



MARK-E0058 SOCIOLOGY OF CONSUMPTION AND FASHION

CONSUMER COLLECTIVES AND FASHION



What are some of the social groups that influence your fashion practices?

What subcultures, communities, or groups can you identify among members of Aalto University?

How do these groups “do” fashion?

Subcultures

Subcultures of consumption

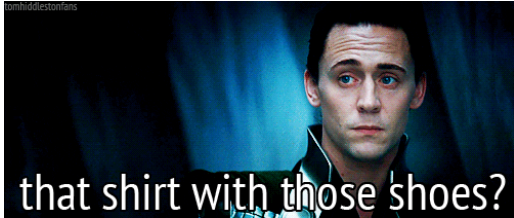
Brand communities

Tribes

“Bourdieu saw these capital endowments accruing gradually through one’s upbringing and resulting in socialized dispositions that make people with similar capital stocks prefer certain consumption fields over others. In other words, children of similar class backgrounds acquire habituated skills and aesthetic preferences through immersion into similar hobbies, vacation plans, and educational paths all the way up to higher education.”

reminder





Cultural capital

- “What you know”
- Embodied knowledge of what is important in the field
- “This-over-that” tacit intuition

reminder



Social capital

- “Who you know”
- Field connections
- Name recognition in field

Symbolic capital

- Particular forms of social/cultural/economic capital can become legitimate markers of prestige, respect, or authority in the field



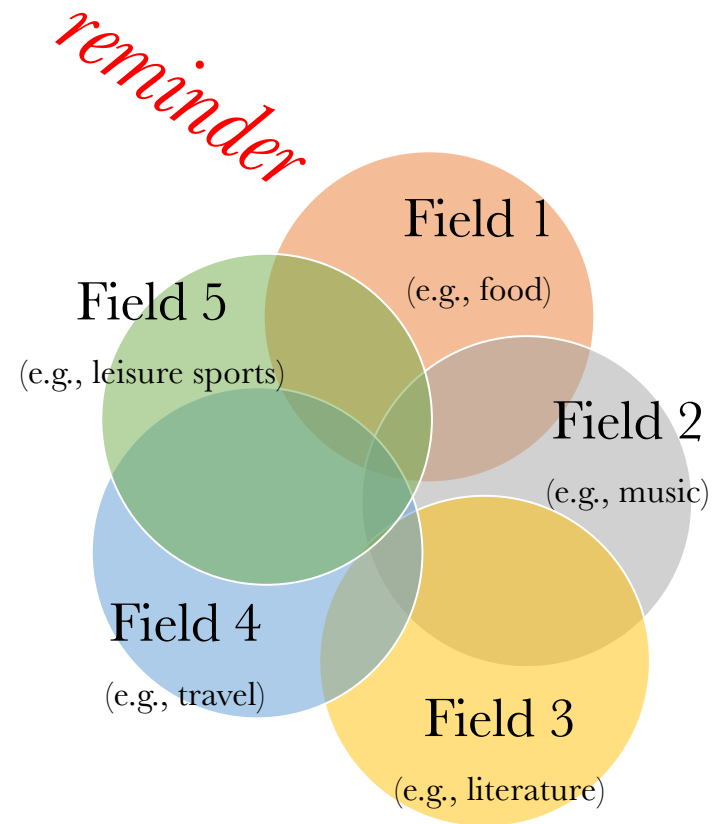
Economic capital

- “What you own”
- Money, possession of valued field artifacts



Field-related
capitals have
different levels of
transferability or
convertibility within
fields...

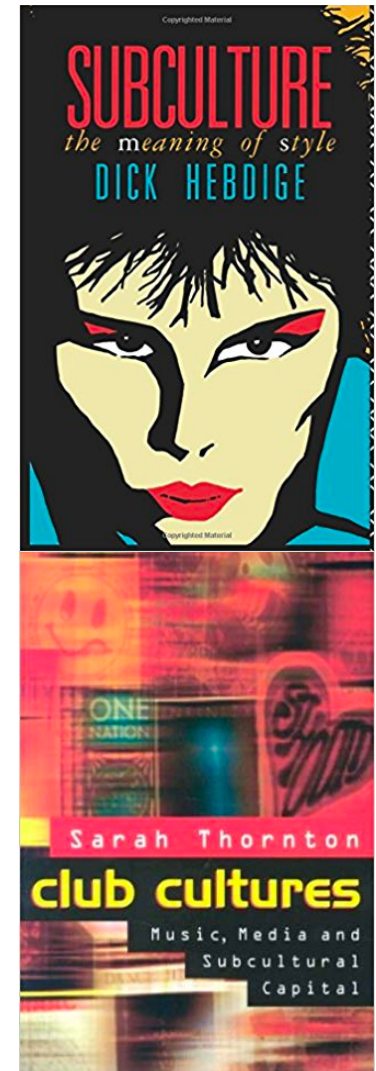
... and across fields



Research into subcultures found that these groups **have their own systems of language, aesthetics, and fashion** that do not adhere or become subjugated to those of the elites.

This represents a major addendum to Bourdieu's fashion and field theory.

Later, subcultures have become sources of inspiration for mainstream fashion trends



Structure

Ethos

Self-transformation

Relationship to
Marketing

Subcultures of Consumption: An Ethnography of the New Bikers

JOHN W. SCHOUTEN
JAMES H. MCALEXANDER*

This article introduces the subculture of consumption as an analytic category through which to better understand consumers and the manner in which they organize their lives and identities. Recognizing that consumption activities, product categories, or even brands may serve as the basis for interaction and social cohesion, the concept of the subculture of consumption solves many problems inherent in the use of ascribed social categories as devices for understanding consumer behavior. This article is based on three years of ethnographic fieldwork with Harley-Davidson motorcycle owners. A key feature of the fieldwork was a process of progressive contextualization of the researchers from outsiders to insiders situated within the subculture. Analysis of the social structure, dominant values, and revealing symbolic behaviors of this distinct, consumption-oriented subculture have led to the advancement of a theoretical framework that situates subcultures of consumption in the context of modern consumer culture and discusses, among other implications, a symbiosis between such subcultures and marketing institutions. Transferability of the principal findings of this research to other subcultures of consumption is established through comparisons with ethnographies of other self-selecting, consumption-oriented subcultures.



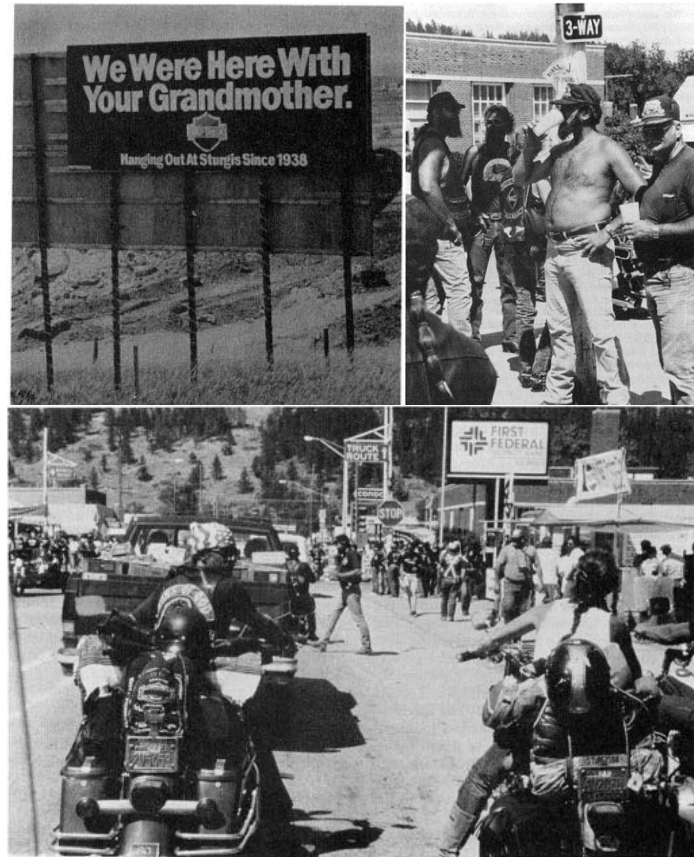
How do these "become"
fashion?

Structure

Ethos

Self-transformation

Relationship to Marketing





	Subculture	Subculture of Consumption	Brand Community	Tribe
<i>Orientation</i>	Social orientation	Socially oriented but dynamics center on consumption	Commodity oriented	Social orientation
<i>Basis of existence</i>	Experience based	Commodity based	Brand based	Emotionality
<i>Relation to mainstream norms</i>	Escapist from mainstream norms	Operates within mainstream norms	Embraces mainstream norms	Varied
<i>Practitioner reach</i>	Global practiced + mobility	Globally practiced	Globally practiced but no movement	Varied (glocal)
<i>Mode of communication</i>	Multi-sited communication	Multi-sited communication	Mostly digital communication	Multi-sited communication
<i>Locus of activity</i>	Activity precedes commercial context	Activity requires commercial context	Activity requires commercial context	Varied
<i>Relation to commercial interests</i>	Activity exists outside of commercial interests	Activity dominated by commercial interests	Activity centered around commercial interests	Linking value, entrepreneurialism
<i>Sources of inspiration</i>	A variety of inspirations	Draws from limited variety of inspirations	Draws from singular inspiration	A variety of inspirations

Key question:

To what degree is a particular field of fashion shaped by actors who are not, in a traditional sense, fashion designers or producers?

Can you think of an example of new fashion influencers whose authority stems from non-traditional fashion fields?





Ambassadors

Our athlete programs support a community of driven athletes and inspirational people who harness their passion to elevate their communities.



Aaron Gwin
Downhill Mountain Biking



Aaron Harrell
Personal Training



Aaron De Jong
Strength Training



Aaron Hewitt
Strength Training

[nfo.lululemon.com/stores/us/costa-mesa/costamesa/ambassadors/aaron-harrell](https://www.lululemon.com/stores/us/costa-mesa/costamesa/ambassadors/aaron-harrell) · UNITED STATES

VANCOUVER, CANADA

CHARLOTTE, UNITED STATES

“In these intervening years we have witnessed the death of the relatively monolithic subculture of consumption that we first encountered. In its place we have observed the emergence of something larger and richer, something we are more comfortable thinking about as a complex brand community or a mosaic of microcultures.

Growth increases diversity. The empowerment of subcultural ‘others’, (i.e., non-male, non-white, non-straight, etc.) in social life tends also to increase the liberalization or democratization of subcultures of consumption. Diversity opens the symbolism of a subculture to other contexts and lived experiences, leading to multiple meanings and multiple authenticities. This also challenges and undermines the authority of the hegemonic perspective.”

Consumption, Markets and Culture,
Vol. 9, No. 3, September 2006, pp. 171–205



Claiming the Throttle: Multiple Femininities in a Hyper-Masculine Subculture

Diane M. Martin, John W. Schouten & James H. McAlexander





NBA FASHION ICONS 2017

The League's Best-Dressed Players





CELEBRITY STYLE

The Fashion Evolution of Kendall Jenner: From Reality TV Star to Stunning Supermodel

Veiling in Style: How Does a Stigmatized Practice Become Fashionable?

ÖZLEM SANDIKCI
GÜLİZ GER

Although stigma is prevalent in everyday life, consumer researchers' interest on the topic remains scant and focuses mostly on stigma management. We move beyond individual coping strategies and examine the processes of stigmatization and destigmatization. Through an ethnographic study of fashion consumption practices of urban Turkish covered women, we explore how veiling, a deviant practice stigmatized in the secular and urban mind-set, first became an attractive choice for some middle-class women and then transformed into a fashionable and ordinary clothing practice for many. We map out the global multi-actored work that underlies the emergence of veiling as an attractive choice and explicate its gradual routinization and destigmatization. We discuss the findings in terms of their implications for understandings of choice and free will, the formative role of fashion in the evolution of a new habitus and social class, and the relationship between the market and religion.

“From the consumer’s point of view, getting tattoos, wearing jeans, and dressing as a Trekkie, unlike being of a particular ethnicity, are practices s/he volitionally chooses to engage in or not. But then, **how and why do consumers voluntarily choose a stigmatized practice, how and why do these practices become fashionable and ordinary consumption choices, and why do only some of these practices become so?**”

Veiling in Style: How Does a Stigmatized Practice Become Fashionable?

ÖZLEM SANDIKCI
GÜLİZ GER

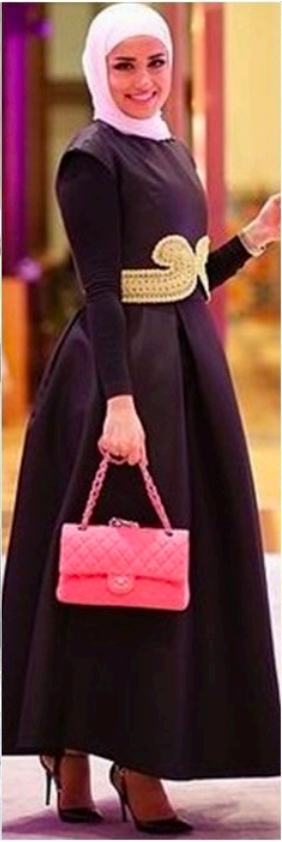
Although stigma is prevalent in everyday life, consumer researchers' interest on the topic remains scant and focuses mostly on stigma management. We move beyond individual coping strategies and examine the processes of stigmatization and destigmatization. Through an ethnographic study of fashion consumption practices of urban Turkish covered women, we explore how veiling, a deviant practice stigmatized in the secular and urban mind-set, first became an attractive choice for some middle-class women and then transformed into a fashionable and ordinary clothing practice for many. We map out the global multi-actored work that underlies the emergence of veiling as an attractive choice and explicate its gradual routinization and destigmatization. We discuss the findings in terms of their implications for understandings of choice and free will, the formative role of fashion in the evolution of a new habitus and social class, and the relationship between the market and religion.

Rising social status, wealth,
and cultural capital

VS.

Religious traditions of humility
and anti-laicity

Tesettür women resolve this
code conflict through fashion
innovation





Frustrated Fatshionistas: An Institutional Theory Perspective on Consumer Quests for Greater Choice in Mainstream Markets

DAIANE SCARABOTO
EILEEN FISCHER

Why and how do marginalized consumers mobilize to seek greater inclusion in and more choice from mainstream markets? We develop answers to these questions drawing on institutional theory and a qualitative investigation of Fatshionistas, plus-sized consumers who want more options from mainstream fashion marketers. Three triggers for mobilization are posited: development of a collective identity, identification of inspiring institutional entrepreneurs, and access to mobilizing institutional logics from adjacent fields. Several change strategies that reinforce institutional logics while unsettling specific institutionalized practices are identified. Our discussion highlights diverse market change dynamics that are likely when consumers are more versus less legitimate in the eyes of mainstream marketers and in instances where the changes consumers seek are more versus less consistent with prevailing institutions and logics.

Subcultures and such often shun the marketplace.

So why and when would a subculture of consumption actively *seek* marketplace inclusion?

TABLE 2

SOURCES AND TYPES OF VARIATION IN MARKET CHANGE DYNAMICS

What consumers want	How consumers are perceived in mainstream market	
	Consumers have less legitimacy in mainstream market	Consumers have greater legitimacy in mainstream market
To be better served by mainstream marketers	<p>Consumers are <i>Stigmatized Seekers</i> <i>Example:</i> Fatshionistas who want to buy clothes from mainstream manufacturers and retailers <i>Anticipated dynamic:</i> If consumers are persistent in pursuing their change agenda, a few mainstream marketers will expand their offerings over time</p>	<p>Consumers are <i>Comfortable Collaborators</i> <i>Example:</i> Members of brand communities who collaborate with one another and with marketers to refine existing market offerings or design new ones <i>Anticipated dynamic:</i> Incremental changes to market offerings will be continuous as marketers collaborate with customers in an effort to keep them loyal</p>
Fundamental changes to market practices	<p>Consumers are <i>Resistant Rebels</i> <i>Example:</i> American protestors against genetically engineered food <i>Anticipated dynamic:</i> Marginal changes if any to institutionalized practices</p>	<p>Consumers are <i>Mainstream Malcontents</i> <i>Example:</i> Music consumers who want to download songs for free <i>Anticipated dynamic:</i> If changes threaten marketers' profitability, marketers will resist but find a compromise</p>

How do “mainstream consumers” relate to subcultures, brand communities, and tribes?

How do these influence the fashion choices of those who are not in these social groups?

“How much” do mainstream consumers draw from subcultures etc.?



Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

Poetics

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/poetics



Downplaying class with style Middle class anxiety and the aesthetic performance of role distance

Jarkko Pyysiäinen^{a,*}, Max Ryyänen^b

^a *Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke), Latokartanonkaari 9, FI-00790 Helsinki, Finland*

^b *Aalto University, School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Department of Art, Finland*

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Middle class taste
Middle class anxiety
Popular culture aesthetics
Performativity
Role distance
Footing

ABSTRACT

Discourses on middle class taste, lifestyle and 'aesthetics' have emphasized how middle class agents orient to mark their position by appropriating 'legitimate' cultural goods and practices and eschewing 'illegitimate' ones. This paper examines what could be learned, if the analytical perspective is broadened and shifted from the sociocultural distinction games between collective class agents to actual situated performances, and the stylistic and expressive means, with which middle class agents relate themselves also to their own class and to its – sometimes troublesome – cultural, aesthetic and moral conventions and expectations. We formulate one version of such a reflexively relational approach to the complexities of middle class agency and its performative enactment. By utilizing analytical tools originally developed by Erving Goffman, and applied here to analyze some excerpts from the film *American Beauty*, we demonstrate how aesthetic performativity oriented to the 'downplaying' of class distinctions can be used by middle class agents to pursue authenticity and to resist, and gain experiential distance from, the agonizing middle class roles, expectations and 'principals' readily surrounding them.

Popular and subculture aesthetics can be effectively used by middle class agents to **downplay unwanted, outwardly generated class expectations.**

Popular and subculture aesthetics can be effectively used by middle class agents **to pursue experiential authenticity.**





ELLE

NEWS FASHION BEAUTY LIFE + CULTURE HOROSCOPES

SUBSCRIBE FOLLOW

A Master Class In Rocking Geek Chic In 2017

Get ready to be schooled



BY SABRINA CARDER 23/03/2017



ELLE

> SUBSCRIBE

Look Of The Day: Kendall Jenner Does Geek Chic

Kendall Jenner channels Harry Potter



BY LENA DE CASPARIS 11/09/2015



Just when we thought we had her look down, and knew what to expect from our favourite Jenner - she went and threw an awesome fashion curve ball at us yesterday.

Pairing some white jeans (yes, post labour day) and a 70s inspired roll neck, to top off her look Kendall seems to have borrowed some specs from our favourite teen wizzard - Harry Potter.

ADVERTISEMENT - CONTINUE READING BELOW

So chic.

How do subcultures and such respond to the appropriation of their fashion items or symbols?



Demythologizing Consumption Practices: How Consumers Protect Their Field- Dependent Identity Investments from Devaluing Marketplace Myths

SEYNEP ARSEL
CRAIG J. THOMPSON

Marketplace myths are commonly conceptualized as cultural resources that attract consumers to a consumption activity or brand. This theoretical orientation is prone to overstating the extent to which consumers' identity investments in a field of consumption are motivated by an associated marketplace myth. We provide a theoretical corrective to this tendency by investigating consumers who have become vested in a commercially mythologized consumption field through an incremental process of building social connections and cultural capital. For these consumers, the prevailing marketplace myth is experienced as a trivialization of their aesthetic interests, rather than as a source of identity value. In response, they employ demythologizing practices to insulate their acquired field-dependent social and cultural capital from devaluation. Our findings advance theorizations concerning marketplace myths and consumer identity work and explicate the sociocultural forces that deter consumers from abandoning a consumption field that has become culturally associated with undesirable meanings.

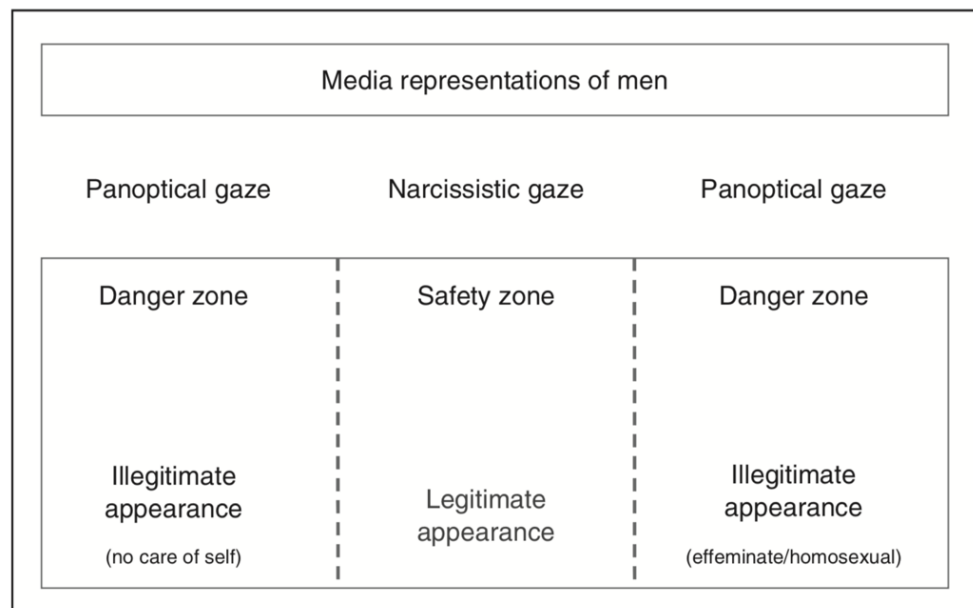
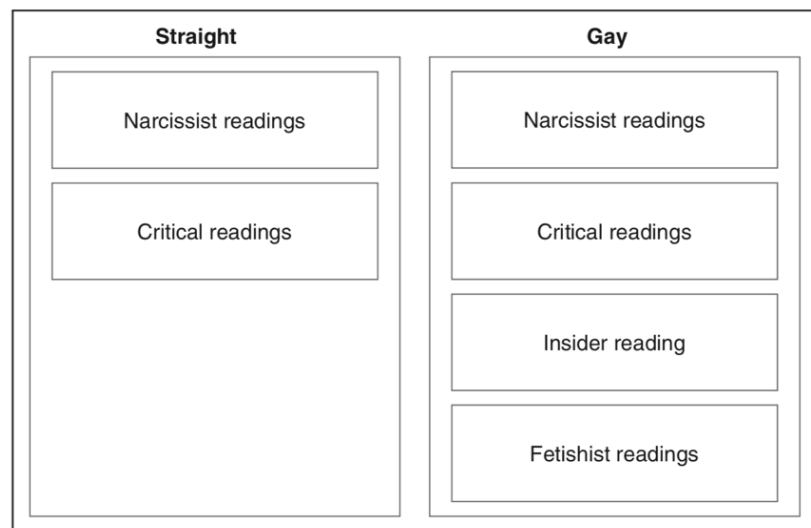


Aesthetic discrimination = articulating subtle differences of why “they are doing it wrong” (high field status)

Symbolic demarcation = articulating subtle differences of why “I’m doing it differently” (lower field status)

Metro/Fashion/Tribes of men: Negotiating the boundaries of men's legitimate consumption

Diego Rinallo



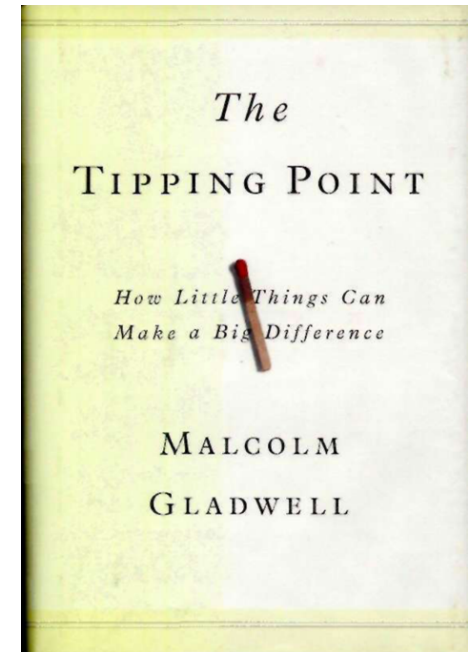
What does “selling out” mean?

It actually comes from subcultural research, meaning “selling out from the community”

Usually denotes that a brand, production, or style is seen as favoring “outsiders” over “insiders”

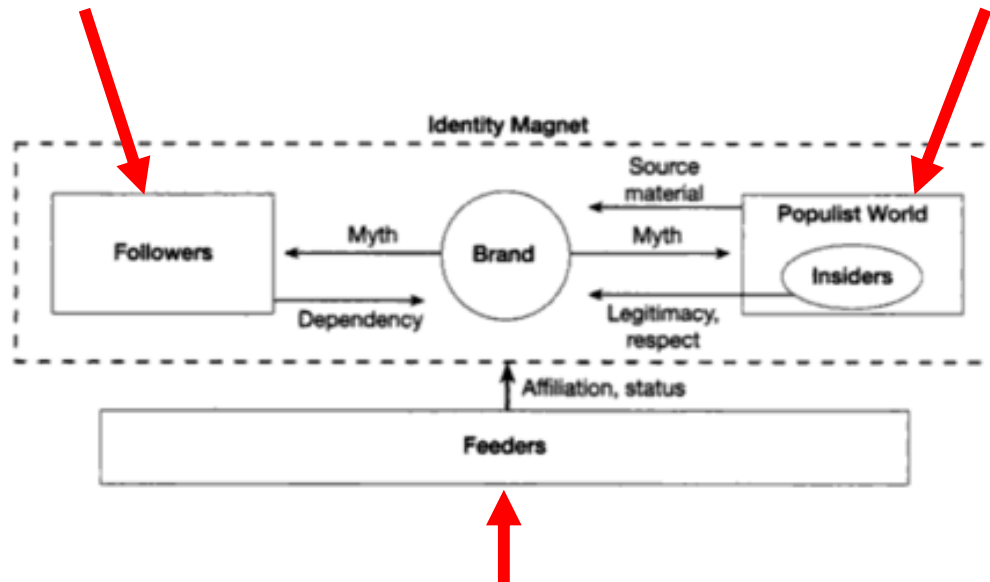


[CEO of Airwalk] “Cool brands treat people well, and we didn't. I had personally promised some of those little shops that we would give them special product, then we changed our minds. That was the beginning. In that world, it all works on word of mouth. When we became bigger, that's when we should have paid more attention to the details and kept a good buzz going, so when people said you guys are sellouts, you guys went mainstream, you suck, we could have said, you know what, we don't.”

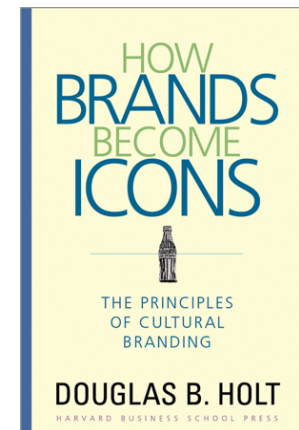


... (2) this will attract *followers* for the brand who curate or evangelize the brand...

(1) The *insiders'* attitude towards the brand or style depends on how well the brand/style is seen as representing or even championing the populist world and its ethos



... (3) and the rest will follow



How do these influence fashion?

Subcultures

Subcultures of consumption

Brand communities

Tribes

Subcultures

Subcultures of
consumption

Brand
communities

Tribes

Produce and legitimate
styles by repurposing
objects and meanings

Evangelize and legitimate
brands

Entrepreneurial building of
new brands, business
models, styles etc.