesque beauty, choose your spot carefully here as increasing development threatens to mar the area's ineluctable magic and overwhelm fragile community resources (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 77).

The guidebook also points out several places offering accommodation or food that donate a part of their income to initiatives that help local communities in different ways:

Peace Matunda Near Kimundo, around 15km northeast of Arusha, this place offers half- to three-day hiking, camping and mountain- biking tours, visits to local families and to coffee and banana plantations, as well as volunteer programs with a focus on underprivileged kids (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 161).

African Tulip Marketing itself as a luxury boutique hotel, the deservedly popular African Tulip inhabits a green, quiet side street and successfully combines an African safari theme with a genteel ambience. The large rooms are supremely comfortable havens from Arusha's noise. There's a whimsical baobab tree in the restaurant, carved wood around the common areas and a small garden around the swimming pool at the back. There are two bars and a gift shop, and a percentage of proceeds from the hotel goes towards charitable projects (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, pp. 158, 159).

Kigongoni Kigongoni's tranquil hilltop perch, about 5km past Arusha, gives it an almost wilderness feel. Spacious cottages, all with porches, fireplaces and wide

views, are scattered around the forest, some quite a hilly walk from the cosy common areas. It's about 5km beyond Arusha towards Moshi. A portion of the lodge's profits go to support the Sibusiso Foundation (www.sibusiso.com), which helps mentally disabled children in the region (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 159).

In the guidelines discussed above, Lonely Planet suggests not making indiscriminate donations, but to donate to recognised projects, as their effects are more sustainable. The book contains some suggestions of what these projects could be. The description of the School of St Jude stands out as an example of this. It's written by Tony Wheeler, one of the two founders of Lonely Planet, which gives this part some extra weight. The description of the school and the opportunity to visit mix travel consumption with morality by making the charitable institution an optional stop on a traveller's itinerary. It is written partly as background information on Tanzania and the charity work being done there, partly as a travel tip; a description of a meaningful place to visit either as a guest for a few hours or long term as a volunteer and partly as an indirect request for donations.

School of St Jude

He's the patron saint of hopeless cases, but St Jude would definitely be smiling at what has been achieved in his name in a school just outside Arusha. To score a place in Australian Gemma Sisia's pioneering establishment you have to meet two very different requirements. First, you've got to be extremely bright – only the smartest kids get to sit the entrance exam and only the best results get a place – and second, you've got to be very poor. If you do get in, you pretty much get a free ride all the way through to graduation. The School of St Jude kicked off in 2002 with three students and one teacher. Ten years later the school had expanded to three campuses, 350 teachers and 1500 students. Has Gemma's plan for 'fighting poverty through education' worked? It's hard to argue with the results: St Jude students' exam scores are outranked only by the most expensive Tanzanian private schools. The huge pride that St Jude parents have in their kids and the fierce competition to get a place underline the school's impact even more effectively.

The school welcomes visitors Monday to Friday during term time, though you'll need to make an appointment: see the 'Visit Us' page of the school website (www.schoolofjude.org) for more information. There are opportunities for long-term volunteers and donations are appreciated (Wheeler, 2015).

The opportunity to volunteer comes up several times throughout the guidebook, and Lonely Planet frames volunteering in a way that emphasises the contribution made to Tanzania, not just to the traveller. Unlike what other volunteering programmes often communicate, Lonely Planet underlines the need to view volunteering as a genuine commitment, bring a specific skill to the table, and preferably not something that could be done by local people:

Volunteering in Moshi While most travellers who visit Moshi come to climb Mt Kilimanjaro, a significant proportion also come to volunteer. As a general rule, volunteering works best for both traveller and the organisation in question if you treat it as a genuine commitment rather than as simply a fun extension of your trip. It's also preferable if you have a particular skill to bring to the experience, especially one that cannot be satisfied by local people.

In the context of a travel guide, these suggestions on how not to be a selfish traveller/ volunteer, are intertwined with the realm of consumption, and volunteering becomes a travel consumption choice in much the same way that the choice to visit a museum or climb a mountain are. The description of this travel agency illustrates the notion that community engagement can be a travel consumption choice:

Grassroots Traveller Working closely with community-based projects, NGOs and organisations striving for sustainable development, this forward-thinking company helps travellers craft interesting itineraries blending adventure with community engagement to discover that there's more to Zanzibar than sun, sand and sea. It also helps volunteers hook-up successful short- and long-term projects (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 87).

This is reinforced by the specification of prices for dorm beds at the hotels that organise volunteering opportunities in the writing about volunteering:

In Moshi, and to a lesser extent Arusha, many groups looking for help post flyers on notice boards around town. Alternatively, Honey Badger (p199), Hotel Hoff (0787 225908; www.hotelhoff.com; US\$19) and the less cosy Foot2Afrika (Hostel foot Prince; 0784 828835; www.foot2afrika.com; US\$23) will set you up with a project that fits your skills and desires as long as you sleep at their hotels. In most cases they require a minimum stay (at least two weeks, but rules vary) and may include breakfast, dinner and laundry. In Arusha, Ujamaa Hotel is a similar set-up (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 202).

Don't be selfless

The instructions on how not to be selfish as a travel consumer are only part of the way that Lonely Planet constructs the Aristotelian moral value justice. Justice is the mean between being selfish and being selfless, and Lonely Planet also instructs the traveller on how to avoid being the latter. The fact that a travel guide is a consumption guide means that the guidelines on how not to be selfless are strongly related to consumption, specifically on how to avoid having bad travel experiences, not being scammed, or avoiding paying too much for what is offered. Aristotle's conception of justice relates what a person deserves to what they have. It doesn't mean everyone should have the same, it allows for differences on the basis of how much merit someone has, or how much effort someone puts in to something. It includes a notion of deserving. In the Tanzania guide, some locals are presented as more deserving than others. The example of the School of St Jude is a clear example of a group of people who according to Lonely Planet are worthy of being at the receiving end of consumption choices. A group that is presented as undeserving, are the 'papasi'; street touts in Zanzibar Town. The warning about street touts stresses that they are unlicensed, may carry false identification, they might lie about whether a hotel is full or still exists, and they might demand payment, which lonely planet suggests you don't give, as they are often already paid by the hotel they are taking you to:

Papasi: street touts

In Zanzibar Town you will undoubtedly come into contact with street touts. In Swahili they're known as papasi (ticks). They are not registered as guides with the Zanzibar Tourist Corporation (ZTC), although they may carry (false) identification cards, and while a few can be helpful, others can be irritating. The main places that you'll encounter them are at the ferry exit and in the Shangani area around Tembo House Hotel. If you decide to use the services of an unlicensed tout, tell them where you want to go and your price range. You shouldn't have to pay anything additional, as many hotels pay commission. If they tell you your hotel of choice no longer exists or is full, take it with a grain of salt. Most papasi are hoping that your stay will mean ongoing work for them as your guide. If you're not interested in this, explain (politely) once you've arrived at your hotel. If you want a guide to show you around Stone Town, it's better to arrange one with your hotel or a travel agency. For any dealings with papasi, if you're being hassled, a polite but firm approach usually works best (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 90).

The guide also warns about known scams, and gives instructions on how to avoid these. All these scams are related to consumption choices, either at the point of payment, or because the scammer finds a way not to deliver on what was promised and paid for:

Paying park fees *For anyone paying directly at the gate, all entry, hut, camping and other park fees must be paid with either Visa or MasterCard and your PIN. One scam involves the relevant officer billing you for less than you owe (e.g. Tsh100 instead of US\$100). After your trek and upon exiting the park, they point this out to you and ask you to pay the difference in cash. The cash, of course, goes into the pockets of whoever is collecting it. Check carefully the amount (and currency) before entering your PIN and keep all receipts at least until after you've left the park (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 207).*

Disreputable guides *While most guides are dedicated, professional, properly trained and genuinely concerned with making your trip safe and successful, there are exceptions. Although it doesn't happen often, some guides leave the last hut*

deliberately late on the summit day to avoid going all the way to the top. Going with a reputable company, preferably one who hires full-time guides (most don't) is one way to prevent bad experiences. Also, insist on meeting the guide before signing up for a trip, familiarise yourself with all aspects of the route, and when on the mountain have morning and evening briefings so you know what to expect each day. The night before summiting talk to other climbers to be sure your departure time seems realistic (though note that not everyone leaves at the same time), and if not, get an explanation from your guide. Should problems arise, be polite but firm (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 207).

Other ways in which the guide instructs on not being selfless include instructions on fair prices. They are often accompanied with a suggestion that the person asking for the price might not have your best interest at heart, and you should stand up for yourself in terms of price, but also in terms of safety, such as in the guidelines on using taxis on Zanzibar:

Taxis, which have white plates on the mainland and a 'gari la abiria' (passenger vehicle) sign on Zanzibar, can be hired in all major towns. None have meters, so agree on the fare with the driver before getting in. Fares for short town trips start at Tsh2000. In major centres, many drivers have an 'official' price list, although rates shown on it (often calculated on the basis of Tsh1000 per 1km) are generally significantly higher than what is normally paid. If you're unsure of the price, ask locals what it should be and then use this as a base for negotiations. For longer trips away from town, negotiate the fare based on distance, petrol costs and road conditions, plus a fair profit for the driver. Only use taxis from reliable hotels or established taxi stands. Avoid hailing taxis cruising the streets, and never get in a taxi that has a 'friend' of the driver or anyone else already in it (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 385).

The guidebook also includes guidelines for whom to tip and how much, and it accompanies these instructions with a warning that higher tips might be demanded and what to do if that happens:

Climbing mt Meru - Tipping Park rangers receive a fixed monthly salary for their work, and get no additional payment from the park for guiding, which means that tips are much appreciated. It happens rarely, but rangers and porters here occasionally expect the big tips demanded by their Kilimanjaro counterparts. If this happens and you're already on the trail, work out an arrangement to keep going, and then report them to headquarters when you get down the mountain. For a good guide who has completed the full trek with you, plan on a tip of about US\$50 per group. Cook and porter tips should be around US\$30 and US\$20 respectively. Tip more with top-end companies (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 169).

Courage

The Aristotelian concept of courage as moral value is the mean between acting over-confident and cowardly. Fearlessness, Aristotle argues, should not be mistaken for courage; fearlessness leads to rash and therefore bad decisions. To be courageous, someone has to be aware of danger, but face it with wisdom and confidence (Aristotle, 2009, p. 49). In the analysed Lonely Planet books, courage is constructed through the encouragement of trying things outside one's comfort zone, by presenting the idea of 'discovery and exploration' as a positive. This is done through the entire aim of the books, to help consumers discover new places and to have new experiences with confidence and wisdom gained through access to the books. There are also specific references to courage as a positive value. For example in this part of the introduction of *The Best Things in Life are Free*:

Last year, while taking our children on their first foray into Africa we visited Marrakesh in Morocco. On our first evening we walked into the Djemaa el-Fna (page 16), the city's world famous open square. It was like walking into another world. The smoke and smells from food stalls, the sound of drummers and the clamour of people shouting, singing and hawking their wares. Everyone's eyes were out on stalks, senses in overdrive. I had been worried it would be too much, but the kids asked to go again the following night. One of the most memorable moments I've had travelling cost nothing beyond the gumption to walk into the square that night (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 5).

‘The gumption’ this travel writer describes having, is what he claims led to one of the most memorable moments while travelling, clearly linking travel consumption to courage and to happiness. Bravery and ‘a sense of adventure’ are the two themes that are used to create the moral value ‘courage’ in *The Best Things in Life are Free*. For example in the description and images of Lynn Canyon Park, where a vertiginous suspension bridge and a creek with frigid waters are recommended to the bravest of travellers:

Although the vertiginous drop to the rushing waters of Lynn Creek from the swaying suspension bridge may be less than that dividing the Capilano Suspension Bridge from the ground beneath, this particular park’s wobbly offering is totally free. Included in the non-existent price tag are numerous trails beneath evergreen stands. The bravest of the visitors here are those who take a dip in the creek’s frigid waters (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 236).

The image accompanying the description is taken from the point of view of someone about to step onto the suspension bridge. This perspective gives a good sense of the bridge’s instability and it emphasises how long the bridge is. It also gives a clear view of the materials used to construct the bridge, wood and rope, which, at least in travellers who do not consider themselves amongst those ‘bravest’ that are addressed in the description, inspire less confidence than, say, concrete and steel.

*---This image has been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons---
fig. vc1, (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 236)*

Bravery is also explicitly a part of this introduction of a Scottish lake, Loch Lomond. It references the film *Braveheart*, which is set in Scotland, and an alleged monster:

You need a brave heart to swim in Scotland, but this beautiful loch – Britain’s biggest puddle – might tempt you in. This is the home of the annual Great Scottish

Swim (and also, apparently, a monster – albeit one without the celebrity status of its Loch Ness cousin) (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 95).

The image that illustrates the description of place to go swimming in natural water (fig. vc2), that the Loch Lomond paragraph is part of, is an image that invokes connotations of bravery by its depiction of a diver, linking it to the ideas of ‘just diving in’, ‘diving in head first’ or as it explicitly says in the text next to the image; ‘diving in the deep end’, all ways of describing courage: *Forget paying to go to the pool – plunge in at the deep end with these European al-fresco aquatic adventures* (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 94).

These images have been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reason fig. vc2, (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 94) fig. vc3, (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 262)

The image’s structure is repeated in the image accompanying the description of a look-out point in New Zealand, where travellers who don’t want to spend on an expensive adrenaline rush for themselves can obtain a second hand thrill by watching others bungee jump (fig. vc3). In the examples of wild swimming and bungee jumping, bravery, adventure and having a sense of it are linked with activities that are commonly linked to the idea of adventure. The same is the case for the use of adventure in the Lonely Planet ‘s descriptions of national parks: *Yours to keep: a free pass to Europe’s best bits – areas enshrined as national parks, where the only entry requirement is a sense of adventure* (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 80).

And in these descriptions of Australian outback walks:

Ormiston gorge and pound. There’s more to explore in the Red Centre than the Rock. An offshoot of the epic Larapinta Trail, this dramatic day-long desert adventure takes you through a gorge and the West MacDonnell ranges to a croc-free swimming hole (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 258).

Rees–Dart track. This challenging four to five-day adventure near Queenstown follows the spectacular Rees and Dart Rivers. Considerate back- country camping is permitted and free unless you're using hut campgrounds (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 258).

But, as with the first example of the writer describing 'having the gumption' to walk into a market, adventure is not limited to physical or adrenaline inducing activities, which Aristotle would place on the 'fearless' end of the scale that courage is the balance of. Lonely Planet describes the Promenade Plantée, a Paris park as an adventure because it is something out of the ordinary, making clear that the link between courage and travel does not need to be about adrenaline and thrill-seeking, it's about experiencing something new.

Promenade Plantée. The inspiration for New York's High Line, this elevated park built on a 19th- century railway viaduct is an unexpected green space floating above eastern Paris. Starting just east of Opéra Bastille in the hip and no-nonsense 12e, it unfolds to provide a quite otherworldly urban adventure. Following the full 4.5km takes you to the very edge of central Paris. 146

In the Lonely Planet, a good travel consumer is a brave traveller, with gumption, a sense of adventure and who is willing to dive into the deep end. Lonely planet's version of courage mirrors the Aristotelian value closely, because their version of the brave adventurer might jump in head first, but they are armed with the knowledge from the guidebooks.

Wisdom

Wisdom, in the analysed Lonely Planet books, can be divided into two types, knowledge and contemplation. References to knowledge and how it plays a part in reaching happiness through travel can be found in the description of 'knowledge institutions' that can be visited, such as museums, libraries and universities. In *The Best Things in Life are Free*, Trinity College in Dublin is described as follows:

Swan around the beautiful green grounds and cobbled squares of Trinity College, Ireland's top university, which dates back to 1592. An air of erudition pervades the place, and if you laze on the grass, undergrad-style, for long enough, you might even absorb some knowledge by osmosis. The list of former students includes Oscar Wilde, Samuel Beckett, Jonathan Swift and, er, Courtney Love. College Green, Dublin, 7am- midnight; free. (Albiston et al., 2016, pp. 97-98)

The description of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC positions knowledge as the main attraction of the city's cultural offering:

A free education. Washington, DC surely boasts the world's highest number of free-entry museums in any city thanks to the Smithsonian Institution – a collection of 19 museums and galleries, plus a zoo and research centers. And all of this is thanks to an eccentric Brit, Mr James Smithson who, despite never having stepped foot in the USA, left his fortune to the country for the 'profusion of knowledge'. Visitors to the museums located along the Mall, among other locations, can learn about virtually everything, from dinosaurs to space shuttles, gold nuggets to the star-spangled banner, the Constitution to botanic plants. The most extraordinary part? Entry to the museums costs nada (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 242).

In the description of the State Library of Victoria in Melbourne, Australia, books, talks and debates are put forward as knowledge related products to be consumed:

From the funky pavement sculpture to the epic domed reading room, this is a house of stories about Victoria's past, present and future, with books (two million), exhibitions (including Ned Kelly's armour) and talks/debates – some held in the Wheeler Centre (wheelercentre.com; 176 Little Lonsdale St) and many free. There's a cafe/bar and free wi-fi (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 249)

The moral value of wisdom and how it leads to happiness can also be seen in the numerous bookshops that travellers are encouraged to visit, for instance in these travel tips about Delhi, Portland, San Francisco, Washington DC and Melbourne:

Be a bookworm. Keep cool, cultured and caffeinated at a Full Circle Bookstore. These air-conditioned bookshops with cafes are a browser's heaven, due to their local, often cheap, editions of Indian and international writers, good history sections, meet-the-author events and laid-back coffee shops (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 36).

Powell's City of Books Powell's is a Portland institution – almost a museum. Most evenings, the flagship store – which occupies a whole block – brings visiting authors to read from and sign new books. Get lost in the many colour-coded rooms and search for bargain-priced used copies of titles you want. powells.com; 1005 W Burnside St; 9am-11pm; readings free (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 212).

*City Lights Books San Francisco's landmark independent bookstore was co-founded by poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti in 1953. Its tradition of political radicalism began when City Lights published Beat-poet Allen Ginsberg's *Howl*, which was put on trial for obscenity (Ferlinghetti won). The bookstore has a busy calendar of author readings that are free to attend, or just show up to browse the bookshelves. citylights.com; 261 Columbus Ave; 10am- midnight; admission free (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 220)*

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fig. vw1, (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 86) fig. vw2, (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 99) fig. vw3, (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 212)

There are multiple images in the book that show shelves full of books (fig vw2 and 3), and people reading (fig. vw1 and 3). These images have a sense of calm that is also seen in the images that illustrate the other part of the value of wisdom; contemplation. All images in this section (fig. vw1-24) have been taken from *The Best Things in Life are Free*.

Contemplation

Contemplation is the other element of the moral value wisdom, and it can be clearly distinguished in the Lonely Planet books. This element is communicated visually more than through text, and can be organised into four types of visualisations; spiritual or religious contemplation, the quiet urban environment, the natural quiet environment, and reflection.

Spiritual or religious contemplation

This type of visualisation of the contemplation element of the moral value wisdom combines symbols of religiosity or spirituality (fig. vw4-9) with compositions that create a sense of calm through, for instance, repetition (fig. vw4, 6 and 8), or through lighting, using sunrise or sunset settings to create calming colours, long shadows and soft light effects (fig. vw4, 6, 7 and 9). The images have a softness and calmness to them, and the connotation of private contemplation is reinforced by the subjects in them, none of whom look directly at the camera or at others in the frame.

*These images have been removed by the author of this thesis for copyright reasons
Fig vw5-9*

The quiet urban environment

These patterns are repeated in the images of the quiet urban environment, where if people are pictured, they are not looking at the audience or each other. The pictures have a sense of calm tranquillity to them, a calmness that is contrasted to the fact that these images are taken in the city centres of bustling and in reality often chaotically busy cities such as Paris (fig. vw11) and Washington, DC (fig. vw12). There are few, if any, people in the pictures, creating a sense of privacy and quiet. The image of snow (fig. vw13) adds a sense of quiet because of the noise dampening effect snow has.

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Fig vw10-13*

The quiet natural environment

The images of the quiet natural environment in Lonely Planet books reinforce the idea that the consumption of travel is about contemplation by showing images that create the space for quiet introversion and thought (fig. vw14 – 19). These images use the same low sunlight as in the other categories, and also show wider landscapes, creating a sense of ‘being alone’, and pictures of deer in a natural environment, which would be easily startled by any noise, creating a sense of quiet.

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Fig vw14-19

Reflection

Reflection is an important aspect of contemplation, and in *The Best things in Life are Free*, reflection is an important part of how travel consumption is visualised (fig. vw20-24). Both natural and cityscapes are shown with strong reflections in water, creating a sense of tranquillity because the reflections can only be as sharp as they are if the water is mirror calm, and a sense of clarity because the sky needs to be clear for such a stark reflection to happen in reality. The symmetry of the images created through the inclusion of the reflection creates calmness as well.

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Fig vw20-24

Temperance

For Aristotle, temperance is the mean between hardship and indulgence. Temperance is an interesting lens to look through when analysing a brand like Lonely Planet and especially a book like this one. There is a certain irony to a travel book called *‘The Best Things in Life are Free*. Because while it’s filled with suggestions for activities that are free or almost free, these activities can usually be found at the end of an expensive flight. Even when this is not the case, being away from home, even when staying in low-budget accommodation, usually costs money. Travelling and exploring new places might be one of ‘the best

things in life' for those who are so inclined; but travel is not free. A reasonable argument could be made that all leisure travel, however low-budget, is an indulgence by its very nature. Still, Lonely Planet promotes an Aristotelian value of temperance within their own framework. It distinguishes between hardships to be avoided, such as dirty hostels, necessary hospital visits or trouble with the law that would end a traveller in a cell, and luxuries to occasionally indulge in, but often with a moralising tone. The preferred options lie in between these, consisting of low-budget and midrange accommodation and food options that make up for their lack of white table cloths with large helpings of authenticity.

In *The Best Things in Life are Free*, luxury and indulgence understandably don't play a large part, but when they are talked about, it is done with moral undertones. The description of the luxury hotel lobbies on Miami's South Beach, luxury is connected to shame: *'The hotels of South Beach unashamedly flaunt wealth, opulence and sexiness. Even if this isn't your speed, the indulgence of their design and landscaping – huge pools flanked by open-air lounges and vaulted, columned ceilings – is a jaw-dropper'* (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 201). There is also a reference to a type of justice in the description, urging the traveller not to be a scrounger, to pay for a drink if you're staying long enough to warrant paying for it: *Explore via their lobbies and outdoor lounge areas; order a drink from a hotel bar if you're staying awhile* (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 201). In a suggestion for something free to do in Tokyo, there is an assumption that luxury boutiques are seen negatively: *It's harder to hate on luxury boutiques when they come in such stunning packages as the ones that span the zelkova tree-lined boulevard Omotesando* (Albiston et al., 2016, pp. 63-64). The description of Grace Bay, in the Caribbean, includes a description of its beauty, and a dig at the *'gaggle of corporate types'* who have set up *'over-the-top luxury digs along the pearlescent shores'* (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 180). On the last pages of the book, the many authors who have worked on it are introduced with a sentence or two, and one of these introductions stands out for its apologetic tone; *Karyn Noble is a senior editor in Lonely Planet's London office, and a freelance writer specialising in luxury and gourmet travel. But some of her most memorable experiences didn't cost a thing* (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 301).

The Best Things in Life are Free opens with an introduction from one of the many Lonely travel writers travel writers who collaborated on this book.

The monetary value implied in the term free can misrepresent what's on offer within these pages. The quality of an experience, after all, is not attached to a price tag. Many of the suggestions here involve unearthing the world's secret wonders, whether that's swimming around Sydney's ocean pools or strolling the tombs and monuments of Delhi's Lodi Gardens. Walkers tackling the great tracks of New Zealand will find themselves close to the soul of those beautiful islands (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 5).

The travel tip book is about non-indulgent travelling. It's not about high-end experiences in expensive five star hotels. Instead, the introduction makes clear, it's about 'real' experiences, discovering the 'true' soul of a destination. Travelling on the cheap, the author claims, is not just about necessity, it can mean a better experience and in some cases can even be a life lesson.

For many of us, when we take our first steps travelling free things are not only appealing but essential if we're to make our backpacking days last as long as possible. And it's not just formative forays - many unforgettable blasts of freedom and discovery tend to be budget affairs. You quickly realise that cheap can mean much, much better. No Roman dinner will ever match the bread and cheese picnic in Villa Celimontana, a short walk from the Colosseum, on my first visit to the Eternal City. And if we're talking life lessons, there are few better insights into the human condition than sharing a dorm room with a dozen others from around the world (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 5).

The last sentence of the introduction; *Great memories, a happier you and a grateful wallet; one glance through these pages and you may never aspire to the indulgences of top-end travel again (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 5)*, links temperance and happiness by explicitly linking travel consumption on a modest budget to happiness.

In Lonely Planet books then, temperance is enjoying travel without too much indulgence and too much hardship. The way to do that, in both the Tanzania guide and in *The Best Things in Life are Free*, seems to be by focusing on 'authentic' experience, or at least experiences of authenticity. Temperance becomes the route to what is 'real', it becomes part of a moral discourse in which temperance offers 'truth'. Authenticity, in relation to temperance, is constructed by connecting the travel experience to localness. A general travel tip Lonely Planet gives is to *'Skip pricey tours. Instead, embrace the trams, buses and boats that give a more authentic (and cheaper) perspective of a city'* (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 156). In Bangkok, the book recommends taking a ferry to cross a river instead of taking an expensive river cruise, and makes it sound appealing not just by comparing the price to a local cheap staple of rice, but by the presence of monks:

For about the price of a bowl of rice, you can board Bangkok's most atmospheric vantage point on a budget river cruise. The best time to ride the ferry is at dusk; join the monks waiting at Tha Phra Athit pier and cruise past some of Krung Thep's landmark monuments, refreshed by balmy evening breezes (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 23).

The monks also make an appearance in the suggestion on how to save money on another authentically Thai experience; getting a massage. The text starts by linking massages to Thai culture, *'Massage is part of the culture in Bangkok'*, and then constructs temperance as a balance: *'but finding a legitimate budget massage among the pricey spas and dodgy operators can be something of a challenge* (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 23). The solution, according to Lonely Planet, is authenticity:

'Our tip is head to source – Wat Pho is both an astonishing temple and the spiritual home of Thai massage and traditional Thai medicine. At the famous massage school you can get a relaxing 30-minute pummelling from monastery-trained practitioners in one of the pavilions within the temple or in the training facility without, all for a wallet-pleasing 260B (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 23).

In the Tanzania travel guide the presence of locals is used to make up for the lack of other distinguishing features at this budget accommodation; *Arusha Centre Tourist Inn. Unremarkable but clean and fairly spacious rooms are on offer here – they're just about fine for the price (ask for a discount anyway), but be prepared for an early morning wake-up call from the neighbouring mosque. The three storeys ring a courtyard, and there's a restaurant at the front with OK food and plenty of Maasai men staring at the TV* (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015, p. 155).

The *Best Things in Life are Free* book often suggests budget food and drink options with reference to their authenticity. For instance in Beijing, where *'Booze will quickly bust your budget, particularly if you're fond of European beers. Stick to local lagers and explore backstreet bars for better bargains* (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 30). When in Moscow, travel consumers are urged to

'Stick to a budget in Moscow by familiarising yourself with old-school cafeterias, where you can fill up on traditional Russian dishes for next to nothing. These buffet-style places allow you to indulge in dishes such as herring in a fur coat (herring, beets, carrots and potatoes), borscht and pelmeni (dumplings) knocked back with a shot of vodka (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 137).

Readers of *The Best Things in Life are Free* will know how to avoid suffering on their Caribbean holiday, by avoiding over-priced meals and having *'honest to goodness local fare'* instead:

Some Caribbean islands, such as Anguilla, have become the gathering grounds for the rich and famous (Brad and Jennifer's 'break-up house' is located here), but that doesn't mean you have to suffer through a vacation's worth of overpriced meals. Plump for one of the local food vans, such as Hungry's, established in 2004, which swaps white tablecloths for honest-to-goodness local fare including tangy seafood chowder (Albiston et al., 2016, p. 183).

Through the discourse these examples are part of, temperance and authenticity have become linked in the morality that is constructed through it.

Conclusion

Morality has long been theorised as the key to happiness. More than two millennia ago, Plato and Aristotle laid the foundation for western morality in their definitions of the four virtues, *Wisdom, Justice, Courage and Temperance*, and posed that living according to these values is what would lead to a truly happy life (Aristotle, 2009, p. 192). Other ancient Greek philosophers, belonging to the schools of the Cynics and of the Stoics, explicitly connected morality and happiness to material culture in a way that we can still recognise in contemporary consumer cultural trends such as minimalism. They posed that one has to live in accordance with nature to be happy, which required the rejection of material goods. In the early Middle Ages, St Augustine of Hippo went even further, and argued that happiness can't just not be found in material objects, it can't be found in the material world. Happiness, for the early Christian philosopher, was obtainable only through the spiritual, through living a virtuous life, but the reward of happiness would only be possible after death (Augustine, 2015, chapter XXII, 32). Another Christian philosopher, Aquinas, later brought happiness at least partially back to earth, by arguing that there were two types of happiness, one of which was only available in the after life, a heavenly happiness, but in addition to this, there was also the possibility to experience happiness in life, on earth. He still linked it to morality, but the fact that happiness was now two fold, and part of it was obtainable on earth, started to put happiness within reach of what is now consumer culture. Enlightenment scholars such as Locke, Bentham and Rousseau later brought happiness firmly back down to earth, to increasingly industrialised societies which were being shaped by the emerging ideas of capitalism into consumer cultures. Here, happiness started to become linked to the concept of consumption, while it remained firmly tied to its moral roots.

The power that consumers now perceive to have over happiness can be seen from positive and negative points of views; contemporary scholars such as Baudrillard and Ahmed have judged the connection between happiness and

morality in contemporary consumer culture as a means of cultural control, a way of preserving the status quo. The Lonely Planet case study in this chapter has shown that the superficially made connection between morality and happiness in consumer culture, often made by concepts such as hedonism and 'false happiness' are exactly that; superficial. Beyond that surface, the virtues defined by Aristotle are still the foundation for how morality and happiness are linked in consumer culture. The Lonely Planet travel guidebooks are instructions on how to consume travel to lead to happiness, and in their instructions are embedded instructions on how to live according to the virtues justice, wisdom, courage and temperance. The Lonely Planet travel guides are Aristotelian Eudaimonist instructions on how to live virtuously, with the goal of happiness. The goal of happiness is illustrated by their book *Happy*, and by the use of images and colour in their travel advice books.

Plato's four virtues are constructed throughout the Lonely Planet books, and they follow the Aristotelian golden mean; they construct the virtues as a balance between two extremes. Justice is defined in Lonely Planet as the balance between 'not being selfish', by for instance promoting charitable projects, or by the instruction of not taking up too much space on local public transport, and 'not being selfless' by for instance warning about common scams in the countries they give advice on. The value courage is defined by the mean between fearlessness and cowardice, with suggestions for activities that will push the travel consumer beyond their comfort zone, while being well prepared with the knowledge from the book. Temperance is constructed as the Aristotelian balance between indulgence and self-sacrifice, with ample advice on how to enjoy oneself without indulging in the most luxurious options, and advice on how to take pleasure from low-budget options, often by constructing these as the 'authentic' option. For both Aristotle and Lonely Planet, wisdom is the foundation of all the other virtues. Courageous, temperate and just decisions and actions can only be taken and made on the basis of knowledge. Lonely Planet's core product is knowledge, and knowledge institutions are an important part of the suggestions they make for travellers to reach happiness in their travel consumption. Contemplation is a key part of how the Lonely Planet constructs wisdom, especially visually, through images of books and readers, religious contemplation

and quiet urban and natural scenes. The construction of happiness and morality in Lonely Planet shows that the superficial link between these concepts, which is commonly made with claims to hedonism is insufficient and that the connections between morality and happiness in consumer culture are far more profound and run far deeper than commonly acknowledged.

Conclusion

This thesis questioned the notion that morality is mainly or even only part of consumer culture in what is known as ethical consumption. Instead, I argue that morality is shaped in several layers throughout consumer culture. I examined these layers by considering the question: *How is morality shaped and perpetuated both explicitly and implicitly in consumer culture?* This question was answered by bringing together theories on cynicism, myth and ideology alongside case studies on food discourse, the ‘one for one’ brand TOMS and the publisher Lonely Planet. The theories and the case studies together answered the sub-questions that are the subjects of the following paragraphs.

Disconnecting knowing and believing

This thesis has shown that consumer culture is not, as is commonly assumed, post-ideological. Ideology and the morality based on it are very much a part of consumer culture, but their presence is obscured in several ways. The first one is the disconnection between what people ‘know and believe’ and on the other what they ‘do’ by what Sloterdijk calls cynicism. People will say they don’t really believe buying Fairtrade coffee will make the world a better place, but crucially, they do it anyway. As Mannoni said, *‘je sais bien, mais quand meme’*: I know well, but still. The ideology and morality of consumer culture are not shaped in what people say they believe, it is shaped in their actions. By actually buying the Fairtrade coffee they are conforming to an ideology and a morality in which the values that Fairtrade stands for are included. This disconnection between what people ‘know and believe’ and what people ‘do’ is part of consumer culture discourse created by producers, who play with self-reflexivity in their advertising, by ironically acknowledging that they realise that consumers don’t really believe their claims, but will act as if they do anyway. This self-reflexivity gives themselves and their consumers license to fully indulge in the ‘belief’, without being accountable to it, or seeming foolish for believing it. By disconnecting what people ‘know and believe’ from what they ‘do’, it becomes harder to recognise where ideology and morality affect consumer culture,

because they are denied their role while they fulfil it. Ideology and morality are obscured further by a second disconnection within this first one; the disconnection between what people 'know' and what they 'believe'. The tension this disconnection causes is addressed through myth.

Layered myths

Myth is commonly understood as a way of making sense of the world when people don't know how something really works. The assumption would be that once people learn how something really works, the myth would be discarded. And often this is the case. People generally no longer believe in dragons, because knowledge of dinosaurs is now widespread. When fossils are found, this knowledge is applied. However, in contemporary consumer culture, what can be seen is that myth and factual knowledge co-exist. Consumers use both to make sense of the world. Campbell (2007, p. 329) poses that this is the catalyst behind the rise of a 'mythopoeic culture'. He argues that myths have become meaningful precisely because people do not have to believe in them. The awareness of the fact that the myths that are created in advertising aren't real is what allows people to indulge in them. In contemporary consumer culture, myth is not simply a way of understanding the world at a factual level, it is about what 'feels' true rather than what is true, about perennial truths rather than hard natural facts. It can therefore be seen as both an expression and a formative of ideology and morality. The very nature of myth is to present itself as 'just the way things are', this means that not only is ideology added to consumer culture through the construction of myth, it is also the reason that it is under-acknowledged. In answer to the sub-question; *What is the role of myth in the shaping of ideology and morality in consumer culture?*, this thesis has demonstrated how myth is constructed in advertising. The several layers that make up myth mean that ideology and morality are constructed in consumer culture implicitly as well as explicitly. The examples from the Body Shop and Dove introduce how advertising can have an overt morality, such as women's empowerment, or the saving of rainforests, but that underlying those explicit moral statements, there is also a layer of myth in which an underlying ideology and morality are constructed, in this case an ideology in which power over one's environment and

life are central. This layering is also evident in the case studies, where several examples show how the overt moral message in advertising is not the end of the story. These explicit moral messages are the surface layer of myth, while the deeper layers create a nuanced, and largely under-acknowledged morality.

Defining needs and morality

Through the construction of myth in advertising, morality is a part of consumer culture. A third reason that this is not generally acknowledged is because consumption tends to be examined from the point of view that the satisfaction of needs is what is the most relevant, if not the only aspect. More recent literature has challenged this idea, but in large part, when consumption and morality are considered, needs are at the core of theory. Often, the connection between needs, morality and consumer culture is drawn through a condemnation of capitalism in general and the advertising industry specifically, for their creation of needs, or rather their creation of unfulfillable ‘false’ desire, which would lock people in a perpetual state of unhappiness. The morality of creating desire is something that is worth considering, and many in both the academic and popular literature have. That said, in this thesis I argue that simply questioning the creation of what is seen as false desire and the morality of that does not cover enough ground. Firstly, the position limits itself by judging either capitalism as a whole, or a company or brand in particular for creating false desire, and to do so means you have to decide where you draw the line between what counts as a need, and what counts as a false desire. It means you are making a decision about what consumers need and what they only *think* they need. The very act of defining needs is morally loaded, as making a distinction between needs and luxuries requires moral consideration. This thesis has demonstrated this interaction between the act of defining needs and morality in the case study of the brand TOMS. This chapter answered the question, *How is morality constructed in the definition of needs in consumer culture?*

The subject of needs is explicitly part of the TOMS ‘giving’ narrative, in their promise to ‘give to a person in need’ every time a TOMS product is sold. What is less explicit is that the way ‘those in need’ are defined, is based on an ideological and moral view. This moral view decides what the needs are, who is

deserving of having their needs met, and how those needs are best served. TOMS gives aid to those in need in the way that is familiar to a Western audience; through the creation of the necessary conditions for an economy like the Western capitalist countries have; healthy workers, educated and given confidence in their skills and abilities. The same goes for whom to help; the groups that a Westerner would describe as vulnerable are described by TOMS as in need; women and children are seen as deserving, they are seen as vulnerable and as worthy of help. Men are implicitly presented as if they are supposed to be able to support themselves.

This narrative shows and shapes an ideology and accompanying morality that sees capitalism as both a current solution and a future goal for those who TOMS has decided are 'in need'. Its success relies partly on the Western ideology of individualism and the related ideology of meritocracy; the idea that if you as an individual go to school, work hard, and stay confident: you'll be fairly rewarded for that and you will be able to 'help yourself', without taking the appropriateness of these narratives in the social context of those who receive TOMS' help fully into account. In the commercial TOMS narrative, they define needs for their consumers from the same ideology, placed in a different context. TOMS shoes fulfil the need to be fashionable, to be an individual and to be recognised as such, to be part of a community; the TOMS tribe, and the need to learn about the world, to explore it both by travelling and by connecting with those less fortunate through the TOMS brand.

The case study of TOMS and how they define needs is an example of how a richer explanation of the way morality affects consumption patterns is possible when the questions considered go beyond questioning the inherent morality of needs. The second part of my critique of the idea that morality is mainly part of consumer culture through the creation of needs, or false desire, is that while questions about the concept of needs, and desire, and the supposed result of consumers internalising these industry led practices (envy and pecuniary emulation) are valid, and can give rich insights into consumption patterns, I argue that they also oversimplify. They are a denial of the complexity of consumer culture, and they overlook the many ways that morality affects consumption patterns. Consumers are not simply passive victims of companies

who one-sidedly decide what they will buy or be unhappy without. Consumer culture should be treated and investigated as a complex sphere where good and bad both exist, and where consumers are not just passive victims of consumer culture's mores.

By recognising that consumer culture is a space in which both what is perceived as the good and the bad exist, creates the opportunity for a much richer analysis of morality in consumer culture. In the case study of the brand TOMS this thesis has demonstrated that both what is seen as the 'the good' and 'the bad' live alongside each other in consumer culture. TOMS is very explicit about both its social mission and the fact that it is a for-profit company, and explains why they see that combination as something that is a more sustainable way of offering aid, as they don't have to depend on donations; they generate their own income to spend on their social goals. Implicitly, it is only sustainable as aid, if it is also sustainable as a profit generating company that can keep delivering that aid. Because of this combination, TOMS has both elements of consumer culture, the 'bad' parts that cause the ill-effects associated with consumer culture such as: pollution caused by mass-production, shipping and packaging, the profit goal and the resulting inequality, and the promotion of fast fashion that leads to high volumes of waste. It also has the parts that are seen as good, for example their focus on helping those in need, the attention they bring to the plight of others, their connecting people from different parts of the world, and their message of care. TOMS is an example of how these two parts function as parts of one whole, and how in the case of TOMS, one is inextricable from the other.

Prosuming morality within limits

In the discourse in which consumer culture is inherently immoral because it creates false desires for consumers, consumers are a passive group. Creating false desire is immoral in this discourse because the consumers are seen as defenceless against them. In reality, as a lot of the literature asserts and illustrates, this is not true. Which led me to question *What role do consumers play in the shaping and perpetuating of morality in consumer culture?*

The examples of the rejection of material goods in minimalism, the active role consumers have in creating experiences in the experience economy, the role of sacrifice in shopping (Miller, 1998) and the concept of prosumption (Jenkins, 2006) to name but a few, all show how consumers are not quite that passive, they actively co-construct consumer culture, its ideology and its morality in many different ways. This thesis has shown that in that co-creation of the narrative of consumer culture, consumers use the opportunity they have to resist and subvert the messages from dominant voices. They show themselves to be less passive than the Frankfurt school scholars (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002) imagined. Althusser's (2014) idea of how ideology is shaped as an active process seems to be a better fit.

That said, the case studies in this thesis have also shown that there is a significant inequality in power over how ideology and morality are shaped in consumer culture. While it is certainly true that consumers have influence over the discourse in which ideology and morality are shaped, it is important to realise that the structures within this co-creation takes place are shaped more by commercial organisations such as large brands than by individual consumers. The examples of Innocent's Big Knit, and TOMS' marketing show how brands are able to harness the power of the consumers who co-create the narrative and direct their contributions to fit within their dominant voice. The result is the strengthening and perpetuation of an inequality of power, under the guise of an equal relationship. This is not to say that consumers are being fooled: they can be seen to do so for their own benefit and in line with their own values, but the fact that the benefit of their voluntary service to the company remains under-acknowledged means that there is also an under-acknowledgement of the power the company has in influencing the construction of moral responsibility.

Atoning for modernity's sins

Morality's traditional association with religion led to the sub-question: *What parallels between the way morality is shaped and perpetuated in religion and in consumer culture can be identified?* This thesis has shown that contrary to what classical literature on capitalism suggests (Benjamin, 1996 [1921]), atonement is a part of consumer culture. It is co-created by the different voices that are part of

consumer culture discourse. Atonement should not be seen as specifically related to ethical consumption, it should be regarded as a part of consumer culture as a whole. Atonement for modernity's sins is most obvious in explicitly ethical consumption, when there is atonement for the ill effects of capitalism and industrialisation, things such as pollution, exploitation and animal cruelty, solved by buying for instance Fairtrade, electric cars, or cosmetics marketed as not tested on animals. What is less explicit is that modernity is seen as damaging to the nostalgic notion of community as a mechanical, in the Durkheimian sense of the word, way of organising the social. In modernity, colder, large-scale 'society' has taken its place, and with that, there is a perceived loss of solidarity, personal bonds and care, which are commonly associated with the idea of a pre-modern close-knit community.

This was particularly evident in the case studies presented in the chapter on food discourse, which asked *How is moral responsibility constructed in food discourse?* By analysing food discourse and the many ways in which it creates moral responsibility to different levels of community, this thesis has shown how food discourse aims to create community over society, in an attempt to redeem itself from what is widely seen as the 'sins' of modernity, industrialisation and capitalism of having created large-scale efficiency oriented society to the detriment of a nostalgically imagined traditional, small-scale, close-knit community. This thesis has shown how both explicitly ethical and consumption in general have elements of atonement in them, and it has demonstrated how in consumer culture, atonement for the loss of community to society is co-created in several ways. For instance by addressing issues such as global exploitation, loneliness, long and opaque food chains, the encouragement to buy local to support local producers and businesses, and through the concept of authenticity.

The Fairtrade Foundation and the Rainforest Alliance both address global exploitation in consumer culture, but the way they create and offer atonement for this sin is different. The Fairtrade Foundation creates a powerful capitalist West and a poor powerless 'Third World' community at the receiving end of the fairness of the Western consumers. It creates atonement, but also inequality between the powerless producers and the powerful consumers. The Rainforest

Alliance offers atonement for global exploitation, but also for sins of modernity against the planet, such as pollution. Their contribution to discourse speaks of the producers and consumers as part of the same problems, and as equal partners in the solution. They offer an atonement that includes the equality and solidarity that is associated with the close-knit community that modernity is seen as having caused the loss of. The example of Innocent's Big Knit campaign shows how consumption can aim to solve loneliness, an immediate result of alienation in society. The moral responsibility that is constructed in the Big Knit campaign is a responsibility of the community to be inclusive and cohesive. The aim to solve alienation is also seen in efforts to make the food chain more transparent, either by regulating it, such as in the case of regional authenticity labels, or by shortening it, such as in the case of local food markets and farm shops. It can also be recognised in the Farmers Union's calls to 'buy British', not just because it will shorten the food chain, but also because they emphasise that it is important that Britain is able to be self-reliant; it should be able to take care of its 'own' community, again, constructing solidarity in food discourse.

In the encouragement to buy local, or eat local in food discourse, there is atonement in the moral responsibility to support your own local community. Buying from local business owners rather than from big chains ensures more money stays in the local community, making it stronger, while also encouraging personal ties between members. 'Local' is a rather ambiguous word, and this thesis has shown that while most of the current literature on local food systems focuses mostly on locally grown produce, and the selling of that produce to local consumers (Bauermeister, 2016; Mount et al., 2013). Food discourse encompasses more than that, and in the ambiguous spirit of the word 'local', the foods at the market are often local only because they are prepared locally, rather than grown there, or because they have any deeply rooted traditions in the area. The findings from the analysis of the Kirkstall Deli Market discourse go against another specific thread in the academic literature on local food consumption, which views the connection between local identity and food as strongly influenced by what it calls 'defensive localism'. This literature argues that the choice to consume local foods is not based on positive consumer community participation such as consumption based on a perceived duty of care, but rather

on a more negative notion; on a celebration of parochialism and exclusion of that which is seen as 'foreign' to the community's values (MacDonald, 2013; Winter, 2003). This thesis has shown that such exclusion is not a necessary part of local food discourse: supporting the local food businesses means that the community has the range of products available that is uniquely 'them'. Not only the products that have deeply rooted ties to the community are considered part of the local identity, although these types of products do play a role. In the case of the Kirkstall Deli Market discourse, there are a few foods that have ties to different levels of local, sometimes to the region, sometimes to the city.

Another example this thesis offers is the way authenticity is part of the Kirkstall Deli market discourse, where this idea is evoked through associating foods or methods of preparation with the authentic. The myth that is constructed in it, of the romantic Rousseauian concept of the primitive man who forages for food that is then cooked on fire, are naturalised and consumed together with the artisanal sourdough bread. This creates a space for morality to be shaped and perpetuated in consumer culture without being explicitly recognised as such. When used to this end, it is as much a reflexive reaction to modernity as the earlier examples of explicitly ethical consumption. Mass-produced consumer goods are seen as artificial, and consuming them means extending the self with that unnaturalness. Authenticity becomes a way of infusing products with a sense of rootedness, in place or in history, and a sense of naturalness. These characteristics make a consumer good feel more 'real', which is essential in the construction of myth and morality in consumption discourse.

Morality and happiness

The final chapter's analysis of the travel guide brand Lonely Planet has shown how travel guides, which are essentially guides on how to consume, are also guides on how to be moral, with a goal of leading a happy life. It answers the sub-question: *What role does happiness play in the construction of morality in consumer culture?* Morality has been theorised as the key to happiness for more than two millennia. Plato and Aristotle laid the foundation for western morality in their definitions of the four virtues, Wisdom, Justice, Courage and Temperance, and posed that living according to these values is what would lead

to a truly happy life (Aristotle, 2009, p. 192). The way that happiness should be reached evolved over the centuries, and morality and happiness became a core part of religion before they were returned to the material world, within the control of people rather than gods. In consumer culture, consumers and producers assert this control over morality and happiness through consumption behaviour.

In the analysis of the Lonely Planet travel guides, this thesis has shown how even though morality and happiness have gone through an evolution throughout history, the virtues defined by Plato and Aristotle, Courage, Wisdom, Justice and Temperance remain an important part of consumer culture, and affect consumption patterns in ways that are largely under-acknowledged. By encouraging travellers to 'take the plunge' and 'be adventurous' the Lonely Planet guides give instructions on how to be courageous. Instructions on how much and who to tip and when to haggle over prices are only a few of the many examples of how justice plays an essential role in consumer culture. Wisdom is an inherent value of travelling with a guidebook, but gathering more wisdom is something the guides promote whenever they can. In their emphasis of more modest travel options over the luxurious, temperance is incorporated in consumer culture through the Lonely Planet guides. Courage, Wisdom, Justice and Temperance are still at the core of consumer culture and the goal of living virtuously remains an essential part of people's lives. In contemporary consumer culture, as it has been throughout history, happiness remains one of the goals of living a virtuous life.

Further research

This thesis has opened up avenues for further research into the role of ideology, myth and morality in consumer culture. The role of the concept of authenticity, how this is defined, by and for whom, and its role in the construction of myth and its specific power to naturalise myth and ideology is something that would likely be a rich topic for further investigation. A second area of research that I believe would yield valuable insights would be the morality in health discourse in consumer culture. Within this area, an interesting focus would be on cases such

as the brand Deliciously Ella, which is a vegan health focused brand that explicitly denies connections to moral topics such as animal welfare.

In conclusion

Through an original synthesis of the literature on ideology and myth alongside case studies on several areas of consumer culture, this thesis has answered its main research question: *How is morality shaped and perpetuated both explicitly and implicitly in consumer culture?* It has demonstrated that ideology and morality are constructed in consumer culture in layers. The surface layers form the explicit moral claims in consumer culture, below which deeper layers of morality are formed. The case studies show how these layers and the morality that is formed in them remain largely under-acknowledged. The thesis demonstrates the importance of continuing to examine the hidden value systems and power relations at play in presumptions of needs and desires, and how such ideological distinctions shape wider experiences of contemporary consumer culture.

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