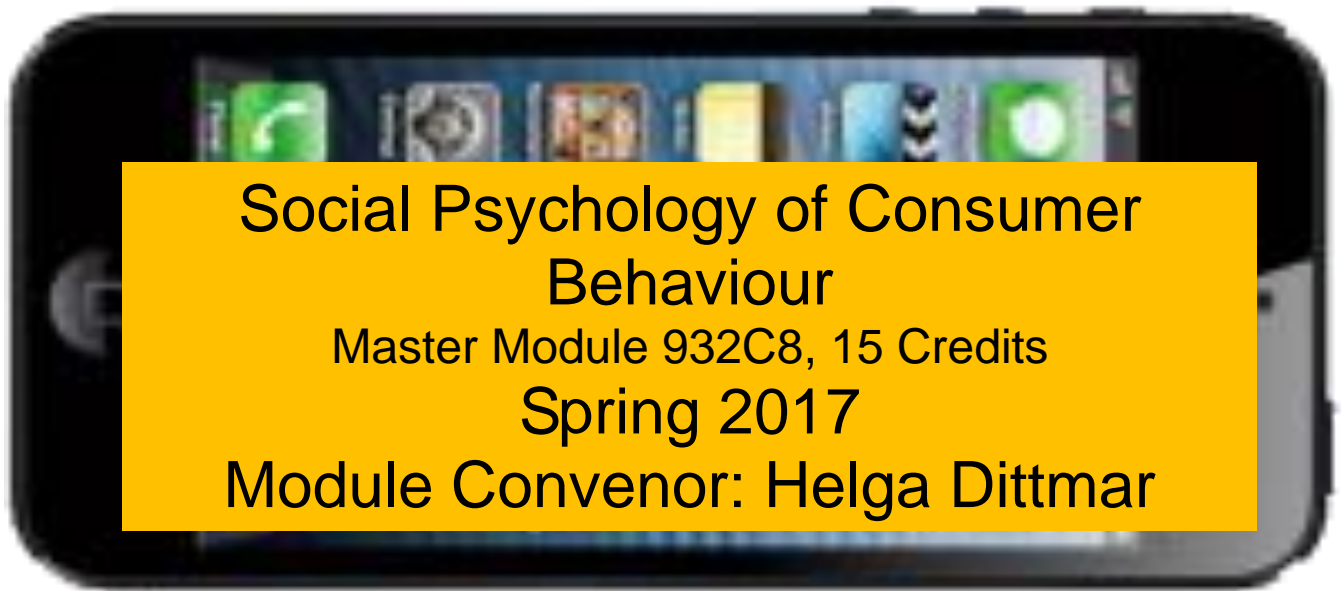




UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX  
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY



**NOTE: Most of the questions you need answers to about this module are in this document. Please read it fully and carefully before your first supervision meeting.**

NOTE: This document concerns the structure and content of the module. If you have questions about procedures, please consult the School of Psychology Administration Office in person or via [psychology@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:psychology@sussex.ac.uk)

## Module Information

### Module Outline

Consumer culture has become such a pervasive aspect of everyday life that it has profound psychological effects. This masters module investigates psychological processes underlying specific behaviours in economic and consumer contexts, such as money bargaining, getting into debt, and buying consumer goods (ordinary and 'compulsive'). It also examines the influence of selected mass consumer aspects on individuals' stereotypes and well-being, including wealth, materialistic values, and the impact of advertising on stereotyping and body image.

### Module Topics in Three Themes

*Opening Session:* Psychological Impact of Consumer Culture: Fact or Fiction?

*Assessment Skills Review:* Powerpoint and Essay preparation guidance

*Theme 1:* Bargaining for Money, Managing Money, and 'Compulsive Buying'

Bargaining for Money: Pro-self or Pro-social?

Managing Money and the Debt Crisis: Personality or Culture?

'Compulsive Buying': Disorder of the Few or Shopaholic Tendency of the Many?

*Theme 2:* Influences on Well-Being: Wealth, Materialism, and Consumer Choice

Wealth and Well-Being: Are Rich Nations and Rich People Happier?

Materialist Value Orientation and Well-Being: Are Materialists Well or Unwell?

Consumer Choice and Satisfaction: Is More More or is Less More?

*Theme 3:* (a) Gender, Sex, and Body Perfect Ideals in Advertising

(b) Children and Consumer Culture

Gender and Sex in Advertising: Entrapment or Liberation?

Body Perfect Ideals in Advertising: Does Size Really Matter?

Children and Consumer Culture: Who is 'Cool' and Who is 'Beautiful'?

*Closing Session:* Individual feedback sessions: Essay plans

## Module Aims: Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate the ability to reflect on some basic theoretical questions about psychological processes in economic and consumer contexts
- Describe and analyse empirical research on individuals' experience of engaging in selected economic and consumer behaviours
- Demonstrate understanding and critical evaluation of selected mass consumer influences on individuals' stereotypes and well-being
- Demonstrate the ability to work in depth on a specific chosen aspect of Social Psychology of Consumer Behaviour

## Module Convenor

Dr. Helga Dittmar, Pevensey 1 2B5

e-mail: [h.e.dittmar@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:h.e.dittmar@sussex.ac.uk)

## Module Structure

### Timing and Duration

The module runs for 12 weeks during Teaching Term 2 (Spring)

### Seminars and Seminar Presentations

There are weekly seminars throughout the term (except for the Easter break). The intention is to make these as interactive as possible. Most involve some small group work, as well as a presentation by one or two of the students, with an invitation to you to ask questions or comment.

The first seminar – in the **very first week** of Teaching Term 2 – is designed to (i) introduce you to the course topics (involving small group work within our seminar group), and (ii) allocate a seminar presentation (topic and time) to each student taking Social Psychology of Consumer Behaviour. (Please note that this allocation is final, and that the presentation is assessed coursework).

Date	Topic
1	Psychological Impact of Consumer Culture: Fact or Fiction?
2	Assessment Skills Review: Powerpoint and Essay preparation guidance
3	Bargaining for Money: Pro-self or Pro-social?
4	Managing Money and the Debt Crisis: Personality or Culture?
5	'Compulsive Buying': Minority Disorder or Majority Shopaholism?
6	Wealth and Well-Being: Are Rich Nations and Rich People Happier?
7	Materialist Values and Well-Being: Are Materialists Well or Unwell?
8	Consumer Choice and Satisfaction: Is More More or is Less More?
9	Gender and Sex in Advertising: Entrapment or Liberation?
10	Body Perfect Ideals in Advertising: Does Size Really Matter?
11	Children & Consumer Culture: Who is 'Cool' and Who is 'Beautiful'?
12	Individual feedback sessions: Essay Plan

## Seminars and Seminar Presentations

We will have a dedicated session on Assessments for the module, focusing on reviewing skills and preparation for your assessed Powerpoint presentation and the term essay. Thereafter, we will have one or two seminar presentations per week.

The list of seminar presentation titles is given below:

1. When are people most motivated to be (truly) fair and considerate in money bargaining?
2. When are people most motivated to get most gain for themselves in money bargaining?
3. What is the role of personality when individuals get into debt?
4. What is the role of culture when individuals get into debt?
5. Disorder of the few? Compulsive buying as a clinical disorder from a psychiatric perspective
6. Shopaholic tendency of the many? Compulsive buying as an extreme form of ordinary buying driven by a search for emotional and identity-related boosts
7. Are people living in rich nations happier?
8. Are rich people happier (within the same country)?
9. Can a materialist value orientation lead to lower personal well-being?
10. Do individuals use a materialist value orientation as a coping strategy to deal with low well-being (such as insecurity or negative emotion)?
11. Is there an optimal number of choices when consumers make decisions?
12. What are the psychological processes through which too much choice leads to poorer decision-making and consumer satisfaction?
13. Can adverts perpetuate gender stereotypes?
14. What is the psychological impact of sexualisation in advertising?
15. Is everybody equally vulnerable to media body ideals having a negative impact on their body image?
16. What are the psychological processes through which media body ideals lead to lower body image?
17. What are the links between materialism and well-being in children?
18. How do children respond to consumer culture ideals of the perfect body?

Presenters need to be there **before the Seminar starts** to make sure that their powerpoint presentations are uploaded and only need to be clicked. Presentations start **on time**, and should be **no longer than 15 minutes** to leave time for questions and discussions. Presentations are assessed (20% of overall mark for the module), and students receive written feedback on their presentation. The presentation topic **cannot be the same topic** you write your **term paper** on (although both can be on topics within the same theme).

## Module Assessment

100% Coursework;

Powerpoint seminar presentation (20% of final mark)

3,000-word Essay (Term Paper) (80% of final mark)

### Deadlines and Procedures

The presentation is given during one of the SPCB seminars. The term paper is due after the end of the module. Date, time, and submission place can be found on Sussex Direct.

Your term paper has to be on a different topic to your seminar presentation. You can choose from the approved essay titles below. If you would like to write your essay on a title not included in the list below, you need to agree the title with the Module Convenor, and submit an approved title registration form with your essay.

### List of Approved Term Paper Titles

- Are people typically motivated by fairness or selfishness in ultimatum bargaining?
- In consumer choice, decision-making quality, and satisfaction, is more more or less more?
- What are the relative roles of personality and culture when individuals get into debt?
- How can we best explain compulsive buying?
- To what extent is actual wealth linked to well-being?
- Is a materialistic value orientation detrimental to well-being?
- Does inequality play a significant role in the relationships between materialism, money, and personal well-being?
- Does advertising contribute to stereotyping?
- Does advertising have an impact on attitudes and behaviour related to sexuality?
- Do idealised media models have a negative impact on individuals' (*or women's or men's or children's*) body image?
- Are some individuals more susceptible to negative body image effects from body ideals in the media?
- How are children affected by consumer culture ideals?

Assessments deadlines and methods of submission can be found on your assessment timetable via Sussex Direct.

Information on the following can be found at the link below:

- Submitting your work
- Missing a deadline
- Late penalties
- Exceptional circumstances
- Exams
- Help with managing your studies and competing your work
- Assessment Criteria

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/internal/students/examinationsandassessment>

## E-submission

From 2016/17, Masters and MRes students taking PG year modules will usually be asked to submit assessments electronically where assessments are text-based, for example, an essay. Your Sussex Direct - Assessment Deadlines & Exam Timetable will give all assessment details, including whether the assessment is to be submitted via e-submission through Sussex Direct or via a different method. Feedback for all e-submission assessments will also be provided electronically.

Please refer to the frequently asked questions available on the following webpage for further information:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/tel/submission/students/esubmission>

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/tel/submission/students/fags>

[www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment/esubmission](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/examsandassessment/esubmission)

## Attendance, Absence and Engagement

You are expected to be 'in attendance' at the University for the full duration of the published term dates for your course of study. That means you should be regularly attending lectures, seminars, labs etc. and committing time to your studies to be in a position to comply with academic and administrative expectations.

**The university has an 80% attendance policy in place, so it's really important that you let us know if you are ill or cannot attend classes so that we can register this as a notified absence.**

**If you are unable to attend your seminars or workshops, you need to send an email to [psychologyabsence@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:psychologyabsence@sussex.ac.uk) setting out the following information:**

- Seminar(s) / workshop(s) that you will be absent from (list all of them)
- Tutor name
- Brief reason for absence

**Please see the following link for further information:**

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/internal/students/attendance>

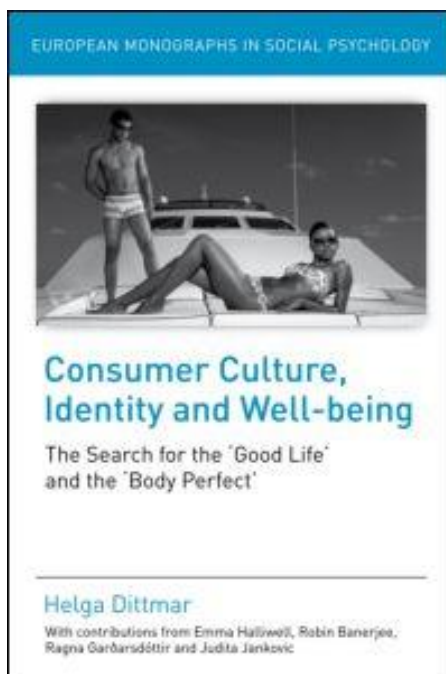
## Methods of Student Feedback

Students give their feedback on the module in a questionnaire towards the end of term.

## Additional Lecture Resources

Please note that, concurrent with this module, there is a lecture series for the final year undergraduate module Economic and Consumer Psychology. The lecture topics are the same as the topics for this masters module. You will find the lecture slides for ECP on your SPCB Sussex Direct Website as an additional learning resource. **You are warmly invited to attend the ECP lectures**, which may be particularly helpful for the topic you are presenting on. Time and venue of the lectures is available from the module convenor.

## Module Readings



My book, paperback revision published in 2010, is concerned with the psychological impact of consumer culture on individuals' identity and well-being. It is not a textbook for this course in a strict sense, but it does contain chapters set as essential reading for the majority of the module topics.

The book summarises a series of research projects, concerned with the meanings and functions of material possessions, motives for buying consumer goods, materialism and well-being, compulsive buying, and the impact of advertising on body image.



## Reading list

The reading list gives starred, essential, mindful, and additional readings for each topic, as well as internet resources.

### Starred readings

Starred readings are an **absolute requirement** for everybody to read before the seminar. They are the one or two most important readings for each topic.

### Essential readings

Essential readings are chosen to give you an introduction to the topic, and to the current debates within the research literature on it. Starred and essential readings are given also on the SPCB website on Study Direct.

### Additional readings

These provide you with a range of primary research studies, or examples of seminar work, and are most useful when you are particularly interested in the topic.

### Internet resources

For most topics, some internet resources are also given, such as website links to ongoing campaigns, or governmental advice, health information, and to educational or illustrative YouTube videos (e.g., advertisements).

### Electronic Library

Please make sure that you know how to access and search the library's electronic subscriptions to journals and other psychology resources (e.g., PsycInfo).

Full readings for each topic of the Module are given below

## *Bargaining for Money: Pro-self or Pro-social?*



Economists, rational choice theorists, and game theorists have tended to make 'pro-self' assumptions about the motivations that supposedly drive us as human beings, and hence in bargaining for money situations: we act rationally and in our own best interests (we "maximise utility"). They are, of course, aware that this 'pro-self' model is not necessarily a tenable explanation for the behaviour of each and every individual, but they often argue that such a 'pro-self' model remains helpful for understanding behaviour at the aggregate level, i.e. if we study the actions of a large number of individuals, their average behaviour will tend to be in line with pro-self assumptions. Psychological economists, personality and social psychologists, and social justice researchers have tended towards interest in 'pro-social' motives or influences when people bargain for money. They theorise and study: our commitment to fairness, equality, or equity; our concern with others' outcomes as well as one's own, empathy, or sense of interdependence; emotions and affect; and the social context we find ourselves in, including social norms, social comparisons, or in-group identification. Neuroscientists have recently become to use brain imaging techniques to examine different theoretical propositions, and unearthed unexpected influences in the process, such as hypnosis or semi-automatic responding. The focal paradigm to examine bargaining for money is the "ultimatum game". In its most simple form, there are players A and B, and player A has to divide a sum of money (say £10) between her/himself and player B by making player B an offer. If player B *accepts* the offer, the money is divided as proposed by A. If player B *refuses* the offer made by player A, nobody gets any money.



### *Starred readings*

- Van Dijk, E., De Cremer, D., & Handgraaf, M. J. J. (2004). Social value orientations and the strategic use of fairness in ultimatum bargaining. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 40, 697-707.
- Gabay, A. S., Radua, J., Kempton, M., & Mehta, M. (2014). The Ultimatum Game and the brain: A meta-analysis of neuroimaging studies. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, 47, 549-558.



### Essential readings

- Alexopoulos, J., Pfabigan, D.M., Lamm, C., Bauer, H., & Fischmeister, F.Ph.S. (2012). Do we care about the powerless third? An ERP study of the three-person ultimatum game. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* 6 (Mar 28, E-publication). DOI: 10.3389/fnhum.2012.00059
- Forgas, J.P. & Tan, H.B. (2012). To give or to keep? Affective influences on selfishness and fairness in computer-mediated interactions in the dictator game and the ultimatum game. *Computers in Human Behavior* (Aug 18, e-publication). DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2012.07.017
- Osumi, T., & Ohira, H. (2010). The positive side of psychopathy: Emotional detachment in psychopathy and rational decision-making in the ultimatum game. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 49, 451-456. DOI: 10.1016/j.paid.2010.04.016
- Dunn, B.D., Evans, D., Makarova, D., White, J., & Clark, L. (2012). Gut feelings and the reaction to perceived inequity: The interplay between bodily responses, regulation, and perception shapes the rejection of unfair offers on the ultimatum game. *Cognitive, Affective & Behavioral Neuroscience*, 12, 419-429. doi: 10.3758/s13415-012-0092z

### Internet Resources

<http://www.livescience.com/26239-chimps-play-the-ultimatum-game-video.html>

### Additional readings

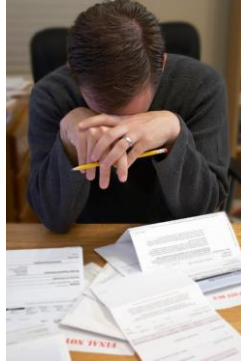
- Bediou, B.; Sacharin, V., Hill, C., Sander, D., & Scherer, K.R. (2012). Sharing the fruit of labor: Flexible application of justice principles in an ultimatum game with joint-production. *Social Justice Research* 25, 25-40. (Mar, E-publication). DOI: 10.1007/s11211-012-0151-1
- Brüne, M., Tas, C., Wischniewski, J., Welpinghus, A., Heinisch, C., & Newen, A. (2012). Hypnotic ingroup–outgroup suggestion influences economic decision-making in an ultimatum game. *Consciousness and Cognition: An International Journal*, 21, 939-946. DOI: 10.1016/j.concog.2012.02.009
- Chuah, S.-H., Hoffmann, R., Jones, M., & Williams, G. (2009). An economic anatomy of culture: Attitudes and behaviour in inter- and intra-national ultimatum game experiments. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 30, 732-744. DOI: 10.1016/j.joep.2009.06.004
- Csukly, G., Polgár, P., Tombor, L., Réthelyi, J., & Kéri, S. (2011). Are patients with schizophrenia rational maximizers? Evidence from an ultimatum game study. *Psychiatry Research* 187, 11-17. DOI: 10.1016/j.psychres.2010.10.005

- Leliveld, M.C., & van Dijk, E. (2008). Initial ownership in bargaining: Introducing the giving, splitting, and taking ultimatum bargaining game. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34, 1214-1225. DOI: 10.1177/0146167208318600
- Murnighan, J.K. & Saxon, M.S. (1998). Ultimatum bargaining by children and adults. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 19, 415-445. Doi:
- Pillutla, M.M. & Murnighan, J.K. (1995). Being fair or appearing fair: Strategic behaviour in ultimatum bargaining. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38, 1408-1426.
- Shirata, Y. (2012). The evolution of fairness under an assortative matching rule in the ultimatum game. *International Journal of Game Theory*, 41, 1-21. DOI: 10.1007/s00182-011-0271-0
- Thaler, R. (1988). Anomalies - the ultimatum game. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2, 195-206.
- Van der Veen, F., Sahibdin, P.P. (2011). Dissociation between medial frontal negativity and cardiac responses in the ultimatum game: Effects of offer size and fairness. *Cognitive, Affective & Behavioral Neuroscience*, 11, 516-525. DOI: 10.3758/s13415-011-0050-1
- Van Dijk, E. & Riel, V. (2000). Strategy and fairness in social decision-making: Sometimes it pays to be powerless. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 36, 1-25.
- Wu, Y., Zhou, Y., van Dijk, E., Leliveld, M.C., & Zhou, X. (2011). Social comparison affects brain responses to fairness in asset division: An ERP study with the ultimatum game. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 5 (Nov 9, E-publication). DOI: 10.3389/fnhum.2011.00131

### *Research Seminar Presentation Titles*

1. When are people most motivated to be (truly) fair and considerate in money bargaining?
2. When are people most motivated to make as much money for themselves as possible?

## *Managing Money and the Debt Crisis: Personality or Culture?*



307 people were declared insolvent or bankrupt every day, equivalent to one person every 4 minutes 42 seconds, and Citizens Advice Bureaux in England and Wales dealt with 8,465 new debt problems every working day during the year ending June 2012 (Credit Action, UK Personal Debt Dec 2012, see Internet Resources).

Apparently, “the aggregate indebtedness of the UK - that's the sum of household debts, company debts, government debts and bank debts - had risen to 492% of GDP, or almost five times the value of everything we produce in a single year... the biggest [indebtedness] relative to GDP of any of the big economies” (BBC News Business, 2011, last accessed on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-15820601>).

Why do UK individuals cope less well when it comes to managing their money in a worldwide recession, following the 2008 credit crash? What do we know about the psychological impact of personal debt on people? And what about increasing student debt, particularly now, after the tuition fee bar is extended to £9000 a year? Is there something about the personality make-up of individuals (broadly construed) that help us explain who gets into debt and by how much? Or should we turn the researchers' eye to the ‘buy now, pay later’ mentality, coupled with easily accessible facilities for borrowing, such as credit cards, discount cards, store cards, loyalty cards, as well as the pressure from consumer culture to join in with the ‘shopping frenzy’ as a form of leisure, relaxation, commitment to eco-friendly and naturally sourced gifts for self and others, even therapy (see Retail Therapy in Internet Resources). People may be particularly likely to seek such relief when they are overcome by the stress and hectic pace of everyday living and working. Both personality and contemporary consumer culture are likely to be important, but how can we best weigh the evidence to think about the role each plays by itself, or in interaction with each other?

### **\*Starred readings**

Haushofer, J., & Fehr, E. (2014). On the psychology of poverty. *Science*, 344, 862-867.

Brown, S., Taylor, K. (2014). Household finances and the ‘Big Five’ personality traits. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 45, 197-212.

## Essential Readings

- Elliott, A. (2005). *Not waving but drowning: Over-indebtedness by misjudgement*. London & New York: Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation (CSFI).
- Meltzer, H., Bebbington, P., Brugha, T., Jenkins, R., McManus, S., & Dennis, M. (2011). Personal debt and suicidal ideation. *Psychological Medicine*, 41, 771-778. DOI: 10.1017/S0033291710001261
- Fitch, C., Hamilton, S., Bassett, P., Davey, R. (2011). The relationship between personal debt and mental health: A systematic review. *Mental Health Review Journal* 16, 153-166. DOI: 10.1108/13619321111202313
- Stone, B., Maury, R.V. (2006). Indicators of personal financial debt using a multi-disciplinary behavioral model. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 27, 543-556. DOI: 10.1016/j.joep.2005.11.002
- Lea, S. E.G. & Webley, P. (1995). Psychological factors in consumer debt: Money management, economic socialization, and credit use. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 16, 681-701.
- Dittmar, H. (2010). Consuming Passions? Psychological Motives for Buying Consumer Goods. In *Consumer Society, Identity, and Well-Being: The Search for the 'Good Life' and the 'Body Perfect'* (pp. 49-70) European Monographs in Social Psychology Series. London and New York: Psychology Press.

## Internet Resources

<http://www.creditaction.org.uk/helpful-resources/debt-statistics.html>

<http://www.retailtherapy.uk.com/>

## Additional readings

### (a) Personal debt

- Lunt, P.K. & Livingstone, S.M. (1991). Everyday explanations for personal debt: A network approach. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 30, 309-323.
- Livingstone, S.M. & Lunt, P.K. (1992). Predicting personal debt and debt repayment: Psycho-logical, social and economic determinants. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 13, 111-134.
- Lea, S.E.G., Webley, P. & Levine, R. M. (1993). The economic psychology of consumer debt. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 14, 85-119.
- Walker, C. M. (1996). Financial management, coping and debt in households under financial strain. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 17, 789-807.

### (b) Student debt

Davies, E. & Lea, S.E.G. (1995). Student attitudes to student debt. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 16, 663-679.

Norvilitis, J. M., Merwin, M. M., Osberg, T. M., Roehling, P.V., Young, P., & Kamas, M. M. (2006). Personality Factors, Money Attitudes, Financial Knowledge, and Credit-Card Debt in College Students. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 36, 1395-1413.

### *Research Seminar Presentation Titles*

3. What is the role of personality when individuals get into debt?
4. What is the role of culture when individuals get into debt?

## ***‘Compulsive Buying’: Disorder of the Few or Shopaholism of the Many?***



“I shop, therefore I am” has become the stereotype of modern consumerism. Interlinked social and economic changes in Britain over the last two decades, such as dramatic increases in disposable income and credit facilities, have produced a different climate in which individuals make consumer choices. Instead of a “rational”, discerning, thoughtful consumer, who gathers information strategically and buys goods according to functional cost-benefit considerations, we appear to buy increasingly for psychological motives, such as identity-seeking and mood repair.

For some people, shopping becomes dysfunctional and takes over their lives. Excessive buying behaviour, more commonly labelled “shopping addiction” or “compulsive buying”, affects an estimated 2-5 % of adults in developed mass consumer economies, including Britain, and can leave sufferers severely distressed and financially crippled. Overspending on credit cards is particularly common. We will discuss and contrast frameworks from clinical psychology (e.g., addiction, impulse control disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder) with social psychological perspectives that centre on self-esteem and self-image.

### **\*Starred readings**

Dittmar, H. (2008). I Shop therefore I am? Compulsive buying and identity seeking. In *Consumer Society, Identity, and Well-Being: The Search for the ‘Good Life’ and the ‘Body Perfect’* (pp.95-120) European Monographs in Social Psychology Series. London and New York: Psychology Press.

Koran, L. M., Faber, R. J. Aboujaoude, E. Large, M. D., Serpe, R. T. (2006). Estimated prevalence of compulsive buying behavior in the United States. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 163, 1806-1812.

### **Essential readings**

Baumeister, R. F. (2002). Yielding to temptation: Self-control failure, impulsive purchasing, and consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28, 670-676.



Soares, C., Fernandes, N., & Morgado, P. (2016). A review of the pharmacologic treatment of compulsive buying disorder. *CNS Drugs*, 30, 281-291.

Dittmar, H. (2004). Understanding and diagnosing compulsive buying. In R. Coombs (Ed.), *Handbook of Addictive Disorders: A Practical Guide to Diagnosis and Treatment*. Chapter 13. New York: Wiley. *Study pack*.

Faber, R. J., Christenson, G. A., de Zwaan, M. & Mitchell, J. (1995). Two forms of compulsive consumption: Comorbidity of compulsive buying and binge eating. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22, 296-304.

#### *Additional reading*

##### *(a) Shopping addiction or compulsive buying from a psychiatric perspective*

McElroy, S.L., Keck, P.E., Harrison, G., Pope, M.D., Smith, M.R. & Strakowski, S.M. (1994). Compulsive buying: A report of 20 cases. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 55, 242-248.

Benson, A. (Ed.) (2000), *I Shop Therefore I am: Compulsive Buying and the Search for Self*, London and New York: Jason Aronson. (select appropriate chapters).

Black, D. W. (1996). Compulsive buying: A review. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 57, 50-55.

Faber, R. J. (1992). Money changes everything: Compulsive buying from a biopsychosocial perspective. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 35, 809-819.

Lejoyeux, M., Tassain, V., Solomon, J. & Ades, J. (1997). Study of compulsive buying in depressed patients. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 58, 169-172.

Faber, R. J. & O'Guinn, T. C. (1992). A clinical screener for compulsive buying. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19, 459-469.

Valence, G., d'Astous, A. & Fortier, L. (1988). Compulsive buying: Concept and measurement. *Journal of Consumer Policy*, 11, 419-433.

##### *(b) Excessive buying from a social psychological and cultural perspective*

Lee, S. & Mysyk, M. (2004). The medicalization of compulsive buying. *Social Science & Medicine*, 58, 1709-1718.

Kyrios, M., Frost, R. O., & Steketee, G. (2004). Cognitions in compulsive buying and acquisition. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 28, 241-258.

Benson, A. (Ed.) (2000), *I Shop Therefore I am: Compulsive Buying and the Search for Self*, London and New York: Jason Aronson. (select appropriate chapters).

Dittmar, H. (2005). Compulsive buying – a growing concern? An examination of gender, age, and materialistic values as predictors of compulsive buying tendency. *British Journal of Psychology*, 96, 467-491. .

Dittmar, H. (2005). A new look at “compulsive buying”: Self-discrepancies and materialistic values as predictors of compulsive buying tendency. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 24, 806-833 .

Elliott, R. (1994). Addictive consumption: Function and fragmentation in postmodernity. *Journal of Consumer Policy*, 17, 159-179.

Dittmar, H., Long, K., & Bond, R. (2007). When a better self is only a button click away: associations between materialistic values, emotional and identity-related buying motives, and compulsive buying tendency online. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*.

Rose, R. (2007). Mediators of the association between narcissism and compulsive buying: The roles of materialism and impulse control. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 21, 576-581.

#### *Seminar presentation question*

5. Disorder of the few? Compulsive buying as a clinical disorder from a psychiatric perspective

6. Shopaholic tendency of the many? Compulsive buying as an extreme form of ordinary buying driven by a search for emotional and identity-related boosts

## *Wealth and Well-Being: Are Rich Nations and Rich People Happier?*



This topic considers the impact of having money on well-being and happiness, i.e. of *actual* wealth, **not** of values, aspirations or desires for money (see next topic). It deals with the question of whether financial success makes people "happy", or least "happier" comparatively. Interestingly, this research area - financial success and happiness - seems to be entirely separate from the effects of a materialistic outlook we will consider next week, and yet awaits some cross-fertilisation. Research on the link between wealth and well-being has yielded rather mixed findings. Whereas some studies – mostly on national, country-level differences - suggest that higher income does indeed lead to increased happiness, other studies dispute this link – usually ones that focus on individual differences. Debates continue, not just over the best interpretation of research findings, but also about the methods and measures that are being used.

### *\*Starred reading*

Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2002). Will money increase subjective well-being? A literature review and guide to needed research. *Social Indicators Research*, 57, 119-169.

Kahneman, D. & Deaton, A. (2010). High income improves evaluation of life but not emotional well-being. *PNAS*, 107, 16489-16493. doi: 10.1073/pnas.1011492107

### *Essential reading*

Kahnemann, D., Krueger, A.B., Schkade, D., Schwarz, N., & Stone, A.A. (2006). Would you be happier if you were richer? A focusing illusion. *Science*, 312, 1908-1910.

Diener, E. & Fujita, F. (1995). Resources, personal strivings, and subjective well-being: A nomothetic and idiographic approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68, 926-935.

Gardner, J. & Oswald, A.J. (2007). Money and mental well-being: A longitudinal study of medium-sized lottery wins. *Journal of Health Economics*, 26, 49-60.

Diener, E., Diener, M. & Diener, C. (1995). Factors predicting the subjective well-being of nations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 851-864.

Myers, D. & Diener, E. (1995). Who is happy? *Psychological Science*, 6, 10-19.

### ***Additional reading***

#### *(a) Selected key articles*

Diener, E., Sandvik, E., Seidlitz, L. & Diener, M. (1993). The relationship between income and subjective well-being: Relative or absolute? *Social Indicators Research*, 28, 195-223.

Myers, D. G. (2000). The funds, friends, and faith of happy people. *American Psychologist*, 55, 56-67.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1999). If we are so rich, why aren't we happy? *American Psychologist*, 54, 821-827.

Costa, P.T., McCrae, R. R. & Zonderman, A. B. (1987). Environmental and dispositional influences on well-being. *British Journal of Psychology*, 78, 299-306.

#### *(b) Concepts and measures*

Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57, 1069-1081.

Veenhoven, R. (1994). Is happiness a trait? Tests of the theory that a better society does not make people any happier. *Social Indicators Research*, 32, 101-160.

Mullis, R. J. (1992). Measures of economic well-being as predictors of psychological well-being. *Social Indicators Research*, 26, 119-135.

### ***Internet Resources***

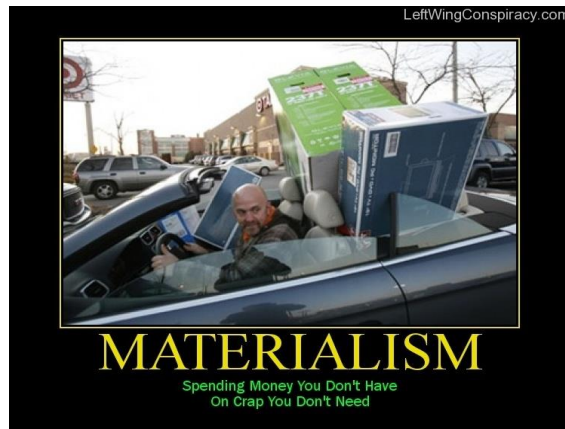
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qSdZPAybf0>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YerOoDL-EeY>

### ***Research Seminar Presentation Titles***

7. Are people living in rich nations happier?
8. Are rich people happier (within the same country)?

## *Materialist Values and Well-Being: Are Materialists Well or Unwell?*



This topic deals with materialistic values, a consumer orientation that places much emphasis on money and material goods, and the psychological benefits that people hope they provide. Conceptualisations differ to some extent, but the three main approaches are Belk's personality trait model, the individual value model proposed by Richins & Dawson (1992), and the financial aspirations perspective by Kasser & Ryan (1993). In contrast to the pervading message in consumer culture that striving for more things and money is good for you, the evidence shows the opposite. There are a large number of studies that document that a stronger materialistic orientation is linked to *lower* well-being. Self-determination theory offers the explanation that the pursuit of goals that depend on external rewards and recognition is not conducive to fulfilling essential psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and close relationships with others. However, there are different ways of thinking about how this link comes about. Recent research has started to question whether materialism is linked to lower-well being per se, and suggests that the negative relationship occurs only under certain conditions (e.g., value conflict, or when people have particular motives for wanting money and material possessions). Other research has examined lower well-being, or insecurity, as a cause of adopting materialistic values, whereas other studies have attempted to show that it is the materialism that leads to lower well-being over time.

### *\*Starred readings*

Dittmar, H., Bond, R., Hurst, M., & Kasser, T. (2014). The relationship between materialism and personal well-being: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 107, 879-924.

Kasser, T. (2016). Materialistic values and goals. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 67, 489-514.

### *Essential readings*

- Kasser et al. (2013). Changes in materialism, changes in well-being: Three longitudinal and one intervention study. *Emotion and Motivation*.
- Kasser, T. & Ryan, R. M. (1993). A dark side of the American dream: Correlates of financial success as a central life aspiration. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65, 410-422. *Study Pack*
- Srivastava, A., Locke, E. A. & Bartol, K. M. (2001). Money and subjective well-being: It's not the money, it's the motives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 959-971. *Study Pack*
- Kasser, T. (2011). Cultural values and the well-being of future generations: A cross-national study. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 42, 206-215.
- Garðarsdóttir, R. B., Janković, J., & Dittmar, H. (2008). Is this as good as it gets? Materialistic values and well-being, in H. Dittmar, *Consumer society, identity, and well-being: The search for the 'good life' and the 'body perfect'* (pp. 71-94). European Monographs in Social Psychology Series (Ed., Rupert Brown). London & New York: Psychology Press.

### *Additional reading*

#### *(a) Definition, measurement, and correlates of materialism*

- Belk, R. W. (1984) Materialism: Trait aspects of living in the material world. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 12, 265-280.
- Kasser, T. (2002). *The high price of materialism*. Cambridge, MA: MIT. Chapter 2 discusses the main relevant scales that measure materialism.
- Richins, M. & Dawson, S. (1992). Materialism as a consumer value: Measure development and validation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19, 303-316.
- Richins, M. (2004). The material values scale: Measurement properties and development of a short form. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31, 209-219.
- Dittmar, H. & Pepper, L. (1994). To have is to be: Materialism and person perception in working-class and middle-class British adolescents. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 15, 233-251.
- Dittmar, H. (1992). Perceived material wealth and first impressions. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 31, 361-379.
- Christopher, A. N. & Schlenker, B. (2000). The impact of perceived material wealth and perceiver personality on first impressions. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 21, 1-19.

*(b) Materialism linked to lower well-being*

Kasser, T. & Ahuvia, A. (2002). Materialistic values and well-being in business students. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 32, 137-146.

Kasser, T. (2002). *The high price of materialism*. Cambridge, MA: MIT. Particularly Chapters 4-6 on "Insecurity", "Fragile Self-Worth", and "Poor Relationships".

Kasser, T., & Ryan, R. M. (1996). Further examining the American dream: Differential correlates of intrinsic and extrinsic goals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 22(3), 280-287.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55, 68-78.

Schmuck, P., Kasser, T., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic goals: Their structure and relationship to well-being in German and US college students. *Social Indicators Research*, 50, 225-241.

Ryan, R. M., Chirkov, V., Little, T. D., Sheldon, K. M., Timoshina, E. & Deci, E. L. (1999). The American dream in Russia: Extrinsic aspirations and well-being in two cultures. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25, 1509-1524 .

*(c) Refinements to the link between materialism and lower well-being*

Burroughs, J. E., & Rindfleisch, A. (2002). Materialism and well-being: A conflicting values perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29, 348-370.

Sheldon, K. M., Ryan, R. M., Deci, E. L., & Kasser, T. (2004). The independent effects of goal contents and motives on well-being: It's both what you do *and* why you do it. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30, 475-486.

Garðarsdóttir, R.B., Aspinall, C., & Dittmar, H. (2009). It's not the money, it's the quest for a happier self: The role of happiness and success motives in the link between financial goal importance and subjective well-being. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 28, 1100-1126.

Kasser, T. & Sheldon, K. M. (2000). Of wealth and death: Materialism, mortality salience, and consumption behavior. *Psychological Science*, 11, 352-355.

Sheldon, K.M., & Kasser, T. (2008). Psychological threat and extrinsic goal striving. *Motivation and Emotion*, 32, 37-45.

*Internet resources*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXynrsrTKbl>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2vySQa34fA>

*Research Seminar Presentation Titles*

9. Can a materialist value orientation lead to lower personal well-being?
10. Do individuals use a materialist value orientation as a coping strategy to deal with low well-being (such as insecurity or negative emotion)?



## *Consumer Choice and Satisfaction: Is more more or is less more?*



*“When people have no choice, life is almost unbearable. As the number of available choices increases, as it has in our consumer culture, the autonomy, control, and liberation this variety brings are powerful and positive. But as the number of choices keeps growing, negative aspects of having a multitude of options begin to appear. As the number of choices grows further, the negatives escalate until we become overloaded. At this point, choice no longer liberates, but debilitates. It might even be said to tyrannise”*  
(Barry Schwartz, 2004, p. 2)

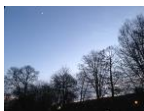
Do you agree?



### *Starred readings*

Iyengar, S. S., & Lepper, M.R. (2000). When choice is demotivating: Can one desire too much of a good thing? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79, 995-1006.

Chernev, A., Böckenholt, U., & Goodman, J. (2015). Choice overload: A conceptual review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 25(2), 333-358.



### *Essential readings*

Schwartz, B. (2004). *The Paradox of Choice: Why less is more*. New York: Ecco.

Shah, A. M., & Wolford, G., (2007). Buying behaviour as a function of parametric variation of number of choices. *Psychological Science*, 16, 369-370.

Schwartz, B., Ward, A., Monterosso, J., Lyubomirsky, S., White, K. et al., (2002). Maximising versus satisficing: Happiness is a matter of choice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 1178-1197.

Markus, H. R., & Schwartz, B. (2010). Does choice mean freedom and well-being? *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37, 344-355

Scheibehenne, B., Greifeneder, R., & Todd, P. M. (2010). Can there ever be too many options? A meta-analytic review of choice overload. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37, 409-425.

### *Internet resources*

<http://www.usabilitycounts.com/2012/07/01/ted-barry-schwartz-on-the-paradox-of-choice/>

### Research Seminar Presentation Titles

11. Is there an optimal number of choices when consumers make decisions?
12. What are the psychological processes through which too much choice leads to poorer decision-making and consumer satisfaction?

## *Gender and Sex in Advertising: Entrapment or Liberation?*

The literature in advertising in psychology, consumer behaviour and marketing is large and addresses a diversity of issues. A major distinction can be drawn between research that is concerned with the direct effects of advertising, examining factors that increase its persuasiveness and ultimately sales, on the one hand, and indirect effects on the other, where the interest lies in investigating the psychological impact of advertising on people's beliefs and identity. By necessity, this topic has to be selective. It addresses a particular area of psychological and social psychological work on 'side effects' of advertising: stereotyping. The concern is that the content of advertising messages may not only reflect stereotypes, but play a causal role in perpetuating such stereotypes, i.e. causing people to think or behave in stereotypical ways. The largest body of empirical work deals with gender stereotypes, but there is also some work on race and aging.

### *\*Starred readings*

Jennings, J., Geis, F. L. & Brown, V. (1980). Influence of television commercials on women's self-confidence and independent judgement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 38, 203-210.

Ey, L.-A. (2016). Sexualised music media and children's gender role and self identity development: A four-phase study. *Sex Education*, 16, 634-648.

### *Essential reading*

Nathanson, A. I., Wilson, B. J., McGee, J., & Sebastian, M (2002). Counteracting the effects of female stereotypes on television via active mediation. *Journal of Communication*, 52, 922-937.

Hurtz, W. & Durkin, K. (2004). The effects of gender-stereotyped radio commercials. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 34, 1974-1992.

Starr, C., & Ferguson, G., (2012). Sexy dolls, sexy grade schoolers? Media and maternal influences on young girls' self-sexualization. *Sex Roles*, 67, 463-476.

Tsaliki, L. (2015). Popular culture and moral panics about 'children at risk': Revisiting the sexualisation-of-young-girls debate. *Sex Education*, 15, 500-514.

### *Additional reading*

(a) *Content analyses of gender stereotypes in advertising*

Livingstone, S. & Green, G. (1986). Television advertisements and the portrayal of gender. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 25, 149-154.

Allan, K. & Coltrane, S. (1996). Gender display in television commercials: A comparative study of television commercials in the 1950s and the 1980s. *Sex Roles*, 3-4, 185-201.

Goffman, E. (1979). *Gender Advertisements*. London: McMillan.

Kang, M. E. (1997). The portrayal of women's images in magazine advertisements: Goffman's gender analysis revisited. *Sex Roles*, 37, 979-996.

Advertising Standards Authority (1990). *Herself Reappraised: The Treatment of Women in Advertising*. London: The Authority.

*(b) Advertising exposure experiments and research relevant to perpetuation argument*

Ambady, N., Paik, S. K., Steele, J., Owen-Smith, A., Mitchell, J. P. (2004). Deflecting negative self-relevant stereotype activation: The effects of individuation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 40, 401-408.

Coltrane, S. & Adams, M. (1997). Work-family imagery and gender stereotypes: Television and the reproduction of difference. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 50, 323-347.

Ward, L. M., Hansbrough, E., & Walker, E. (2005). Contributions of music video exposure to black adolescents' gender and sexual schemas. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 20, 143-166.

Courtney, A. E. & Whipple, T. W. (1983). *Sex Stereotyping in Advertising*. Lexington, MA: Heath.

Garst, J. & Bodenhausen, G. V. (1997). Advertising's effects on men's gender role attitudes. *Sex Roles*, 36, 551-572.

Jaffe, L. J. & Berger, P. D. (1994). The effect of modern female sex role portrayals on advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 34, 32-42.

*(c) Race Stereotypes*

Rivadeneyra, R. (2006). Do you see what I see? Latino adolescents' perceptions of the images on television. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 21, 393-414.

Mastro, D. E., Tamborini, R. Hullett, C. R. (2005). Linking media to prototype activation and subsequent celebrity attraction: an application of self-categorization theory. *Communication Research*, 32, 323-348.

## Internet resources

Smith, C. Review of Papadopoulos, L. (2010). Sexualisation of Young People Review. London: Home Office Publication. Available at [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/Sexualisation-young-people](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/Sexualisation-young-people).

## Research Seminar Presentation Titles

13. Can adverts perpetuate gender stereotypes?
14. What is the psychological impact of sexualisation in advertising?

## Body Perfect Ideals in Advertising: Does Size Really Matter?



A different debate, also concerned with the potentially damaging effects of advertising on us, focuses on the 'body perfect' ideals represented by advertising and media models as a cause of body dissatisfaction and disordered eating. The 'body perfect' ideal for women is ultra-thin, with media models typically underweight. There is a growing body of evidence that ultra-thin media models make many women feel bad about their own body, although there are some reverse findings. It also appears that the use of models with a healthy, average body weight not only avoids making women feel bad, they also do not seem to compromise advertising effectiveness. The recent Dove campaign (see above) is the first, and interesting, example of such a backlash against the 'cult of the skinny'.

Although the concern with body image has mainly focused on girls and women, there is recent evidence that negative exposure effects also occur in men, where idealised muscular media models cause greater body anxiety and body dissatisfaction. Recent research has started to focus on the psychological processes through which women and men may come to feel bad about their own bodies after exposure to 'body perfect' advertising.

### *\*Starred reading*

Halliwell, E., & Dittmar, H. (2008). Does size matter? The impact of ultra-thin media models on women's body image and on advertising effectiveness. In H. Dittmar, *Consumer Culture, Identity and Well-Being* (pp. 121-146) East Sussex & New York: Psychology Press. *Study pack*.

Hurst, M., Dittmar, H., Halliwell, E., & Diedrichs, P.C. (2016). Does size matter? Media influences and body image. In C. Jansson-Boyd & M. Zawiska (Eds), *International Handbook of Consumer Psychology*. Taylor and Francis.

*Essential reading*

- Grabe, S., Ward, L. M., & Hyde, J. S. (2008). The role of the media in body image concerns among women: A meta-analysis of experimental and correlational studies. *Psychological Bulletin*, 134, 460-476.
- Dittmar, H. (2009). How Do 'Body Perfect' Ideals in the Media have a Negative Impact on Body Image and Behaviors? Factors and Processes Related to Self and Identity. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, special issue on Media, Body Image and Eating Behaviors.
- Ferguson, C. J. (2013). In the eye of the beholder: Thin-ideal media affects some, but not most, viewers in a meta-analytic review of body dissatisfaction in women and men. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 2, 20-37.
- Brown, A. & Dittmar, H. (2005). Think 'thin' and feel bad: The role of appearance schema activation, attention level, and thin-ideal internalisation for young women's responses to ultra-thin media ideals. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 24, 1088-1113.
- Want, S. C. (2009). Meta-analytic moderators of experimental exposure to media portrayals of women on female appearance satisfaction: Social comparisons as automatic processes. *Body Image*, 6, 257-269.

*Additional reading**(a) Research or overviews documenting a negative impact*

- Levine, M.P. & Harrison, K. (2004). The role of mass media in the perpetuation and prevention of negative body image and disordered eating. In J.K. Thompson (Ed). *Handbook of eating disorders & Obesity* (pp. 695-717). New York: John Wiley.
- Stice, E., Schupak-Neuberg, E., Shaw, H.E., & Stein, R.I. (1994). Relation of media exposure to eating disorder symptomatology: An examination of mediating mechanisms. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 103(4), 836-840.
- Groesz, L.M., Levine, M.P., & Murnen, S.K. (2002). The effect of experimental presentation of thin media images on body dissatisfaction: A meta-analytic review. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 31, 1-16.
- Kilbourne, J. (1994). Still killing us softly: Advertising and the obsession with thinness. In P. Fallon, M.A. Katzman, & S.C. Wooley (Eds.). *Feminist perspectives on eating disorders*, 395-418. New York: Aronson.
- Grogan, S. (2007). *Body Image: Understanding Body Dissatisfaction in Men, Women and Children*. London: Routledge. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Chapter on media effects.

*(b) Studies challenging or qualifying negative impact*

- Mills, J.S., Polivy, J., Herman, P., & Tiggemann, M. (2002). Effects of exposure to thin media images: Evidence of self-enhancement among restrained eaters. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29, 12, 1687-1699.
- Joshi, R., Herman, C. P., & Polivy, J. (2004). Self-enhancing effects of exposure to thin body images. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 35, 333-341.
- Harrison, K. (2001). Ourselves, our bodies: Thin-ideal media, self-discrepancies, and eating disorder symptomatology in adolescents. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 20, 289-323.
- Dittmar, H. & Howard, S. (2004b). Professional hazards? The impact of model's body size on advertising effectiveness and women's body-focused anxiety in professions that do and do not emphasize the cultural ideal of thinness. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 43, 1-33.
- Yamamiya, Y., Cash, T. F., Melnyk, S. E., Posavac, H. D., & Posavac, S. S. (2005). Women's exposure to thin-and-beautiful media images: Body image effects of media-ideal internalization and impact-reduction interventions. *Body Image*, 2, 74-80.

(c) *Male body image*

- Barlett, C. P., Vowels, C. L., & Saucier, D. A. (2008). Meta-analyses of the effects of media images on men's body image concerns. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 27, 279-310.
- Blond, A. (2008). Impacts of exposure to images of ideal bodies on male body dissatisfaction: A review. *Body Image*, 5, 244-250.
- Agliata, D., & Tantleff-Dunn, S. (2004). The impact of media exposure on males' body image. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 23, 7-22.
- Cafri, G., Thompson, J. K., Ricciardelli, L., McCabe, M., Smolak, L., & Yesalis, C. (2005). Pursuit of the muscular ideal: Physical and psychological consequences and putative risk factors. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 25, 215-239.
- Rohlinger, D. A. (2002). Eroticizing men: Cultural influences on advertising and male objectification. *Sex Roles*, 46, 61-74.
- Leit, R. A., Gray, J. J., & Pope, H. G. (2002). The media's representation of the ideal male body: A cause of muscle dysmorphia? *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 31, 334-338.
- Lorenzen, L. A., Grieve, F. G., & Thomas, A. (2004). Exposure to muscular male models decreases men's body satisfaction. *Sex Roles*, 51, 743-748.

Internet Resources

- <http://campaignforbodyconfidence.wordpress.com/>
- [http://www.channel4learning.com/sites/lifestuff/content/up\\_close/body\\_positive.html](http://www.channel4learning.com/sites/lifestuff/content/up_close/body_positive.html)



### Research Seminar Presentation Titles

15. Is everybody equally vulnerable to media body ideals having a negative impact on their body image?
16. What are the psychological processes through which media body ideals lead to lower body image?

## *Children and Consumer Culture: Who is 'Cool' and Who is 'Beautiful'?*



We live in a world where consumerism and a 'throw-away' mentality are growing, while planetary resources are dangerously depleting. Moreover, consumers of fashionable brands, the latest gadgets, and the coolest looks are getting ever younger. Thus, the powerful impact of consumer culture on children needs addressing, if we want to support their well-being.

### *\*Starred readings*

### Essential readings

- Ku, L., Dittmar, H., & Banerjee, R. (2014). To have or to learn? The impact of materialism on learning in British and Chinese children's learning. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 106, 803-821. doi: 10.1037/a0036038
- Dittmar, H., Bond, R., Hammond, A., Ewers, H., & Bjarnadottir, A. (under editorial review). Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the thinnest of them all? The impact of Disney princess characters on young girls' body image. *American Psychologist*.
- Chaplin, L. N., & John, D. R. (2007). Growing up in a material world: Age differences in materialism in children and adolescents. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 34, 480-493.

### Additional readings

#### *(a) Development of materialism*

Banerjee, R. & Dittmar, H. (2008). Individual differences in children's materialism: The role of peer relations. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34, 17-31.

Banerjee, R. & Dittmar, H. (2008). What is beautiful and who is 'cool'? Consumer culture and socialisation. In H. Dittmar, *Consumer culture, identity, and well-being* (pp. 173-198). East Sussex: Psychology Press.

Easterbrook, M., Wright, M., Dittmar, H., & Banerjee, R., (2014). Consumer culture ideals, extrinsic motivation, and well-being in children. *European Journal of Social Psychology*.

Kasser, T., Ryan, R. M., Zax, M. & Sameroff, A. J. (1995). The relations of maternal and social environments to late adolescents' materialistic and prosocial aspirations. *Developmental Psychology*, 31, 907-914.

*(b) Development of appearance ideals*

Dittmar, H., Halliwell, E., & Ive, S. (2006). Does Barbie make girls want to be thin? The effect of experimental exposure to images of dolls on the body image of 5-8-year-old girls. *Developmental Psychology*, 42, 283-292.

Internet Resources

[www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/consumercultureproject/](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/consumercultureproject/)

Research Seminar Presentation Titles

17. What are the links between materialism and well-being in children?
18. How do children respond to consumer culture ideals of the perfect body?