

Special Issue
“Forty Years of Fantasies, Feelings, and Fun”

FROM THE GUEST EDITOR

1982 was a year that left a significant mark on the history of marketing and consumer research. During that year, Morris B. Holbrook and Elizabeth C. Hirschman published an article titled "The Experiential Aspects of Consumption: Consumer Fantasies, Feelings, and Fun," which served as a manifesto for the experiential perspective on consumer behavior. This publication revolutionized our understanding of how individuals consume experiences and set the groundwork for the field of experience management. This influential article has garnered over 13,000 citations and has had a profound impact on various disciplines, including arts management.

To commemorate the fortieth anniversary of this groundbreaking article, the International Journal of Arts Management is dedicated to celebrating the originality, impact, and scholarly rigor of these two esteemed scholars. This Special Issue, which I have the privilege of editing, brings together a distinguished group of leading scholars in arts marketing. These authors have graciously accepted the invitation to contribute original articles, paying homage to the anniversary while offering fresh perspectives and guiding future research endeavors.

The articles featured in this Special Issue collectively explore the following research question: forty years later, what enduring insights can we glean from Holbrook and Hirschman's 1982 work that remain relevant to those studying and managing cultural experiences in the realm of art and culture?

The opening article is penned by Morris B. Holbrook, who offers a personal reflection on the necessity of examining the experiential aspects of consumption four decades ago. As he revisits the historical development of this research stream, he underscores the continuous need for expanding and refining the traditional consumer behavior model. The uncharted territories of experiential consumer value within arts management are bound to be the subject of future investigations.

Next, François Colbert delves into the realm of extended cultural consumption. By tracing the evolution and diverse facets explored by academic researchers since 1982, especially within arts and culture marketing, the author identifies numerous mechanisms related to cultural consumption across a broad spectrum of fields, including tourism, psychology, and sociology. The subsequent study, conducted by Martina Gallarza, Raquel Sanchez, and Manuel Cuadrado, is built upon a thorough literature review. Their comprehensive review, which encompasses both qualitative and quantitative research, closely examines the utilization of experiential value within the realms of arts and culture. Their findings shed light on the fact that this application has not been systematized to date, thus opening up new research avenues that are not only challenging but also pivotal for the entire field.

Bernd Schmitt directs our attention to a crucial area of future exploration, advocating for an examination of fantasies and their role in arts consumption. Through phenomenological introspection, the author identifies three fundamental features of art fantasizing: goal-directedness, the inclusion of ideologies, and self-involvement. This framework provides a valuable foundation for leveraging fantasies in arts marketing.

Furthermore, Alan Bradshaw and Stephen Brown, in their characteristic provocative and brilliant style, offer a dual perspective on the context in which the 1982 article was produced. They present theses and antitheses for the reader's contemplation, allowing for a wholly personalized synthesis.

The subsequent article extends the analysis of the legacy of the 1982 paper, seeking to harness the potential of the cultural consumption experience. In this context, I identify several areas where managerial processes can be revised to enhance the offering of captivating consumption experiences by cultural organizations.

Jennifer Wiggins continues the discussion by exploring future opportunities for the arts and introduces the concept of psychological ownership. The notion that a consumer perceives a target, or parts of it, as personally significant has the potential to fulfill various needs, benefiting both consumers and organizations. Several promising avenues for further investigation emerge. Antonella Carù, Bernard Cova, and Zannie Voss contribute to the discourse on the consumer's role, emphasizing the active engagement of the audience alongside the artists. Their conceptual framework centers on the audience's responses, with particular attention to extreme reactions such as applause and boos, and their implications for both the organization and the artist.

Finola Kerrigan continues the dialogue concerning potential future developments of the cultural experience construct, with a focus on film consumption in the post-COVID-19 era. Many aspects deserving of attention remain underexplored. The author addresses the dual nature of escape, which offers relief during challenging times but also poses the risk of diverting attention from pertinent social and political issues.

The final article by Claire Roederer and Marc Filser acknowledges the positive evolution of cultural experiences for consumer research while advocating for the ongoing expansion and updating of proposed models of consumer experience. These models should reflect the changing landscape shaped by technology and culture, encompassing advancements in technology and technoculture that may evoke both frustration and fear, alongside the eudaemonism trend prevalent in the current century.

It will be up to the readers to determine whether we have succeeded in this Special Issue's goals: rekindling discussions on experiential consumption, providing fresh and innovative insights into the experiential consumption of the arts within our contemporary context, celebrating the lasting impact of this significant contribution to our literature, and offering valuable support to both arts management professionals and scholars.

Michela Addis