Journal of Business Research 199 (2025) 115552

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Business Research

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

The role of volitional reconsumption in the lives of gay men living with concealable stigmatized identities

Vikram Kapoor [a,*], Russell Belk [b], Wendy Hein [c]

[a] Lecturer in Marketing, Goldsmiths, University of London, New Cross, London SE14 6NW, United Kingdom
[b] York University Distinguished Research Professor, Kraft, Foods Canada Chair in Marketing, York University, Schulich School of Business, 4700 Keele St., Toronto M3J1P3, Canada
[c] Senior Lecturer in Marketing, Business School, Birkbeck, University of London, Malet St, London WC1E 7HX, United Kingdom

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Reconsumption
Concealed stigma
Identity
Objects
Possessions
LGBTQ+

ABSTRACT

Volitional reconsumption involves consumers intentionally and actively seeking to relive specific consumption experiences. Various factors in consumers' personal lives, such as identity transitions, personal crises, and different life stages, can influence their reconsumption experiences. Based on an oral history approach, our study investigates the role of volitional reconsumption among middle-aged gay men in Ireland. These men, living with concealable stigmatized identities (CSIs), have experienced severe stigma from the Irish Catholic church for most of their lives. Our study reveals that for our participants, the volitional reconsumption of specific objects and practices goes beyond simple recreation; they serve as a safeguard against the pain of stigma stemming from a homophobic church and society. Specifically, their volitional reconsumption experiences serve four main purposes: evading reality, giving a sense of permanence, providing power through contagion, and enabling identity reification. These purposes are achieved through four types of reconsumption: regressive, progressive, relational, and reflective, involving the use of specific objects and practices. The theoretical contribution of our study pertains to linking the growing field of consumer stigma, in our case concealable stigma, to volitional reconsumption and its benefits to consumers.

The past is outside the domain and reach of our minds. It is hidden in some material object we do not suspect. (Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time*).

1. Introduction

In the documentary film *Objects*, Vincent Liota (2021) follows the intertwined meanings of the ordinary objects that accrete in our lives and inadvertently gather significance – a handful of grass, a sugar egg, the sweater of a dead French film star. Such ordinary things may become talismans, sanctuaries, or symbols and reminders of our lives. In this study we examine the role of ordinary objects and practices that gather meanings in the lives of a group of middle-aged men who have lived stigmatized lives as homosexuals in a homophobic time and place. We find that by reconsuming these objects and practices, these participants gain strength, solace, and linkages that help them live with the stigmas they face in their semi-closeted lives.

Marketers have long sought to capitalize on consumers' reconsumption of cultural artifacts, such as brands, films, and stories (Brown et al., 2003; Cervellon & Brown, 2018; Goulding, 2001; Kim & Bruce, 2018; Preece et al., 2019; Zemack-Rugar & Moore, 2019). Reconsumption is defined as "consumption experiences that consumers actively and consciously seek to experience again" (Russell & Levy, 2012, p. 341). Consumers' proclivity to reconsume "objects" like books, films, locales, and art forms can change unpredictably depending on the objects' shifting status and standing within the socio-cultural context, as shown by burlesque, which was once considered offensive but is now admired (Cervellon & Brown, 2018). The likelihood of consumers engaging in reconsumption may also be influenced by various contextual factors in their personal lives, such as different life stages, identity transitions, and personal crises (Russell & Levy, 2012), including experiences related to stigma. However, the relationship between stigma and reconsumption has not yet been thoroughly explored in academic research. Our study aims to address this gap by focusing on the reconsumption experiences

* Corresponding author.
E-mail addresses: v.kapoor@gold.ac.uk (V. Kapoor), rbelk@schulich.yorku.ca (R. Belk), w.hein@bbk.ac.uk (W. Hein).

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2025.115552
Received 1 January 2024; Received in revised form 14 June 2025; Accepted 17 June 2025

of seven middle-aged Irish homosexual men, who were raised and came of age in an environment of "religious homophobia" at a time when the Irish Catholic Church rigorously condemned and stigmatized homosexuality (Reygan & Moane, 2014).

Stigma is a discrediting characteristic that precludes people from full social inclusion and that influences multiple facets of their lives and identities (Goffman, 1963; Taket et al., 2009a). Stigma can significantly influence consumption behavior (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005; Crockett, 2017; Eichert & Luedicke, 2022; Kapoor & Belk, 2022; Kates, 2002; Venkatraman et al., 2024) and market dynamics (Sandikci & Ger, 2010; Valor et al., 2021). Some stigmas, including sexual orientation, mental health, abortion, illnesses like HIV, criminal records, and drug abuse, may go unnoticed when people opt not to disclose information that could discredit them (Goffman, 1963). Consequently, they live with concealed/concealable stigmatized identities (or CSI), like our study participants who spent much of their lives in the "closet." Significantly less researched than visible stigmatized identities (Quinn & Chaudoir, 2009), CSIs are "socially devalued identities that can be kept hidden from others" (Quinn, 2017, p. 287).

Based on our oral histories and observations, we found that our participants' ongoing struggles with the stigmas they faced led them toward the volitional reconsumption of specific objects and practices. Our study answers the following questions: *Why do those living with CSIs engage in the volitional reconsumption of specific objects and practices? And what are the focal objects and practices of their repeated consumption?* Our findings indicate that participants' reconsumption experiences served four purposes: evading reality, giving a sense of permanence, providing contagious power, and enabling identity reification. These purposes are achieved through four types of reconsumption: regressive, progressive, relational, and reflective, involving the use of specific objects and practices that we have identified. Our study heeds Russell and Levy's (2012) call to explore how life circumstances influence reconsumption, especially through historical analysis or longitudinal study, which our oral history approach fulfils. By considering CSI as the context or prism through which we examine the dynamics of reconsumption, our theoretical contribution lies in how CSI changes the purpose of reconsumption. The reconsumption experiences of our participants were not simply acts of recreation. Rather, their reconsumption experiences were a bulwark protecting them from the pain of stigma from a homophobic church and public.

The rest of the article is structured as follows: First, we discuss the theoretical foundations of our study, focusing on reconsumption and stigma. Next, we outline our methods for data collection and analysis. In the findings section, we explore the various purposes that reconsumption objects and practices serve in the lives of our study participants. Finally, the discussion section presents the implications of our findings and suggests avenues for further research before we conclude.

2. Theoretical foundations

2.1. Reconsumption

Reconsumption refers to consumers actively and consciously seeking to repeat and relive their past consumption experiences (Russell & Levy, 2012). Repetition, intentional or unintentional, is a common phenomenon in our daily lives. Thinkers like Søren Kierkegaard, Gilles Deleuze and Gertrude Stein have devoted significant attention to understanding this phenomenon. Repetition has been theorized from the temporal dimensions of the future (Kierkegaard, 1843/1983), the past (Stein, 1935), and the present (Gorichanaz, 2021). Furthermore, Deleuze (1994) differentiates between static and dynamic repetition where static repetition "refers back to a single concept," whereas dynamic repetition is like the "'evolution' of a bodily movement" (p. 20). Especially in works of art, repetition can transcend "rote articulation" to evoke memories and experiences, including "reproduction and reflection" (Levy, 1996, p. 79).

Previous research on practices related to reconsumption has focused on reiterative practices in regular or habitual consumption (Coupland, 2005; Khare & Inman, 2006), addictive and compulsive consumption (Hirschman, 1992; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989), sacred and profane consumption (Belk et al., 1989; Schindler & Minton, 2022), and ritualistic consumption (Rook, 1985; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991). Marketers have sought to capitalize on volitional reconsumption by reviving beloved series (Preece et al., 2019), remaking iconic films (Bohnenkamp et al., 2015), adapting popular novels into movies (Zemack-Rugar & Moore, 2019), recreating histories at museums (Goulding, 2001), and using retro branding (Brown et al., 2003). This phenomenon of reconsumption can also be observed in communal settings, as shown by Cervellon and Brown's (2018) study of the neo-burlesque sphere, where nostalgia and communal sentiments play a significant role. Recent empirical evidence indicates that factors such as place attachment (Zhe et al., 2023) and gender (Harun et al., 2020) exert influence on consumers' repurchase intentions. However, as suggested by Russell and Levy (2012), life circumstances may influence reconsumption experiences. Conceivably, reconsumption behaviors can be influenced by financial constraints, life transitions (e.g., relocation), cultural shifts (e.g., environmental consciousness), personal experiences (e.g., nostalgia, emotional attachments), lifestyle changes (e.g., minimalism, frugality), and access to sharing technologies and platforms. We explore the phenomena of reconsumption in the context of individuals living with concealed stigmatized identities.

2.2. Stigma

Stigma is a discrediting trait that hinders an individual from gaining full social acceptance (Goffman, 1963). Social exclusion is one of the consequences and it can be experienced in various overt and covert ways (Taket et al., 2009b). Goffman specifies three primary categories of stigmas: physical deformities, behavioral deviations (e.g., alcoholism and addictions), and tribal stigma, which results from membership in a discredited group (e.g., race, ethnicity, etc.). Nonetheless stigmas are not just limited to individuals but also apply to group practices such as veiling (Sandikci & Ger, 2010), products such as menstrual cups (Ndichu & Rittenburg, 2021), and market offerings such as Halal foods (Sandikci et al., 2024). The overall cultural norms at a specific historical time and place determine what is considered stigmatized in various circumstances (Mirabito et al., 2016).

Stigmatized people with different "stigma configurations" i.e., with varying levels of social representations (Eichert & Luedicke, 2022) and visibility engage with the marketplace differently and for different reasons. Sometimes, they do so to challenge the negative associations with certain marketplace practices (Sandikci & Ger, 2010), highlight the greater need for the inclusion of a specific segment of society (Scaraboto & Fischer, 2013), or reverse the stigma onto the dominant culture by stressing a different and morally superior value system (Nguyen et al., 2014). At other times, stigmatized people use the marketplace as a resource. For example, they may use products that help them present themselves professionally and thereby help them integrate socially (Crockett, 2017). They may also choose appropriate (concealing or compensatory) careers as a coping mechanism (Kapoor & Belk, 2022), build communities with others who also face stigma (Machin et al., 2019), master creative practices to defy shame (Venkatraman et al., 2024), use the online environment for ludic exchange (Heljakka et al., 2018) or to seek refuge (Kozinets, 2001). As Machin et al. (2019) note, the marketplace is "an important resource in coping" with the stressors associated with stigmatized identities (p. 410).

Although concealing stigma can have advantages, such as reducing instances of bias and discrimination (Major & Schmader, 2017), there is compelling evidence that living with stigma can have a negative impact on wellbeing in various ways, such as leading to experiences of loneliness and social isolation (Prizeman et al., 2023), vulnerability to stress (Frost, 2011), maladaptive coping (Hayward et al., 2018), and restricted

access to structural resources (Hatzenbuehler, 2016). As well, actively hiding stigma can impede the social integration and overall well-being of those with CSI (Camacho et al., 2020; Pachankis et al., 2018; Quinn & Earnshaw, 2013; Smart & Wegner, 2000). One of the primary reasons causing stress and conflict for CSIs is "disclosure disconnect," which involves managing their concealed stigma to varying extents across different social settings (Ragins, 2008, p. 195).

The impact of stigma on well-being can be particularly significant in certain cases, such as among sexual minority consumers who are more likely to experience mental health issues compared to heterosexuals (Cochran & Mays, 2009). Even within sexual minorities, there are smaller groups that are more susceptible to well-being concerns. For example, there is clear evidence that individuals with CSI can experience difficulties in social adjustment and overall well-being due to actively concealing stigma (Camacho et al., 2020; Pachankis et al., 2018; Quinn & Earnshaw, 2013; Smart & Wegner, 2000). As well, as our introduction notes, CSIs are considerably understudied relative to visible stigmatized identities (Quinn & Chaudoir, 2009). Table 1 below illustrates some of the visible and concealed stigmas that have received scholarly attention in management and marketing.

3. Methods

As seen in Table 1, the intersection of stigma and reconsumption has yet to garner academic focus in the context of people with both visible and concealable stigmatized identities. This research examines the role of volitional reconsumption for individuals with concealable stigmatized identities. Oral history interviews with seven single, middle-aged Irish gay men (see Table 2) were conducted by the first author, an early middle-aged, openly gay man. The common ground of being gay and single, and the resultant trust from the participants enabled this researcher to connect with these men professionally. Participants' life experiences serve as the raw materials in oral history (Frisch, 1979; Thomson, 2000). The data was collected in interviews over multiple days, varying between 2:25 and 4:46 h duration. Aside from formal recorded conversations, the researcher spent several hours meeting with the participants and talking with them on the phone. Interviews were mostly conducted in their homes and their visible objects were sometimes used as stimuli to prompt discussions.

The testimonies of the participants' life stories or oral histories centered on the accounts they chose to share about their lives based on what they remembered about their past and present circumstances and what they wanted others to know (Atkinson, 2001). These oral histories were the "result of a guided interview" by the first author (Atkinson, 2001, p. 125) and were, as such, different from life histories, which are about the "collection, interpretation and report writing" of a person's life, drawing on various sources (Roberts, 2002, p. 3). In recapitulating their life events and consciously articulating such stories, the participants established an intelligible composite narrative by consolidating their present and their past (McAdams, 1985; Perks & Thomson, 2003; Plummer, 1995). These discussions should not be taken as factual historical accounts, however. The stories shared by the participants were the memories of their experiences told in ways that gave these experiences "social meaning" (Davies, 2011, p. 473). The most vivid and arguably veridical parts of their tales were those anchored in memorable objects that entered and, in some cases, left their lives.

3.1. Data collection and analysis

Following ethical approval, the study participants were recruited from the gay app Grindr. The use of Grindr to recruit gay participants for surveys and other studies has been quite popular for research (e.g., see Blackwell et al., 2015). The first author created a Grindr profile in a mid-sized Irish city and approached potential participants for the study. Following the description of mid-life as "forty-ish to sixty-ish," by Simpson (2014, p. 156), participants from the 40–65 age group were recruited. The interview transcripts yielded 694 double-spaced pages.

When the study participants shared their coming-out experiences and their difficult early days while exploring and still suppressing their sexuality, it was found that mnemonics, or memory aids such as photos proved tremendously beneficial. Slim et al. (2003) insightfully suggested that "A refugee may find much more to say when looking at a picture of home" (p. 120). Following Slim et al. (2003), the participants were requested to carry, during the discussions, photos that helped release their memories. A total of 156 photographs were collected in the study. Most of these photographs were taken during visits to the participants' homes. The photographs revealed insights that were not clear in the discussions, stirred participant memories, and enabled triangulation (Glaw et al., 2017).

The data was jointly analyzed by the first and second authors. We conducted an extended grounded theory analysis of the data following Strauss and Corbin's (1990) method of open, axial, and selective coding and by embracing abductive reasoning (Belk & Sobh, 2019). Grounded theory involved a systematic collection and analysis of data leading to the development of theory in the course of the research process and resulting from a "continuous interplay between analysis and data collection" (Charmaz, 2014; Goulding, 2002, p. 42). Such a methodology that involves separating the process of coding or conceptualizing data into a series of tasks offers a more transparent view of the reasoning that leads the analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 101). Data collection and analysis were iterative, including ongoing interactions between data and different conceptualizations (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012), frequently involving the potential for establishing new theories. Eventually, later in the research process, the intersection of stigma and reconsumption appeared prominent. This revelatory pattern emerges in much qualitative research (see Small & Calarco, 2022).

4. Findings

The participants in our study lived and grew up in Ireland at a time when the Catholic Church openly opposed homosexuality, leading to its stigmatization. Table 3 features specific quotes from the participants' oral testimonies, highlighting the widespread stigma associated with homosexuality in Ireland during that period.

The participants engaged in multiple reconsumption experiences aided by the possessions in their homes. This reconsumption served four purposes: evading reality, giving a sense of permanence, providing contagious power, and enabling identity reification. We discuss these purposes below.

4.1. Reality evasion

We define reality evasion as the deliberate avoidance of real-life stressors and challenges through engagement with alternative realities or experiences. Reality evasion can take on various forms, ranging from benign reverie to substance abuse. For two of our study participants – Peter and Kevin – engagement in regressive reconsumption experiences facilitated a sense of reality evasion. Regressive reconsumption involves a backward temporal orientation and is driven by a desire to recreate an experience and return to a prior condition (Russell & Levy, 2012).

Peter, a 41-year-old semi-closeted telecommuter, reported feeling isolated for most of his life. During a period in his life when he acquired the courage to disclose his sexual orientation to his family, he was strictly advised to refrain from discussing the matter in the future. To escape from the harsh reality including several instances of bullying that Peter faced, he immersed himself in the miniature world of books, reading about distant lands, particularly Celtic myths and fantasies. He said: "I quite liked really big, thick books: the thicker, the better. Five hundred pages, I loved; anything that big because it would take me a nice chunk of time." Upon further discussion about Peter's feelings regarding the completion of a book, he stated:

Table 1
Illustrative studies on stigma.

No.	Article	Stigma/Stigma type	Research question/aims	Findings	Contributions
1	Venkatraman et al. (2024)	Drag artists/ Visible stigma	How do stigmatized consumers master creative practices to embody pride and resist shame?	Theorizes shame and pride as social and embodied and shows how consumers' mastery of creative practices helps them embody pride and resist stigmatization.	Contributes to consumer research on identity repair, stigma resistance, and the emancipatory potential of mastery.
2	Liu and Kozinets (2022)	Unmarried Chinese women/ Typically visible stigma	Investigates the consumption-related identity work that stigmatized individuals engage in to discharge the courtesy stigma attached to their close associates.	Reveals how the reciprocal and interdependent relationship between personal and social identity work is realized and exhibited through a range of consumption-related counternarratives and practices to manage self, parents, and society in ways that challenge courtesy stigmatizing identity narratives to increase or, at minimum, avoid losing family face.	Offers new perspectives on stigma management, identity narratives, and the role of consumption discourses and practices in the significant social phenomena of courtesy stigma.
3	Valor et al. (2021)	Bullfighting/Visible stigma	How do actors use emotion discourse to undermine the legitimacy of consumer practices?	Shows how antibullfighting activists (challengers) mobilize emotional discourse to articulate the emotional prototypes of their adversaries (custodians of the practice) and how the pathic stigmatization of supporters undermines the practice's normative and relational legitimacy.	Advances a rhetorical perspective on emotions and their role in deinstitutionalization processes; develops the theory of marketplace sentiments by showing how sentiments operate downstream; and provides evidence of the sociocultural mechanisms underpinning the emotional vilification, stereotyping and stigmatization of consumer collectives.
4	Crockett (2017)	Race/Visible stigma	When confronted with racial stigma, how do people manage it? What specific arrangements of objects and tactics do they mobilize to make everyday life more tolerable (if not more equal)?	The black middle-class participants interpreted and framed stigma largely through the lens of racial uplift ideology and by using the strategy of (normative or oppositional) respectability, which help make their daily life more tolerable.	By mapping a sociohistorically significant anti-racist strategy of action- "politics of respectability," the article contributes to the CCT literature on the sociohistoric pattern of consumption.
5	Scaraboto and Fischer (2013)	Consumers of plus-size fashion/Visible stigma	Develop an understanding of the triggers that prompt consumers to seek greater inclusion in and a more satisfactory set of offerings from mainstream marketers, and the strategies consumers use when they seek greater inclusion and choice.	Identifies three triggers for mobilization: development of a collective identity, identification of inspiring institutional entrepreneurs, and access to mobilizing institutional logics from adjacent fields. The strategies identified are appealing to institutional logics, publicizing desirable institutional innovations and persistent institutional impediments, and allying with more powerful institutional actors.	Extends our understanding of how institutional theory can help to illuminate marketplace phenomena of interest to consumer researchers.
6	Sandikci and Ger (2010)	Islamic Veiling in Turkey/Visible stigma	How and why does a stigmatized practice become a consumption choice in the first place? What are the mechanisms underlying the transformation in the stigma status of this practice? What roles do consumers, the market, and other individual and institutional participants play in adoption and transformation processes? And, what are the personal, societal, and theoretical ramifications of these processes?	Revealed how *tesettür*, a stigmatized practice in the secular mind-set, was first voluntarily adopted by some middle-class women and then transformed into a fashionable and ordinary consumption choice for many. The study shows how personalization and aestheticization have contributed to the routinization of *tesettür* and the change in its stigma status.	The study contributes to our understanding 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.
7	Nguyen et al. (2014)	Freeganism/Visible and concealable stigma	Why do consumers voluntarily adopt stigmatized practices? What is the role of ideology, practices, and resources in stigma reversal? What are the consequences of stigma reversal?	Unveils the processes of Freegan ideology formation and the mechanisms- ideological reversal, practice reversal, and resource reversal- through which stigmatized individuals redirect stigma onto mainstream consumers.	Conceptualizes and empirically explicates a multi-dimensional framework of reverse stigma, thereby advancing the understanding of stigma management strategies and providing implications for anti-consumerism and sustainable consumption.
8	Sandikci et al. (2024)	Halal market producers/Visible stigma	What triggers activism by stigmatizers toward brands that attempt to serve stigmatized markets? And what is the nature and form of activism in which stigmatizers engage?	Identifies three triggers that make activism by stigmatizers more likely to occur: stigma multiplicity, identity threat to stigmatizers, and ambiguity in targeting. Findings also identify three forms of this territorial activism: patrolling the market boundaries, punishing the insurgents, and	Contributes to the market systems literature and to theories of identity threat, ownership, and territoriality.

(*continued on next page*)

Table 1 (*continued*)

No.	Article	Stigma/Stigma type	Research question/aims	Findings	Contributions
				projecting identity threats beyond the market.	
9	Adkins and Ozanne (2005)	Low literacy/ Concealable stigma	Examine the juncture of literacy skills and marketplace activities and discover the coping strategies employed by low-literate consumers.	Identifies a set of personal, situational, and social coping strategies used by low literates to get their needs met.	While past research suggests that stress evokes coping strategies, this study contributes by conceptualizing a stigma as a potential stressor and identifying specific market coping strategies that used personal, situational, and social resources.
10	Kates (2002)	Gay men/ Concealable stigma	To further the understanding of key aspects of subcultural consumption by theorizing the subtle and dramatic variations in consumption practices.	Are subcultural meanings coherent, or are there some challenges and contestations? How do subcultural consumers demarcate and express symbolic boundaries while consuming if boundaries tend to change, shift, and lose their semiotic potency over time? And how do subcultural consumers achieve status internally if status consumption is not predicated on group norms and conformity but on individual choice, distinction, and negotiation?	Contributes to knowledge in consumer research by addressing the need for a revised theoretical framework that recognizes that a monolithic hierarchy of meanings need not structure subcultural consumption and that intrasubcultural processes of negotiation and distinction also play significant roles in inflecting subcultural consumption.
11	Ndichu and Rittenburg (2021)	Stigmatized product- a menstrual cup/ Concealable stigma	What stigma-related risk perceptions emerge as consumers adopt stigmatized products? What product and consumption factors help to mitigate stigma-related risk perceptions in the adoption of such products?	Explore consumers' experiences in the adoption of new stigmatized products, with a focus on uncovering the stigma-related risk perceptions that emerge in the adoption process and the ways consumers overcome those risk perceptions.	The study contributes to understanding the risk perceptions in consumers' adoption decisions and usage of a new stigmatized product tied to a stigmatized identity, product factors that attenuate risk perceptions in adopting stigmatized products, and social support in stigmatized consumption contexts.
12	Kapoor and Belk (2022)	Semi-closeted gay men/ Concealable stigma	How do marginalized consumers cope with systemic oppression through market-based choices?	Reveals that altruistic career choices that may seemingly lead to a sense of redemption can be a means to cope with systemic oppression.	Contributes to our understanding of coping-related growth and religiously mediated gay identity that evolves in the field of career.
13	Moorhouse et al. (2023)	Financial debt/ Concealable stigma	Apply stigma theory to investigate the effect of debt accumulation on middle-class individuals' well-being and link social benefits to actual behavior change in terms of debt reduction behaviors and debt repayment.	Individuals who anticipated stigmatization and formed new social connections in a community-based condition reduced their consumer debt.	Contributes towards (1) explaining consumer debt accumulation, (2) providing new explanations and interventions for debt reduction, and (3) expanding the investigative scope to include diverse populations and less extreme debt situations (beyond bankruptcy and mortgage foreclosure crises).
14	Yeh et al. (2017)	Mental health/ Concealable stigma	Examine the multifaceted aspects of stigma that have been identified as the primary contributors to stigma creation and illustrate and highlight how the general public may be segmented along their stigmatizing beliefs.	Segmentation of the overall market of people without mental illness finds a single group of people who do not stigmatize—allies, who consistently endorse positive beliefs and feelings toward people with mental illness—and four distinct segments of stigmatizers: adversaries, who consistently endorse negative beliefs and feelings; ambivalents, who have mixed beliefs and feelings; blamers, who endorse the belief that people with mental illness are responsible for their illness; and shamers, the only group of people who endorse our shame items.	Contributes toward an understanding of how applying the marketing principle of segmentation and targeting among stigmatizers can inform the positioning of a serious public health issue, mental illness, for messaging in social marketing campaigns.
15	Achar et al. (2022)	Stigma associated with risk factors (Visible and concealed)	Investigate the interplay between moral identity and risk factor stigma in health persuasion.	Demonstrates that stigma associated with risk factors can "taint" the morality of advocated health behaviors, threatening the moral self-concept of individuals with high moral identity.	Extends previous work on moral identity to the health domain and reveals a moral process in stigma effects, beyond previously known social processes.
16	Harmeling et al. (2021)	Stigmas related to diseases (visible or concealable) and bodyweight (typically visible)	Examines how and when stigma influences consumer responses to marketing communication.	Illustrates a robust interactive effect between a consumer's potentially stigmatizing attribute and audience cues in marketing communication and identifies a continuum of threat inferences that consumers managing stigmas make, based on available cues to deduce the power differential between them and a potential audience.	Contributes to our understanding of how consumers with potential stigmas uniquely decode aspects of marketing communications as audience cues, influencing their consumption decisions.

(*continued on next page*)

Table 1 (*continued*)

No.	Article	Stigma/Stigma type	Research question/aims	Findings	Contributions
17	Conrad Henry and Caldwell (2006)	Lower socioeconomic consumers in a heavy metal music enclave (visible/concealable)	To delineate the range of consumer responses to life-conditions where sustained powerlessness is experienced and provide a framework to understand the ways in which these consumers try to reclaim degrees of self-empowerment and wellbeing.	Offers a taxonomy of consumer remedies as pathways to self-empower: resignation, confrontation, withdrawal, engagement, concealment, escapism, hedonic, spiritual, nostalgia, and creative.	Advances understanding of consumer response to sustained powerlessness as consequence of disadvantaged life conditions that are resistant to change.
18	Chaney et al. (2019)	Visible and concealed	Demonstrate the important influence of stigmatized-identity cues on consumer behavior.	Consumers with stigmatized identities attend to stigmatized-identity cues that signal inclusion (or exclusion) toward other stigmatized groups, resulting in stigmatized-identity cue transfers, especially whensimilarity mindsets are activated, and among consumers who are high in stigma solidarity.	Discusses ways in which companies can better signal their inclusive attitudes and ideologies to attract consumers

Table 2
Participant profiles.

Participants (Pseudonyms)	Age	Profession	Disclosure of sexual identity (current status)	Self-reported wellbeing issues	Number of interviews	Interview hours
Gary	52	Priest	Semi-closeted	Guilt	2	3:02:13
Roger	55	Priest	Semi-closeted	Internal conflicts, crisis, sought counselling services	2	2:25:20
Paddy	62	Psychotherapist	Semi-closeted	Loneliness, Diagnosed with Bipolarity	2	3:15:38
Peter	41	Telecommuter (IT)	Semi-closeted	Isolation	2	3:25:00
Kevin	47	Nurse	Semi-closeted	Self-harm	4	4:46:00
Conor	56	Unemployed	Open (after being semi-closeted for years)	Isolation	3	3:42:00
Ronaldo	47	Volunteer (Helpline)	Semi-closeted	Self-harm	2	3:40:00

> A feeling of emptiness then … It was like: Oh, It's over, what do I do now and there was one time when I actually started back on page one [Laughs] as soon as I had finished it. … It's just that while I am reading the book, it, it gives me something to do and there will be some nice [twists] where I can't put the book down because the story is so gripping and I'd, I'd end up staying up later than normally. I would just … get another chapter read or another page read, and then when you come to the end because you'd been so engrossed at it for so long then you just feel like 'Oh' and then kind of life kicks in and, and sometimes life isn't as good as what was happening when you were reading things in the book and you want to go back ….

Rereading a book or revisiting a place should include a temporal element, with one desiring to revisit the experience after a period. However, in Peter's case, the pressing temporal dimension was noteworthy as the very purpose of his reconsumption was to compulsorily escape the harsh reality of the present rather than hedonism per se. Peter's regressive reconsumption was not just limited to rereading books; it also involved making pilgrimages, specifically to Lourdes in France. Peter has installed the Live Grotto app on his mobile device and visits it on a regular basis, as it is not always possible to visit Lourdes in person. This brought back memories of his prior visits. He recalled:

> The clock plays Lourde[s] are they that says sings. And that plays that every hour. Ya. And every so often I go online, and I'll actually look at their webcam. They have a webcam at the Live at the Grotto. So, you can look at it anytime day in and out. … And on the time of the day, they might have the Rosary going on, they may have the procession at night. And you don't always see the procession but you hear them saying the Rosary in different languages and singing together. But the, the picture would still be of the Grotto.

Peter mentioned that he felt otherworldly upon crossing the entrances to Lourdes: "… it's just this feeling you get that it's other worldly. It's almost like when you go through the gates of the sanctuary, you are kind of leaving the real world behind." Referring to Fig. 2, he recounted his back-and-forth movement between an online and offline (actual) world, as well as attending the livestreamed online procession from Lourdes. The "otherworldly" experience that Peter describes is like the "multisensory and embodied" transformations described by some of the participants in Higgins and Hamilton's (2019) study of the therapeutic servicescape of the Lourdes pilgrimage (p. 1245).

Peter primarily re-read books as a form of escapism, feeling an urgency to return to them as soon as he finished reading them. However, his frequent visits to Lourdes, both online and in person, provided him with a sense of tranquility and acceptance. While the goals of these two types of experiences of reconsumption are distinct from one another, they are both extremely beneficial to Peter in his isolation.

Like Peter, Kevin — a nurse by profession — reconsumed a practice that could be interpreted as self-infantilizing and childlike. Kevin created safe zones, a small world within a bigger world, on his bed sheets. He recalled:

> … I used to lie on my bed at night-time after doing something and like just I used [to] be in the bed like this and I'll be like I used to build [laughs] I used to play with the, with the; I used to go into a little world when I couldn't sleep … I used to sort of [laughs] I used to like [bursts into laughter] I used to play with the, the sheets like and say I make a house maybe here and maybe here and you know I would be like this and then eventually I would fall asleep … It was like building houses like small, little houses [laughs] on one side of the sheet, and kind of like, like villages that you are safe here and this is where and then eventually I just fall asleep … I used to draw farms and houses … Just like pretend to draw like used to, over there you go, over there [laughs] that's what I said I used to be like, no I was only 8 or 9 may be 10–11. I was like until the age of may be 20, 19–20

Table 3
Participant quotes on stigma around homosexuality in Ireland.

No.	Participant name, profession, age	Quotes on stigma in Ireland
1	Father Gary, priest, 52	It is only a few short years since it was legalized. Homosexuality prior to that was a criminal offense. That's only in the 90 s, it's only 30 years ago, you know. But then of course we are the first country in the world to vote for same-sex marriage which I didn't think would happen, but it did … The Church in Ireland, well the Church states that homosexuality is explicit, is explicitly evil and they talk about showing compassion to gay people and all that, but they don't, they don't.
2	Father Roger, priest, 55	I, I think I protect myself because I have taken on a corporate shame of the way that our Christian Church treats the whole notion of homosexuality that it is intrinsically disorder; it is a very, very judgmental term …
3	Paddy, psychotherapist, 62	The, the stigma around being gay, there is a stigma, there is a stigma around anything that is sort of ah, ah, minority. There is a stigma, there is a stigma around mental health, and ah like people think that ah, ah, they don't understand, they don't understand it for the most part, they don't understand it
4	Kevin, nurse, 47	So, I met this guy in the Church [when Kevin joined a Bible Study group] and I basically confessed to him that I was gay and not just that I was gay, but I had feelings towards men and I have slept with men in the past and he said: Okay, so we need to re-baptize you again. So, they re-baptized me again. So, I was with the Church for ten years and never looked at another man…s When Kevin was asked whether he considered himself religious, he said: "No. I was at one stage but not anymore because after what I learnt in the Bible, ah I was like No, the Catholic Church, no."
5	Conor, unemployed, 56	I knew I knew the word 'homosexual' [Me: hmm] so I knew then that, that I was homosexual and since I was in college at that time, and I had access to a library, and I looked up books about homosexuality and all that. And there was one book I read was all legal ah, it was all legal, it was actually legal, it was all to do with legal, legality. It was actually a very negative book; it was very depressing and ah, so I say, something is wrong with me, the Catholic Church can't be wrong, the State cannot be wrong. So, I have to be wrong. I felt that I was the wrong here; so, it's my fault and I have to do something about it.
6	Ronaldo, Volunteer, 47	So, you are just always aware of it, and I think growing up…it's easier now for the tweens and teenagers and stuff like that. But growing up my age, you didn't have … the only role models you'd have were heterosexuals, you didn't see anything homosexual, it was wrong, it was illegal.

> I was very kind of … I didn't know anything; I was still very kind of innocent.

In contrast to the bigger "real" world, where Kevin felt threatened and insecure, the miniaturized world, which consisted of tiny villages, farms, and homes, seemed to provide him a sense of safety and protection. After Stewart's (1993) idea of the miniature, Belk (1995) notes, we "continue to delight in the miniature and the gigantic, the fantastic, and the spectacular" (p. 34). Books, movies, and video games offer miniature worlds where individuals can immerse themselves in alternative realities. In her treatment of the miniature, Stewart (1993) remarks: "… the book encapsulates the details of everyday life, fitting life inside the body rather than the body inside the expansive temporality of life" (p. 40). The secret allure of the miniature is that, unlike the elusive giant, it is devoid of dread and danger and provides us with "true completeness" (Millhauser, 1983, p. 130).

4.2. *Permanence*

By permanence, we refer to the human inclination and behavioral practices aimed at extending or preserving the longevity of people or possessions. The fundamental human instinct for survival and the fear of the unknown are the roots of the desire to postpone death. People across different ages and cultures have sought to extend life through rituals, elixirs, and, more recently, scientific and medical developments. We encountered instances where two of our study participants – Ronaldo and Conor – engaged in progressive reconsumption aimed at postponing or avoiding the end of their own lives or the lifespan of their possessions, thereby seeking permanence. Progressive reconsumption, in contrast to regressive reconsumption, is characterized by its openness to change and its drive to "affirm, confirm, or disconfirm" a previous experience (Russell & Levy, 2012, p. 347).

Ronaldo mentions purchasing DVDs (see Fig. 3) in the expectation of watching them with distant friends who could visit Ronaldo in the future. However, the act of buying DVDs nullifies his ongoing suicidal thoughts. He says:

> … even now I'm huge movie freak; my DVR is almost always constantly full of movies. Ah, I have about 1200 DVDs and Blu-rays at home … I never or almost never buy a DVD to watch on my own. It's always to share with other people … I am buying those things to keep me alive … It's my way of coping; it's my way of finding the balance to balance off the black stuff, to balance off the dark stuff ….

Ronaldo's case exemplifies an intriguing material phenomenon: "something to look forward to so I won't kill myself." This is arguably the most powerful form of apotropaic protection, involving materialism and perpetuation of desire. It literally means, "I buy therefore I am," or rather "I have thus I live."

> … I carry my suicide note … but it kind of stopped me doing anything silly because I won't do anything at home because I don't want my mom to find out. I wouldn't even like her to find a body or anything like that [his voice is very sad] … Yeah because I figured someday, I will have the balls to do something. But having the note has actually stopped me doing anything silly … So, it's actually for me, it's a good thing.

Ronaldo's quotes above are intriguing points that we interpret as a quest for permanence. Ronaldo's always carrying his suicide note (see Fig. 4) ostensibly has powers of "buying" him life-extension through controlling suicidal action, just as having DVDs to watch with friends give him something to live for. The DVDs and the suicide note for Ronaldo are apotropaic objects that foster a sense of life continuity and permanence.

Conor, another participant, takes all necessary precautions to prevent the disappearance of specific objects, particularly gifts. His reconsumption preserves tangible objects for the future through a practice of abstinence. For instance, he refrains from burning the candles that were gifted to him because doing so would make them disappear. "Lisa [Conor's niece] gave me that [candle]. I have loads of, Lisa got, got me few for Christmas but they're in a box for Christmas, one with a Santa Claus. She gave me this, I won't use this either." Conor discusses other candles given to him by his former boyfriend who is no longer alive.

> There, there, I won't light these because once you burn them, they are gone like. Ah, I won't, I won't use that either, I just put some other replacement, get, take another candle, take that out, put another candle in there.

By burning non-memory-laden candle replacements, Conor prevents

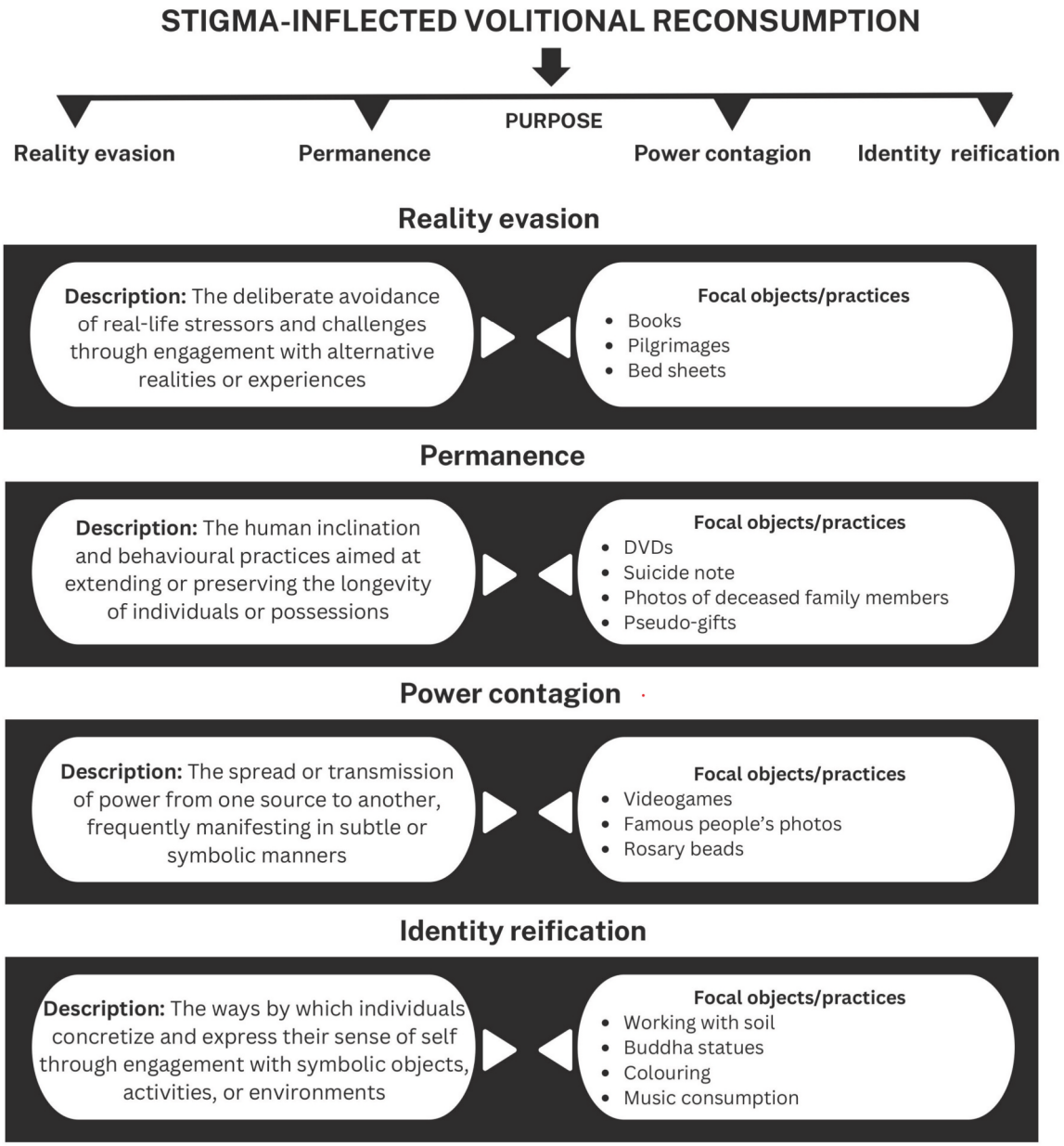

Fig. 1. Different purposes of stigma-inflected volitional reconsumption.

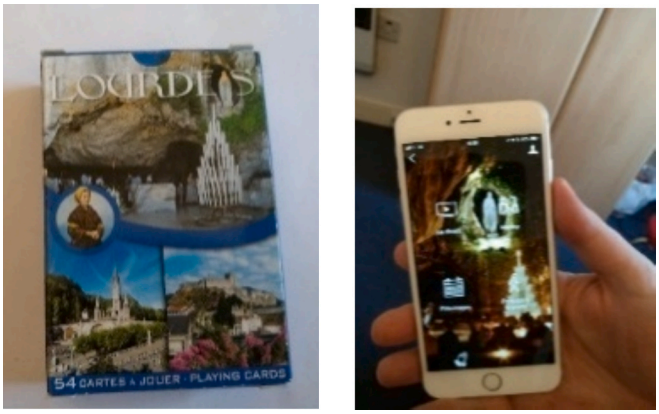

Fig. 2. Pictures of Peter's mobile phone with Lourdes app and souvenirs.

the original candles from disappearing. The sacred status of the original candles is seen in their "numinous character" and Conor's "non-rational" relationships with them (Belk, 1991, p. 35). He takes further measures to preserve such gift objects to ensure their permanence and their sanctity. For example, he avoids washing a table that his former boyfriend gave him because the table bears his deceased friend's signature and Conor is afraid that washing will rub the signature off: "… he [Conor's boyfriend] actually wrote that himself, look underneath that …That's why I don't wash that because that will rub off and I don't, he actually did that himself, that's his own writing.".

Conor also often digitalizes memories by taking photographs of his family members — his father, Nan, and siblings, which he then saves in multiple places such as hard disks and USB drives: "Ah, they are actually on this. They're actually on that. And, the hard disk. I have another disk here. They are actually in this as well." Conor gains some protection against the objects' accidental loss by saving digitized photographs of these treasured objects in multiple locations. These endeavors can be seen as death-defying practices of abstinence. Conor says only physical death can separate him from these physical objects. "I would … when I

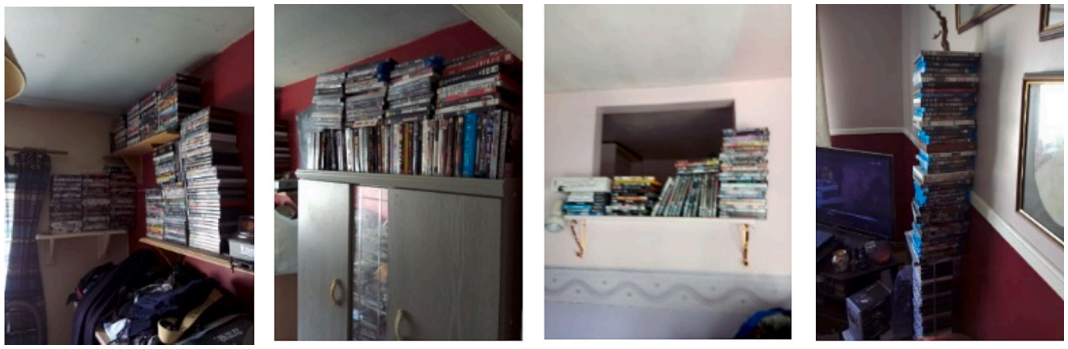

Fig. 3. Ronaldo's DVD collection.

Fig. 4. Ronaldo's suicide note.

die … Not before that! That's not good to anybody, they're … for me, but not for anybody else you know.".

Conor's ongoing practice of abstinence manifests in another very peculiar way in his life in the context of gifts and souvenirs given by his now-deceased relatives and friends. Memory-laden artefacts function as "nostalgic mnemonic devices," (Belk, 1991, p. 29) representing the person's familial and social connections, especially the dead. Gifts of family photos "memorialize relationships to others" (Belk, 1991, p. 30). For example, Conor discussed his collection of memory-prompting artifacts.

> I think the one from Nan is treasured most actually because I [was] very close to Nan; she was like my mum really. What else ah. She gave me rosary beads, I have a calc [calculator], Dad gave me one big calculator for Christmas, so I have, I still have that

Later in the discussions, Conor said: "… somewhere near my bed alright. I don't, I don't look at them [the Rosay beads gifted by his deceased Nan], … ah, sometimes I do but not very often." Conor spent most of his childhood with his Nan and cherishes gifts from her and his siblings as well as his parents. Several times during the visit to Conor's house, he became highly emotional when showing these possessions. Though Conor appears to have severed all ties with the Catholic Church over their rejection of homosexuality ["…I'm not a member of the Catholic Church anymore … I don't consider myself as a Catholic"], he cherishes the rosary beads his Nan gave him, though at times he abstains from looking at them. This echoes with Marcoux (2017) who, in the context of souvenirs, suggested how "what is right in front of us, perceivable and within reach, maybe so omnipresent that it becomes absent, completely forgotten" (p. 953). We interpret Conor's dialectical, often ambivalent, experience of simultaneously remembering and forgetting his cherished gifts, such as rosaries gifted by his Nan, as progressive as the forgetting allows him to move forward in life.

4.3. *Power contagion*

By power contagion, we mean the spread or transmission of power from one source to another, frequently manifesting in a subtle or symbolic manner. In the testimonies of three participants—Peter, Kevin, and Father Gary—power contagion appeared subtly in their imaginations through a process of relational reconsumption. "Relational reconsumption experiences are focused on how they affect one's relationships with other people, the human context that anchors reconsumption" (Russell & Levy, 2012, p. 349). Our participants' reconsumption of objects were influenced by how the owner perceives or imagines an idealized unified humanity, to include sexual minorities like themselves. Their reconsumption experiences had an element of power contagion. That is, they release a power through contagious magic (Huang et al., 2017).

We commonly use virtual narratives, games, and other imaginative and entertaining quasi-religious rituals to make sense of the world and our relations within it (Wagner, 2012). In Peter's quote below, we see the aspect of relational quests in virtual games.

> … But, I would have spent like may be 13 h on playing MMOs [massively multiplayer online games] … So you're, while you're playing on your own, there's other people in the world playing these and you can plan together and form like a group to go questing together … And it can help doing the quest also. … it can be very social because there's other real people playing at the same time as you … I am not great at the Player versus Player but I am, I much prefer the questing … if you have people helping you, it's going to be easier … I suppose 'life.' That's the common quest … And it's, it's kind of coming together as one for the common good, really. It's, it's, it's not only is it like for questing but it's, it's kind of a creating a better place you know … Now at this stage I was out anyway. But I suppose when you are creating a character and logging in it's almost like you are back in the closet in one sense but not in another sense because you don't have to hide it and or you could just tell anybody.

When probed further on his MMO encounters, Peter said: "This character [his avatar] can possibly use magic or swords. [laughs] So, for a few hours, you [laughs], you can throw fire balls if you want to [laughs]." In Peter's testimony, we observe escapism from issues around his sexuality and identity, framed within the element of common relational quests. Peter's questing attempts at video gaming seem to be driven by a desire for power that he could not find in the real world.

According to Belk et al. (1989), sacralization of the secular is

particularly prevalent in art, music, and especially in popular culture in which magnetic sports and rock stars are revered as deities. Famous people's objectification, such as Brazilian soccer player Pele and American baseball player Babe Ruth, have become mysterious iconic objects who are thought to have contagious magical powers (Belk, 1991). As Fernandez and Lastovicka (2011, p. 279) note, "objectified magical thinking both creates magical power and signifies that magical power to self and others." Kevin idolizes the rock star, Grace Jones:

> … I love Grace Jones, yeah like from the age of 11, I'd seen her picture and album cover and I was just hooked on and after that I loved the act, the total androgyny of her, her look ah she was strong, she didn't care what anyone thought about her, she only doesn't give a fuck like and that's her whole attitude, she doesn't care and I have seen her … She also ah came from an abusive background. Well like with the Bible in hand and stuff like this, she also lived, I can relate a little bit to her life ….

In Kevin's remarks above, there is a definite striving for contagious magic to acquire something if the grace and power of his hero, Grace Jones (see Fig. 5). Kevin grew up terrified as a result of the Catholic Church's harsh anti-homosexuality stance: "I was at one stage but not anymore because after what I learnt in the Bible, ah I was like No, the Catholic Church, no." His father and students at school abused him: "people used to beat me, my father used to beat me … pupils in the school used to beat me." Later in life, however, he could identify with Grace Jones' strong attitude, frequently recalling Jones' songs of defiance during his oral history discussions. Kevin specifically mentioned Grace's song "Demolition Man," which includes the lyrics "I'm a walking disaster," "I'm a demolition man," and "an arsenal of doom." Kevin, like Grace, aspired to have a "don't f*** with me" attitude and acknowledges that at this time in his life, he feels that he truly understands the lyrics, which he may not have as a child. There appears to be an oddity here, however. Kevin mentions her androgyny – something against the heteronormative conceptions of the Irish Catholic Church. Although he did not mention it there is also a "primitive" characterization of Jones in the center photo (Torgovnick, 1990) as well as racialized fetishism similar to the photos of nude black males by Robert Maplethorp (Mercer, 1999). While Grace Jones is female, it is her alleged androgyny that Kevin emphasizes.

Besides Grace Jones, Kevin also had a fascination with masks. Masks of many kinds, including conventional human faces and otherworldly characters (such as Satyrs and Gorgons), were popular during the pre-classical Greek era (Napier, 1986). Masks can serve several functions even in contemporary times. They can be sources of power and fright (Freedberg, 1989). They can also be used to hide (Rosen, 2001; Solomon, 2021). Besides their function of hiding the self, masks can also be transformative (Napier, 1986; Newell, 2013). And in Goffman's (1959) appraisal rather than masks hiding the "true self," we are the sum of all the masks we wear. We maintain that our heroes and heroines also act as a kind of mask or persona that we wear through our identification with them in yet another act of contagious magic.

Kevin also identifies with Grace Jones because she, like him, had an abusive background: "She [Grace Jones] also ah came from an abusive background. Well like with the Bible in hand and stuff like this, she also lived, I can relate a little bit to her life." There also appears to be a racist allusion to the primitive here. As Torgovnick (1990, p. 8) observes, "Primitives are our untamed selves, our id forces – libidinous, irrational, violent, dangerous." The "primitive" also refers to "a way station or spa for men suffering from cultural alienation and psychic distress" (Torgovnick, 1996, p. 23).

Another example of relational reconsumption was the sense of security from rosary beads relished by Father Gary:

> I wouldn't sleep at night unless I have my rosary in my hand you know … always even with a man, I would have my rosary [laughs] … if I were sleeping with a guy, I would still have the rosary underneath my pillow … yeah. I don't sleep a night without it. Always! … I get a feeling of great security when I have my rosary with me. I find great comfort and strength with having them on my person. Even after some adult fun, there would often be guilty thoughts going through my mind as I clutch the crucifix on the rosary it allays my guilty feelings which are quite common if you are a Catholic

The prayer beads have a kratophanous power for him (Belk et al., 1989). The Catholic Church had expelled Father Gary following an anonymous accusation about his grooming a non-adult person on a gay app: "…Somebody made a complaint. They said they saw me on Grindr … That I was grooming a 16-year-old boy … they [his superiors at the Church] think I am bringing scandal to the Church." This incident had a highly detrimental effect on Father Gary's mental health, leading him to seek psychiatric assistance: "So then I went to my doctor and he send me to a psychiatrist because my head wasn't right." Holding the rosary beads gave Father Gary comfort and strength in countering his Catholic guilt. Especially after having sex with men, holding his rosary beads and crucifix sanctified the act despite its condemnation by the church. He clung to it not only after having "adult fun," but also in dealing with other difficult situations in life. It appeared from Father Gary's testimony that the sacred power of the rosary beads was being transferred to him, empowering him engage in a very practice that the Catholic Church openly denigrated as "morally wrong.".

4.4. Identity reification

Identity reification refers to how consumers concretize and express their sense of self through engagement with symbolic objects, activities, or environments. For three participants in our study — Conor, Father Roger, and Peter — reflective reconsumption helped strengthen their sense of identity that we refer to as identity reification. With an inward focus on the self, reflective reconsumption allows for consolidating identity (Russell & Levy, 2012). Father Roger shared in his oral testimony of how he reconciled his sexuality against Church dictates and

Fig. 5. Pictures of Grace Jones in Kevin's house.

loved ones' expectations while he worked with the soil.

> I see the Almighty Creator in landscape, in the soil. I find it roots me very much to be handled with soil, and to see plants grow and it reminds me, sometimes plants remind my own life; you know when I see the beautiful flowers as if and sometimes the flowers get because of the climate around them gets suppressed and I would be reminded of the suppression in my own life, that I suppressed myself; I allowed myself to be suppressed by other people's expectations and so I love to this date, I was told that ah working with soil ah protects you from depression. So, I love seeing things grow, I love to design a garden, I love to see a garden well-kept together … I love when you put small seed [sic] into the dark soil and after a time they sprout and green shoots … for me working with the soil, I feel a connection and energy to be part of the cosmological connection

According to Father Roger's oral history, reconsuming the practice of working with soil caused him to reflect on his sexuality and embrace its natural beauty. He very much appreciated the external pressure he felt – the external control imposed by society in sanctioning compulsory heterosexuality and the reproduction of offspring. As a result, he suppressed his sexuality. However, the act of planting trees caused something to grow and allowed him to think metaphorically of his own difficulties. The mention of "dark soil" from which the green plants emerge also appears to have overtones of soil (and sexuality) being dirty and the green plants being natural, pure, and clean (Douglas, 1966). Organic sprouting was seen as cleansing. While there may be "dark" urges, wonderful things can spring from them and Father Roger is giving birth to organic, if non-animal, offspring. The emergence of purity from dirt resulted in this "Father's" acceptance of his sexuality and a sense of "protection." Father Roger also believes that working with soil reminds us that we may grow even in the most difficult conditions and yet produce something beautiful.

Conor also shared his love of gardening, flowers, and nature. He mentioned his engagement in gardening (and Nature) as being "therapeutic." In his discussions, on several occasions Conor spoke about the triumph of Nature over the Catholic Church's verdict on homosexuality being "wrong":

> … It just, it just, it was an argument within myself, intellectually and spiritually and emotionally and it was an argument with myself and then, and then I coughed out; nature has to win out! Can't let my book of rules or laws whatever, no matter what that says, nature's going to win out. My nature tells me that I am gay like, so I can't do, I can't fight this; this is me–like, it is part of me. So only, that, it's only for, that realization, I realized I am gay, and the rules are wrong, so they have to be changed.

The element of (external) control by the Catholic Church eventually led Conor to invoke his own (internal) control and discontinue going to the Church on a regular basis. However, alongside the sexual aspect, Conor invoked a parallel discourse about Nature winning and controlling everything else. Nature, according to Conor, is about sexuality as well as trees, plants, and all living things. Here too there is a cleansing by virtue of the will of nature – an act of God if you will. Also, Conor stressed that in his history long walks in nature alone provided him with the time and space to reflect on himself and his problems.

Reminding us that magical effects are not a thing of the past, Belk (1991, p. 22) draws our attention to the "curative, protective, and apotropaic powers" of certain objects and possessions in modern civilization. We discovered evidence of such apotropaic properties of objects in our research. For Kevin, photos and statues of Buddha bring him peace, tranquility, balance, and apotropaic protection.

> I feel protected like protected ah I feel like it's just, it's, it's, it just kind of gives me a reference to like he is sitting there and you know it's just at peace and … just total tranquility and total balance, total ah equilibrium like yeah totally kind of just the way he sits and the hand goes up like this and all these kinds of things … when I have really like really, really bad days like I can just come in here, I can come home and I am just, whatever is going on in my head, I just kind of let it, let it go and just relax

The seated Buddhas in Kevin's home (see Fig. 6), embody grounding, harmony, calm, and inner equilibrium, which in turn, help in restoring Kevin's sense of identity. In his oral history, Kevin mentioned often touching the Buddha statue in his house.

Another example of a reflective reconsumption experience was Peter's association with coloring. Peter is an artist and saw this prospect in terms of stepping into another world that he described as more colorful (in the context of coloring black-and-white images):

> … you could probably say that say the hiding in the closet would be the black-and-white kind of a thing whereas coming out … you are kind of free, you don't have to hide … I just thought the color brings the picture more life than black and white … Ah, you are probably not even enjoying life as much as you should and it just kind of feels like black and white. You could always, it's probably very clichéd but you could always take it back to the film of Wizard of Oz and it starts off in black-and-white and then when she gets transported to Oz that's when everything becomes colorful.

Peter remembered several instances of adding color to black-and-white images in his novels. He said: "… color brings the picture more life than black and white." One surprising instance was when he colored a black-and-white certificate he had won in his school days. Megehee et al. (2016, p. 1) use another movie, "Pleasantville," as another example of transformation. In the film, black-and-white represents a metaphor for "morality, conformity, and conventionality," and when the movie characters experience new realities, "their perceptions of the world around them shift from black-and-white to color."

Peter sings in a choir and has a profound connection to music. He mentioned that he feels an "out-of-body" experience when the four parts of the melody come together. During his recorded discussions with the first author, Peter sang several songs and expressed how singing is a way for him to express his feelings. Reflecting on one of his music lessons, Peter recalled,

> … I had it when I was singing and there was just one other time, where I was going just for one or two voice lessons and whatever way he [the lesson teacher] got me to sing I kind of had an out-of-body experience thinking Wow, this, this actually sounds good because he got me to sing in a way that I wouldn't normally have sung and it, it was quite powerful as well and it got me singing louder that I still haven't perfectly mastered it but I just remembering that instant, I just had this kind of out-of-body experience listening to myself and I was like Wow … It's hard to explain [Laughs].

Peter seemed very timid and described himself as quite a lonely person. Music, specifically singing, served as a means for self-expression and realizing or bringing forth his identity.

5. Discussion

Volitional reconsumption, which refers to consumers actively and consciously seeking experiences again, has received scholarly attention from consumer researchers (e.g., Cervellon & Brown, 2018; Russell & Levy, 2012). However, the relationship between stigma and reconsumption has not been thoroughly examined in academic research. Our study aims to fill this gap. We specifically address the research questions: Why do those living with concealed stigmatized identities engage in the volitional reconsumption of specific objects and practices? And what specific objects and practices are the focus of their repeated consumption? Our findings reveal that participants' reconsumption experiences serve four main purposes: evading reality, giving a sense of permanence,

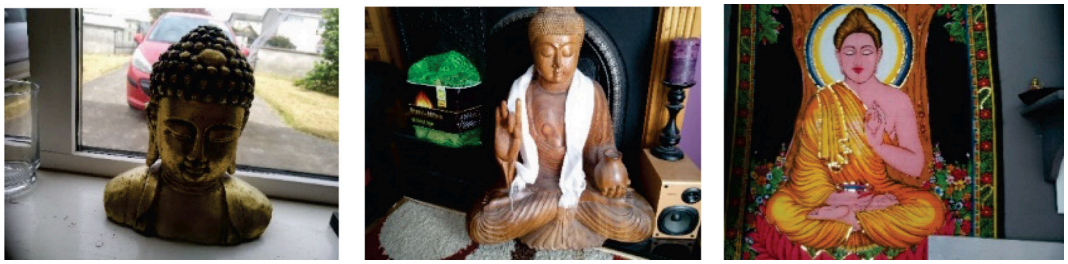

Fig. 6. Buddha statues and paintings in Kevin's house.

providing contagious power, and enabling identity reification. These purposes are achieved through four types of reconsumption: regressive, progressive, relational, and reflective, involving specific objects and practices that we have identified (see Fig. 1). While these four categories of reconsumption broadly align with those proposed by Russell and Levy (2012), they serve different purposes and manifest differently within the group of people we studied. A closer reading of our data also suggests a variety of reconsumption acts, which have implications for marketers and businesses. We discuss these below.

Regressive reconsumption involving immersion in miniature worlds aided some of our study participants in evading reality. Miniaturization transported them to a private world and a childlike state of experiencing a microcosm within a macrocosm, life within life, thereby helping them temporarily dissociate from macroscopic realities and find comfort and therapeutic benefits in the intricacies of miniature domains (Stewart, 1993; Millhauser, 1983). Offering insights from the lives of consumers living with concealable stigma and their reconsumption of miniatures, our study adds to the academic conversation on miniaturing as a complex activity pursued by people for various reasons (Körner and Schütz 2021; Meriläinen et al. 2022), as well as on digital pilgrimages (Paganopoulos, 2024). It is not the consumption but the repeated volitional consumption of miniature worlds by our participants living in stigma, which is noteworthy, as it offered a secure environment free from the constraints of the physical world. Furthermore, the digital aspects of some of these miniature experiences has practical implications for marketers seeking to integrate the real and virtual worlds (Barhorst et al. 2021), particularly poignant in today's evolving landscape where new digital technologies and platforms, as well as new realities and experiences, have significantly transformed consumer behavior (Flavián, Ibáñez-Sánchez, & Orús, 2019; Yadav & Pavlou, 2020). In parallel, our findings provide evidence of therapeutic benefits through engaging with miniatures in the context of those living with concealable stigmatized identities, thereby contributing to previous consumer research in the context of consumer well-being and therapeutic value services and experience provision (Higgins & Hamilton, 2019; Moisio & Beruchashvili, 2010). However, value creation through the therapeutic use of miniaturization and scaled-down representations of reality may extend beyond contexts involving stigma.

Our findings indicate evidence of progressive reconsumption to achieve a sense of permanence. Two notable acts of reconsumption are gift surrogacy and digital memorialization. Gift surrogacy refers to our participant's intentional substitution of symbolic or representative items for actual gifts, often intending to maintain the longevity of the original gift. How living with stigma and the quest for permanence manifests in gift surrogacy, as evidenced in our data, contributes to marketing conversations on contextualized experiences of gifts in recipient lives (Weinberger et al., 2025; Givi et al., 2023). Digital memorialization refers to preserving and commemorating deceased family members' memories, identities, or experiences in digital formats. Understanding how stigmatized consumers seek permanence through digital memorialization practices has significant implications for marketing research on consumer memorialization (Allen & Brown, 2016; Anderson & Hamilton, 2024). Besides, both gift surrogacy and digital memorialization offer opportunities for marketers interested in building long-term consumer relationships. Gaining insights into these (re)consumption practices may help marketers better understand consumers' approaches to legacy planning (Guido, Amatulli, & Sestino, 2020; Steadman et al. 2023; Phillips, 2016), as well as posthumous product/brand attachment and necro-branding (Baumann et al. 2024; Boeuf & Darveau, 2017).

Evidence of reconsumption through acts of sacralization (e.g., Kevin) and purification (e.g., Father Roger and Conor) is widely present in our data. Whereas sacralization involves attributing sacred or religious significance to secular objects, practices, or ideas, purification is the cleansing of one's mental and emotional state, often achieved through immersion in nature or engagement in artistic activities. In art, music, and popular culture, the sacralization of the secular is particularly common, as celebrated athletes and rock stars are venerated as deities (Belk, Wallendorf, & Sherry, 1989; Belk, 1991; Radford & Bloch, 2012). For some participants, engaging in reflective consumption through gardening or horticulture helps ground them in the physical world and fosters a connection with nature. Such practices suggest a sense of purification or cleansing. Consumer research has also demonstrated the importance of purifying practices and how consumers construct romantic impressions of nature (Canniford & Shankar, 2013). The findings from our study have implications for marketers seeking to cultivate feelings of sacredness among their customers. As Schindler and Minton (2022) have observed, managers responsible for marketing goods and services have long believed that marketers must prioritize the hedonic dimension of products and brands to foster more profound, meaningful relationships with their consumers. However, as our data suggests, consumers who face stigma contend with different social realities and dynamics that shape their everyday behaviour, tastes and choices. As a result, the consumption choices and practices of these consumers may not be exclusively driven by hedonic factors, as demonstrated by our findings.

Broadly, our study suggests stigma as a context or prism that changes the purposes served by reconsumption. Beyond the contribution of CSI as a prism that changes the purpose of reconsumption, our study suggests that some consumers (e.g., Conor, Kevin, Peter) who are stigmatized or marginalized may not necessarily be more exposed to 'predatory marketing' (i.e. based on consumer low self-esteem or lack of security). Instead, reconsumption can be a potential source of strength and well-being for stigmatized consumers. Living with stigma can be related to marketing's persistent emphasis of consumer insecurities (cf. Shankar & Fitchett, 2002), which leads to a cycle of continuous dissatisfaction, interspersed by temporary relief due to consumption. Our participants, despite (or maybe due to) facing CSIs highlight alternatives to the continuous consumer search and marketing drive for the 'new and improved'. In this context, stability and sanctuary were often based on reconsumption of existing objects, possessions and activities (one exception being the repeat purchase of DVDs). Reconsumption can therefore also be considered an antidote to overconsumption and the constant need to search for the newest thing to improve our life and well-being, which may be particularly important in this context, given that stigmatized consumers may be more likely to face mental health issues (Camacho, Reinka, & Quinn, 2020; Pachankis et al., 2018). New

products, routines or a 'makeover' may not be the solution, but instead the search for solace and sanctuary in reconsumption.

6. Conclusion

It is somewhat ironic that our study using *oral* history found that it was the non-verbal voices of the seemingly incidental objects in our participants' homes that spoke loudest in giving them courage and joy in the face of homophobic oppression. These objects occasionally also whispered hints of racism and pedophilia in *sotto voce*. Reconsumption of these objects not only offered escape and diversion, but they also sometimes created power through the kratophany of mixing sacred and profane as with sex and a crucifix. At other times instead of heating things up, they calmed them, as with the images of the Buddha. Fundamentally however, the importance of reconsumption, at times linked to objects and possessions that ranged in material value clearly emerged, and oral histories outlined the multiple ways participants approached reconsumption.

No doubt, as with the participants in Liota's (2021) film *Objects*, most of these objects will lose their power, meanings, and significance when their current owners die. But for the time being, they continue to be the silent voices, magic talismans, and memento mori of a special group of men in a specific conflictual environment.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Vikram Kapoor: Writing – original draft, Visualization, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Russell Belk:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Supervision, Methodology, Formal analysis, Conceptualization. **Wendy Hein:** Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Conceptualization.

Funding

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Acknowledgments

We thank the ACR-Sheth Foundation for their financial support (2019 ACR-Sheth Foundation Dissertation Grant). We also thank the editor, associate editor, and three anonymous reviewers for their valuable feedback.

Data availability

The data that has been used is confidential.

References

Achar, C., Dunn, L. H., & Agrawal, N. (2022). Tainted by stigma: The interplay of stigma and moral identity in health persuasion. *Journal of Marketing Research, 59*(2), 392–410. https://doi.org/10.1177/00222437211060854

Adkins, N. A., & Ozanne, J. L. (2005). The low literate consumer. *Journal of Consumer Research, 32*(1), 93–105. https://doi.org/10.1086/429603

Allen, M., & Brown, S. D. (2016). Memorial meshwork: The making of the commemorative space of the Hyde Park 7/7 memorial. *Organization, 23*(1), 10–28. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508415605103

Anderson, S., & Hamilton, K. (2024). Consumer-driven memorialization. *Journal of Consumer Research, 50*(5), 985–1007. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucad025

Atkinson, R. (2001). The life story interview. In J. F. Gubrium, & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 121–140). Sage Publications. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412973588.d9.

Barhorst, J. B., McLean, G., Shah, E., & Mack, R. (2021). Blending the real world and the virtual world: Exploring the role of flow in augmented reality experiences. *Journal of Business Research, 122*, 423–436. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.08.041

Baumann, C., Knowles, J., Timming, A. R., Price, D. P., Dahana, W. D., & Shen, Y. (2024). Necro-branding: Elvis Presley as a necro-celebrity. *Celebrity Studies, 1–28*. https://doi.org/10.1080/19392397.2024.2393804

Belk, R. W. (1991). The ineluctable mysteries of possessions. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 6*(6), 17–55.

Belk, R. W. (1995). *Collecting in a consumer society*. Routledge.

Belk, R. W., & Sobh, R. (2019). No assemblage required: On pursuing original Consumer Culture Theory. *Marketing Theory, 19*(4), 489–507. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470593118809800

Belk, R. W., Wallendorf, M., & Sherry, J. F., Jr. (1989). The sacred and the profane in consumer behavior: Theodicy on the odyssey. *Journal of Consumer Research, 16*(1), 1–38. https://doi.org/10.1086/209191

Blackwell, C., Birnholtz, J., & Abbott, C. (2015). Seeing and being seen: Co-situation and impression formation using Grindr, a location-aware gay dating app. *New Media and Society, 17*(7), 1117–1136. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814521595

Boeuf, B., & Darveau, J. (2017). Posting from beyond the grave: An autopsy of consumer attitudes toward promotional communication in a posthumous context. *International Journal of Research in Marketing, 34*(4), 892–900. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2017.06.004

Bohnenkamp, B., Knapp, A.-K., Hennig-Thurau, T., & Schauerte, R. (2015). When does it make sense to do it again? an empirical investigation of contingency factors of movie remakes. *Journal of Cultural Economics, 39*(1), 15–41. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10824-014-9221-6

Brown, S., Kozinets, R. V., & Sherry, J. F. (2003). Teaching old brands new tricks: Retro branding and the revival of brand meaning. *Journal of Marketing, 67*(3), 19–33. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.67.3.19.18657

Camacho, G., Reinka, M. A., & Quinn, D. M. (2020). Disclosure and concealment of stigmatized identities. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 31*, 28–32. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2019.07.031

Canniford, R., & Shankar, A. (2013). Purifying practices: How consumers assemble romantic experiences of nature. *Journal of Consumer Research, 39*(5), 1051–1069. https://doi.org/10.1086/667202

Cervellon, M. C., & Brown, S. (2018). Reconsumption reconsidered: Redressing nostalgia with neo-burlesque. *Marketing Theory, 18*(3), 391–410. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470593118777892

Chaney, K. E., Sanchez, D. T., & Maimon, M. R. (2019). Stigmatized-identity cues in consumer spaces. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 29*(1), 130–141. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcpy.1075

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis* ((2nd ed.).). Thousand Oaks.

Cochran, S. D., & Mays, V. M. (2009). Burden of psychiatric morbidity among lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals in the California quality of life survey. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 118*(3), 647–658. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016501

Conrad Henry, P., & Caldwell, M. (2006). Self-empowerment and consumption: Consumer remedies for prolonged stigmatization. *European Journal of Marketing, 40*(9/10), 1031–1048. https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560610680998

Coupland, J. C. (2005). Invisible brands: An ethnography of households and the brands in their kitchen pantries. *Journal of Consumer Research, 32*(1), 106–118. https://doi.org/10.1086/429604

Crockett, D. (2017). Paths to respectability: Consumption and stigma management in the contemporary black middle class. *Journal of Consumer Research, 44*(3), 554–581. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucx049

Davies, A. (2011). Voices passed. *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing, 3*(4), 469–485. https://doi.org/10.1108/17557501111183626

Deleuze, G. (1994). *Difference and repetition (P. Patton, Trans.)*. Columbia University Press. Original work published 1968.

Douglas, M. (1966). *Purity and danger: An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*. Routledge.

Eichert, C. A., & Luedicke, M. K. (2022). Almost equal: Consumption under fragmented stigma. *Journal of Consumer Research, 49*(3), 409–429. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucab077

Fernandez, K. V., & Lastovicka, J. L. (2011). Making magic: Fetishes in contemporary consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research, 38*(2), 278–299. https://doi.org/10.1086/659079

Flavián, C., Ibáñez-Sánchez, S., & Orús, C. (2019). The impact of virtual, augmented and mixed reality technologies on the customer experience. *Journal of Business Research, 100*, 547–560. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.10.050

Freedberg, D. (1989). *The power of images: Studies in the history and theory of response*. *University of Chicago Press*. https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226259031.001.0001

Frisch, M. (1979). Oral history and hard times, a review essay. *Oral. History Review, 7*(1), 70–79. https://doi.org/10.1093/ohr/7.1.70

Frost, D. M. (2011). Social stigma and its consequences for the socially stigmatized. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 5*(11), 824–839. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2011.00394.x

Givi, J., Birg, L., Lowrey, T. M., & Galak, J. (2023). An integrative review of gift-giving research in consumer behavior and marketing. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 33*(3), 529–545. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcpy.1318

Glaw, X., Inder, K., Kable, A., & Hazelton, M. (2017). Visual methodologies in qualitative research: Autophotography and photo elicitation applied to mental health research.

International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 16(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917748215
Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life. Anchor*.
Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*. Simon & Schuster.
Gorichanaz, T. (2021). Rereading, art-making and other joys: Toward a theory of information, repetition and the good life. *Journal of Documentation, 77*(6), 1364–1378. https://doi.org/10.1108/JD-01-2021-0011
Goulding, C. (2001). Romancing the past: Heritage visiting and the nostalgic consumer. *Psychology and Marketing, 18*(6), 565–592. https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.1021
Goulding, C. (2002). *Grounded theory: A practical guide for management, business and market researchers. Sage*. Publications.
Guido, G., Amatulli, C., & Sestino, A. (2020). Elderly consumers and financial choices: A systematic review. *Journal of Financial Services Marketing, 25*(3–4), 76–85. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41264-020-00077-7
Harmeling, C. M., Mende, M., Scott, M. L., & Palmatier, R. W. (2021). Marketing, through the eyes of the stigmatized. *Journal of Marketing Research, 58*(2), 223–245. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022243720975400
Harun, A., Mahmud, M., Othman, B., Ali, R., & Ismael, D. (2020). Understanding experienced consumers towards repeat purchase of counterfeit products: The mediating effect of attitude. *Management Science Letters, 10*, 13–28. https://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2019.8.019
Hatzenbuehler, M. L. (2016). Structural stigma: Research evidence and implications for psychological science. *The American Psychologist, 71*(8), 742–751. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000068
Hayward, L. E., Vartanian, L. R., & Pinkus, R. T. (2018). Weight stigma predicts poorer psychological well-being through internalized weight bias and maladaptive coping responses. *Obesity, 26*(4), 755–761. https://doi.org/10.1002/oby.22126
Heljakka, K., Harviainen, J. T., & Suominen, J. (2018). Stigma avoidance through visual contextualization: Adult toy play on photo-sharing social media. *New Media and Society, 20*(8), 2781–2799. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817732534
Higgins, L., & Hamilton, K. (2019). Therapeutic servicescapes and market-mediated performances of emotional suffering. *Journal of Consumer Research, 45*(6), 1230–1253. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucy046
Hirschman, E. C. (1992). The consciousness of addiction: Toward a general theory of compulsive consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research, 19*(2), 155–179. https://doi.org/10.1086/209294
Huang, J. Y., Ackerman, J. M., & Newman, G. E. (2017). Catching (up with) magical contagion: A review of contagion effects in consumer contexts. *Journal of the Association for Consumer Research, 2*(4), 430–443. https://doi.org/10.1086/693533
Kapoor, V., & Belk, R. W. (2022). Coping and career choices: Irish gay men's passage from hopelessness to redemption. *Consumption, Markets and Culture, 25*(1), 52–78. https://doi.org/10.1080/10253866.2020.1784733
Kates, S. M. (2002). The protean quality of subcultural consumption: An ethnographic account of gay consumers. *Journal of Consumer Research, 29*(3), 383–399. https://doi.org/10.1086/344427
Khare, A., & Inman, J. (2006). Habitual behavior in American eating patterns: The role of meal occasions. *Journal of Consumer Research, 32*(4), 567–575. https://doi.org/10.1086/500487
Kierkegaard, S. (1983). *Fear and trembling – Repetition* (H. V. Hong & E. H. Hong, Trans.). Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1843).
Kim, H., & Bruce, N. I. (2018). Should sequels differ from original movies in pre-launch advertising schedule? Lessons from consumers' online search activity. *International Journal of Research in Marketing, 35*(1), 116–143. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2017.12.006
Körner, R., & Schütz, A. (2021). It is not all for the same reason! predicting motives in miniature wargaming on the basis of personality traits. *Personality and Individual Differences, 173*, Article 110639. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2021.110639
Kozinets, R. V. (2001). Utopian enterprise: Articulating the meanings of Star Trek's culture of consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research, 28*(1), 67–88. https://doi.org/10.1086/321948
Levy, E. K. (1996). Repetition and the scientific model in art. *Art Journal, 55*(1), 79–84. https://doi.org/10.1080/00043249.1996.10791745
Liota, V. (2021). *Objects, 64-minute film. Semicolon Pictures.*
Liu, C., & Kozinets, R. V. (2022). Courtesy stigma management: Social identity work among China's "leftover women". *Journal of Consumer Research, 49*(2), 312–335. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucab065
Machin, J. E., Adkins, N. R., Crosby, E., Farrell, J. R., & Mirabito, A. M. (2019). The marketplace, mental well-being, and me: Exploring self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-compassion in consumer coping. *Journal of Business Research, 100*, 410–420. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.12.028
Major, B., & Schmader, T. (2017). Stigma as identity threat: Implications for health. In B. Major, J. Dovidio, & B. Link (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of stigma, discrimination, and health*. Oxford University Press.
Marcoux, J. S. (2017). Souvenirs to forget. *Journal of Consumer Research, 43*(6), 950–969. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucw069
McAdams, D. P. (1985). *Power, intimacy and the life story*. Guildford Press.
Megehee, C. M., Ko, E., & Belk, R. W. (2016). Leaving Pleasantville: Macro/micro, public/private, conscious/non-conscious, volitional/imposed, and permanent/ephemeral transformations beyond everyday life. *Journal of Business Research, 69*(1), 1–5. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.07.014
Mercer, K. (1999). Reading racial fetishism: The photographs of Robert Maplethorp. In J. Evans, & S. Hall (Eds.), *Visual culture, the reader* (pp. 435–447). Sage Publications.
Meriläinen, M., Stenros, J., & Heljakka, K. (2022). The pile of shame: The personal and social sustainability of collecting and hoarding miniatures. In S. S. Muthu (Ed.), *Toys and Sustainability*. Singapore: Environmental Footprints and Eco-design of Products and Processes. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-9673-2_4.
Millhauser, S. (1983). The fascination of the miniature. *Grand Street, 2*(4), 128–135. https://doi.org/10.2307/25006539
Mirabito, A. M., Otnes, C. C., Crosby, E., Wooten, D. B., Machin, J. E., Pullig, C., Adkins, N. R., Dunnett, S., Hamilton, K., Thomas, K. D., Yeh, M. A., Davis, C., Gollnhofer, J. F., Grover, A., Matias, J., Mitchell, N. A., Ndichu, E. G., Sayarh, N., & Velagaleti, S. (2016). The stigma turbine: A theoretical framework for conceptualizing and Contextualizing marketplace stigma. *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing, 35*(2), 170–184. https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.15.145
Moisio, R., & Beruchashvili, M. (2010). Questing for well-being at Weight Watchers: The role of the spiritual-therapeutic model in a support group. *Journal of Consumer Research, 36*(5), 857–875. https://doi.org/10.1086/605590
Moorhouse, M., Goode, M., Cotte, J., & Widney, J. (2023). Helping those that hide: Anticipated stigmatization drives concealment and a destructive cycle of debt. *Journal of Marketing Research, 60*(6), 1135–1153. https://doi.org/10.1177/00222437221146521
Napier, A. D. (1986). *Masks, transformation, and paradox*. University of California Press.
Ndichu, E. G., & Rittenburg, T. L. (2021). Consumers' navigation of risk perceptions in the adoption of stigmatized products. *Journal of Business Research, 132*, 340–353. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.03.057
Newell, S. (2013). Brands as masks: Public secrecy and the counterfeit in Côte d'Ivoire. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 19*(1), 138–154. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9655.12007
Nguyen, H. P., Chen, S., & Mukherjee, S. (2014). Reverse stigma in the Freegan community. *Journal of Business Research, 67*(9), 1877–1884. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2013.12.001
O'Guinn, T. C., & Faber, R. J. (1989). Compulsive buying: A phenomenological exploration. *Journal of Consumer Research, 16*(2), 147–157. https://doi.org/10.1086/209204
Pachankis, J. E., Hatzenbuehler, M. L., Wang, K., Burton, C. L., Crawford, F. W., Phelan, J. C., & Link, B. G. (2018). The Burden of stigma on health and well-being: A taxonomy of concealment, course, disruptiveness, aesthetics, origin, and peril across 93 stigmas. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 44*(4), 451–474. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167217741313
Paganopoulos, M. (2024). Techno-nostalgic forms of digital pilgrimage: Online journeys into and out of Mount Athos. *Media Watch, 15*(3), 278–296. https://doi.org/10.1177/09760911241263276
Perks, R., & Thomson, A. (2003). *The oral history reader*. Routledge.
Phillips, B. (2016). The scrapbook as an autobiographical memory tool. *Marketing Theory, 16*(3), 325–346. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470593116635878
Plummer, K. (1995). *Telling sexual stories: Power, change and social worlds*. Routledge.
Preece, C., Kerrigan, F., & O'Reilly, D. (2019). License to assemble: Theorizing brand longevity. *Journal of Consumer Research, 46*(2), 330–350. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucy076
Prizeman, K., Weinstein, N., & McCabe, C. (2023). Effects of mental health stigma on loneliness, social isolation, and relationships in young people with depression symptoms. *BMC Psychiatry, 23*(1), 527. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-023-04991-7
Quinn, D. M. (2017). When stigma is concealable: The costs and benefits for health. In B. Major, J. F. Dovidio, & B. G. Link (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of stigma, discrimination, and health* (pp. 287–299). Oxford University Press.
Quinn, D. M., & Chaudoir, S. R. (2009). Living with a concealable stigmatized identity: The impact of anticipated stigma, centrality, salience, and cultural stigma on psychological distress and health. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 97*(4), 634–651. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015815
Quinn, D. M., & Earnshaw, V. A. (2013). Concealable stigmatized identities and psychological well-being. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 7*(1), 40–51. https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12005
Radford, S. K., & Bloch, P. H. (2012). Grief, commiseration, and consumption following the death of a celebrity. *Journal of Consumer Culture, 12*(2), 137–155. https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540512446879
Ragins, B. R. (2008). Disclosure disconnects: Antecedents and consequences of disclosing invisible stigmas across life domains. *The Academy of Management Review, 33*(1), 194–215. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2008.27752724
Reygan, F., & Moane, G. (2014). Religious homophobia: The experiences of a sample of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Ireland. *Culture and Religion, 15*(3), 298–312. https://doi.org/10.1080/14755610.2014.942329
Roberts, B. (2002). *Biographical research*. Open University Press.
Rook, D. W. (1985). The ritual dimension of consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research, 12*(3), 251–264. https://doi.org/10.1086/208514
Rosen, B. C. (2001). *Masks and mirrors: Generation x and the chameleon personality*. Praeger Publishers.
Russell, C. A., & Levy, S. J. (2012). The temporal and focal dynamics of volitional reconsumption: A phenomenological investigation of repeated hedonic experiences. *Journal of Consumer Research, 39*(2), 341–359. https://doi.org/10.1086/662996
Sandikci, Ö., & Ger, G. (2010). Veiling in style: How does a stigmatized practice become fashionable? *Journal of Consumer Research, 37*(1), 15–36. https://doi.org/10.1086/649910
Sandikci, O., Jafari, A., & Fischer, E. (2024). Claiming market ownership: Territorial activism in stigmatized markets. *Journal of Business Research, 175*, Article 114574. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2024.114574
Scaraboto, D., & Fischer, E. (2013). Frustrated fatshionistas: An institutional theory perspective on consumer quests for greater choice in mainstream markets. *Journal of Consumer Research, 39*(6), 1234–1257. https://doi.org/10.1086/668298
Schindler, R. M., & Minton, E. A. (2022). What becomes sacred to the consumer: Implications for marketers. *Journal of Business Research, 151*, 355–365. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.06.022

Shankar, A., & Fitchett, J. A. (2002). Having, being and consumption. *Journal of Marketing Management, 18*(5–6), 501–516. https://doi.org/10.1362/0267257022683721

Simpson, P. (2014). Differentiating selves: Middle-aged gay men in Manchester's less visible "homospaces". *The British Journal of Sociology, 65*(1), 150–169. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12056

Slim, H., Thompson, P., Bennett, O., & Cross, N. (2003). Ways of listening. In R. Perks, & A. Thomson (Eds.), *The oral history reader* (pp. 114–139). Routledge.

Small, M. L., & Calarco, J. M. (2022). *Qualitative literacy: A guide to evaluating ethnographic and interview research. University of California Press*. https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520390676

Smart, L., & Wegner, D. M. (2000). The hidden costs of hidden stigma. In T. F. Heatherton, R. E. Kleck, M. R. Hebl, & J. G. Hull (Eds.), *The social psychology of stigma* (pp. 220–242). The Guilford Press.

Solomon, M. (2021). *The new chameleons: How to connect with consumers who defy categorization*. Kogan Page.

Steadman, C., Medway, D., & Banister, E. (2023). Consuming memorial tattoos: The body as marketplace object? *Consumption, Markets and Culture, 27*(2), 216–232. https://doi.org/10.1080/10253866.2023.2188206

Stein, G. (1935). Portraits and repetition. In *Lectures in America* (pp. 165–206). Beacon Press.

Stewart, S. (1993). *On longing: Narratives of the miniature, the gigantic, the souvenir, and the collection. Duke University Press*. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822378563

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Sage Publications.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. M. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* ((2nd ed.).). Sage Publications.

Taket, A., Crisp, B., Neveill, A., Lamaro, G., Graham, M., & Barter-Godfrey, S. (2009a). Introducing theories of social exclusion and social connectedness. In A. Taket, B. Crisp, A. Neveill, G. Lamaro, M. Graham, & S. Barter-Godfrey (Eds.), *Theorizing social exclusion* (pp. 3–37). Routledge.

Taket, A., Foster, N., & Cook, K. (2009b). Understanding processes of social exclusion: Silence, silencing and shame. In A. Taket, B. Crisp, A. Neveill, G. Lamaro, M. Graham, & S. Barter-Godfrey (Eds.), *Theorizing social exclusion* (pp. 173–183). Routledge.

Thomson, P. (2000). The voice of the past: Oral history. In R. Perks, & A. Thomson (Eds.), *The oral history reader* (pp. 21–28). Routledge.

Timmermans, S., & Tavory, I. (2012). Theory construction in qualitative research: From grounded theory to abductive analysis. *Sociological Theory, 30*(3), 167–186. https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275112457914

Torgovnick, M. (1990). *Gone primitive: Savage intellects, modern lives*. The University of Chicago Press.

Torgovnick, M. (1996). *Primitive passions: Men, women, and the quest for ecstasy*. The University of Chicago Press.

Valor, C., Lloveras, J., & Papaoikonomou, E. (2021). The role of emotion discourse and pathic stigma in the delegitimization of consumer practices. *Journal of Consumer Research, 47*(5), 636–653. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucaa028

Venkatraman, R., Ozanne, J. L., & Coslor, E. (2024). Stigma resistance through body-in-practice: Embodying pride through creative mastery. *Journal of Consumer Research, 51*(4), 797–819. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucae015

Wagner, R. (2012). *Godwired: Religion, ritual and virtual reality*. Routledge.

Wallendorf, M., & Arnould, E. J. (1991). "We gather together": Consumption rituals of Thanksgiving Day. *Journal of Consumer Research, 18*(1), 13–31. https://doi.org/10.1086/209237

Weinberger, M. F., Baskin, E., & Gunasti, K. (2025). Relational gifting: Conceptual frameworks and an agenda for a new generation of research. *Journal of Consumer Research, 51*(6), 1252–1278. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucae042

Yadav, M. S., & Pavlou, P. A. (2020). Technology-enabled interactions in digital environments: A conceptual foundation for current and future research. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 48*(1), 132–136. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-019-00712-3

Yeh, M. A., Jewell, R. D., & Thomas, V. L. (2017). The stigma of mental illness: Using segmentation for social change. *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing, 36*(1), 97–116. https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.13.125

Zemack-Rugar, Y., & Moore, S. G. (2019). Play it again, Sam! an empirical examination of the volitional reconsumption's motivations and behavioral consequences. In R. Bagchi, L. Block, & L. Lee (Eds.), *Advances in consumer research* (Vol. 47, pp. 933–934). Association for Consumer Research.

Zhe, L., Jie, W., & Yuan, H. (2023). The effect of place attachment of geographical indication agricultural products on repurchase intention. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 72*, Article 103266. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103266

Vikram Kapoor is Lecturer in Marketing at Goldsmiths, University of London. He won the 2019 ACR-Sheth Public-Purpose Dissertation Award and the 2021 AMS Review-Sheth Foundation Doctoral Competition for Conceptual Articles. His research focuses on consumer identity projects and coping, stigma, self-gift giving, rituals, festivals, religion and consumption. His works have been published in the *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *Consumption Markets & Culture*, *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, *Journal of Homosexuality, Religions* and *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*.

Russell W. Belk is York University Distinguished Research Professor and Kraft Foods Canada Chair in Marketing at the Schulich School of Business. His research involves the extended self, meanings of possessions, collecting, gift-giving, sharing, digital consumption, and materialism. It tends to be qualitative, cultural, and visual. He has received the Paul D. Converse Award, two Fulbright Fellowships, the Sheth Foundation/Journal of Consumer Research Award for Long Term Contribution to Consumer Research, and is a fellow in ACR, APA, and the Royal Society of Canada.

Wendy Hein is Senior Lecturer at Birkbeck, University of London, where she researches and teaches consumption and marketing, focusing on gender and sustainability. Her work has been published in various books and articles including the *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, *Journal of Business Research,* and the *European Journal of Marketing*.