

THREE ESSAYS ON VINTAGE PRODUCTS AND
SECOND-HAND RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS

Aaron Schibik

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APPROVED:

Nancy Spears, Co-Committee Chair
David Strutton, Co-Committee Chair
Kenneth Thompson, Committee Member
Jeffery Ogden, Chair of the Department of
Marketing, Logistics, and Operations
Management
Marilyn Wiley, Dean of the G. Brint Ryan
College of Business
Victor Prybutok, Dean of the Toulouse
Graduate School

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Now more than ever, consumers are deciding to forgo modern products and are buying vintage instead. Yet, despite the growing importance of vintage products in the consumer marketplace, research investigating why consumers buy old, often outdated products remains limited. Research that examines customer shopping behavior in second-hand retail markets, where vintage products are bought and sold, is similarly rare. What drives consumers to buy vintage products? What factors influence customer-shopping behavior at second-hand retailers? This three-paper dissertation addresses these gaps by developing better and more actionable insights into why some consumers purchase vintage items. Furthermore, this three-paper dissertation looks to explain customer-shopping behavior and drives consumers to make a purchase at second-hand retail establishments.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation features three essays. The first, “What Makes a Product Vintage? Investigating Relationships between ‘Consumer Pastness,’ Scarcity, and Purchase Intentions toward Vintage Products,” examines why consumers purchase old products. Specifically, this research proposes that vintage products provide value to consumers simply because they come from another era. In this essay, researchers compare vintage products to archeological artifacts. Like archeological artifacts, vintage products feature imbued traces “of the past” that causes individuals to perceive that an object is from a bygone age. This research suggests that consumers purchase vintage products because they provoke strong feelings “of the past”—hereafter, defined as consumer pastness- which leads them to perceive that vintage products are scarcer and thus more valuable than comparable new and second-hand products. After developing a scale for consumer pastness, researchers propose and find support for their hypothesis across multiple studies.

Essay 2, titled “Organized Chaos and the Thrill of the Hunt,” investigates spatial crowding, or the perceptions of space available to shoppers in a store, in second-hand retailers. While spatial crowding generally has a negative effect on customer outcomes, this research purposes that spatial crowding effects consumers differently in second-hand stores. One thousand one hundred fifty-two customer reviews of second-hand retailers and three experiments provide evidence that: (1) even though treasure hunting is essentially the same for both searchers and browsers, a browsing goal suppresses purchase intentions in a crowded second-hand retailer, while a searching goal increases purchase intentions; (2) the suppression effect of a browsing goal on purchase intentions can be overcome with purposeful merchandise displays that bring structure to an open-ended shopping approach, while random displays lead to lower purchase

intentions; and (3) a treasure hunting mentality provides a viable mediating explanation for the observed effects of the browsing goal.

Finally, Essay 3, titled “What is Art? Vintage Products as Display Pieces,” investigates vintage products as works of art. Extending the art infusion effect purposed by Hagtvedt and Patrick (2008), this research shows that using vintage products as works of art can lead to higher product evaluations for other products promoted with the vintage product. More specifically, this research theorizes that consumers attitudes towards vintage products spill over to neighboring products promoted with it, leading to more favorable product evaluations for the promoted product. Additionally, this research also shows that this effect does not occur if there is not a good perceived fit between the vintage product and the promoted product. Three experiments demonstrate these effects.

ESSAY 1

WHAT MAKES A PRODUCT VINTAGE? INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN “CONSUMER PASTNESS,” SCARCITY, AND PURCHASING INTENTIONS TOWARD VINTAGE PRODUCTS

Introduction

What makes products vintage? The English word “vintage” originated from the medieval French use of the word *vendage* to designate a branded wine’s year of birth and production locale. Then and now, marketers’ decisions to position the vintage of wines facilitated the ability and propensity of consumers to establish connections from the past to their contemporary consumption experiences. Decisions to position wines based on vintage enhanced consumers’ enjoyment and their status. The value that consumers accrued when purchasing, drinking or “displaying” particular vintages was consequently enhanced as well. These desirable vintage-induced outcomes may have been coincidental, serendipitous, fundamentally unmanaged; the historical record remains unclear. No reason exists, however, to assume the potential power and value that might be derived from “managing vintage” should remain unexamined or untapped by contemporary marketers who might leverage the process.

Marketing academics define vintage products as previously owned products made during earlier eras (Sarial-Abi et al., 2017). Consumers are increasingly buying vintage (Thredup, 2020). Indeed, the buying and selling of vintage products may be “changing the consumption landscape” (Duffy et al., 2012, p. 519). The claim is bold but well-grounded. Consumers now routinely purchase vintage products from categories such as antiques (Belk, 1990; 1991), automobiles (Gabbott, 1991), collectibles (Pearce, 1995), fashion goods (Cervellon et al., 2012; McColl, et al, 2013), and vinyl records (Chivers Yochim and Biddinger, 2008; Goulding and

Derbaix, 2019), among other product categories.

If vintage products genuinely are changing the consumption landscape, now is an appropriate time to study vintage consumption. Realistically, as vintage products grow in desirability and circulate more-freely throughout second-hand markets, more consumers may purchase vintage products (Thredup, 2018; Thredup, 2020). When more consumers buy and use vintage products, those items' useful lives are extended. Conventional retailers' revenues may drop as second-hand retailers, the typical purveyors of vintage products, benefit (Guiot and Roux, 2010).

When vintage products satisfy consumer needs consumer demand for newer alternatives declines. Avoiding the new in favor of the old contravenes conventional marketing wisdom insofar as consumers generally ascribe higher value to newer products (Coskuner-Balli and Sandikci, 2014; Dinnin, 2009). Recognizing this, marketers routinely attempt to sell products by saying they are "new and improved." Yet, by definition, vintage products are neither new nor improved. In fact, vintage products are often functionally inferior to newer alternatives - typewriters versus computer keyboards, for example. Despite their practically inferior status, many consumers prefer vintage rather than newer products (DeLong et al., 2005).

This study's goal is to develop actionable marketing insights regarding why consumers might elect to purchase vintage products. To accomplish this goal, this study introduces a new concept, known as *pastness*, to the marketing literature. The construct was originally developed inside the archeological discipline. When applied inside marketing contexts, pastness suggests consumers purchase vintage products because they perceive that vintage items contain perceptible traces of the past (Holtorf, 2013; 2017). These hints of the past may add value to vintage products and make them more desirable. Their possession of pastness also may

theoretically and practically distinguish vintage items from other types of second-hand goods. This study proposes that as consumers perceive given products are characterized by higher pastness those specific products will be viewed as scarcer, more desirable, and more valuable than – as theoretically and practically distinct from - new or second-hand versions of the same product.

Three studies were conducted to test this proposition. A pilot study utilizing word association tasks develops preliminary evidence that consumers perceive vintage products contain perceptible traces of the past while second-hand products do not. Study 1 confirms initial hypothesized effects in which consumers perceive vintage products contain higher levels of pastness and are scarcer than equivalent new products. A scale was developed that captured three distinct dimensions that comprise pastness to test these effects. Study 1 also demonstrates that the presence of pastness and scarcity increases purchasing intentions. Study 2 reveals how any differences between vintage and second-hand products can be minimized by increasing consumer perceptions of pastness for second-hand products. Second-hand products' production history and narrative lineage were highlighted for this purpose.

Literature Review

Vintage Products and Scarcity

Consumers have demonstrated renewed interests in old or retro products and brands (Brown et al., 2003). Some retailers have capitalized on this nostalgic wave by making their products and retail spaces appear as old as possible while seeking to capture the mystique of the past (Hamilton and Wagner, 2014; McColl et al., 2018). Despite this renewed fascination with products and brands from the past, research on genuinely old vintage products has lagged. While studies have occasionally examined why consumers buy vintage items (e.g., Sarial-Abe et al.,

2017), research has typically concentrated on vintage fashion (Cervellon et al., 2012; McColl et al., 2013; Orlean, 2019; Thredup, 2018; 2020).

While limited, previous research has sought to identify the factors that explain why consumers purchase vintage products. Among the factors identified are consumers' needs or desires for uniqueness (Tian et al., 2001), bygone eras (Belk, 1990; Holbrook, 1993), self-expression, more environmentally sustainable behaviors, and engagement with product categories (Cervellon et al., 2012). As noted, studies typically focused on apparel product categories. However, certain motives associated with the immediately-preceding factors might apply to other vintage product categories. The desire to be more environmentally sustainable, for example, comes to mind. However, other motives remain specific to the buying and selling of products consumed conspicuously (e.g., vintage fashion). Most vintage research addresses how consumers express themselves to targeted audiences, including audiences of one (themselves). Buying vintage clothing, for example, satisfies some consumers' desire to feel unique because they are wearing items that others cannot acquire off contemporary racks (Cervellon et al., 2012; Turunen et al., 2015). The desire to feel unique or more attractive might motivate consumers to purchase vintage clothing and other conspicuous items such as vintage automobiles. But a desire to demonstrate uniqueness fails to explain why consumers purchase socially less-conspicuous vintage products such as furniture, antiques, vinyl records, books, toys, or video games.

The reasons why consumers buy vintage items are many and varied. Yet one point is clear: consumers perceive vintage products as different from modern everyday products. A deeper look inside how consumers acquire vintage products may reveal how special they are inside some consumers' minds. Consumers typically cannot buy vintage products at traditional or virtual big-box retailers. Most retailers that sell vintage items are second-hand stores or non-

traditional retail outlets operating inside second-hand markets (Guiot and Roux, 2010; Padmavathy et al., 2019; Roux and Guiot, 2008). To acquire vintage items, consumers must visit non-traditional settings that feature the “more experiential” consumption experiences that typically accompany the prospect that desirable vintage products are available (Belk et al., 1988; Pine and Gilmore, 1998). This retailer portfolio includes flea markets (Sherry, 1990a; Sherry, 1990b; Maisel, 1974), thrift stores (Bardhi and Arnould, 2005), swap meets (Belk et al., 1988), garage sales (Herrman, 1995; Herrman and Soiffer, 1984; Soiffer and Herrman, 1987), auctions (Palmer and Forsyth, 2006), or locally-owned boutiques (McColl et al., 2012; 2018).

Two ways exist for consumers to acquire vintage products. First, consumers can buy new products and retain/use them for extended periods. Second, consumers can buy products second-hand inside non-traditional consumption settings. Either way, the acquisition of desirable vintage products likely challenges consumers. That because purchasers, either original owners or actual users [or both], must keep items long enough for them to achieve their coveted status as vintage (Brough and Isaac, 2012; Price et al., 2000). Because many vintage products are heirlooms, sacred possessions, or extensions of consumers, their owners/users are often loathe to part with them (Belk, 1988; 1990, Belk et al., 1989). When retailers categorize products as vintage, they purposefully segregate/separate the items from common, everyday goods and other second-hand products inside consumers’ minds (Sarial-Abe et al., 2017; Maisel, 1974). Vintage products often exist as special, exalted items that merit respect from both buyers and sellers.

Given their special status, consumers and retailers often have difficulty determining the value of these artifacts. When attempting to determine the value of products encountered for the first time, consumers often compare “new” products to their existing knowledge base and shape subsequent opinions based on what they already knew or perceived to be true (Cialdini et al.,

1981; Greenwald, 1968). However, consumers often have limited knowledge about vintage products. How much do average consumers know about 1950s-era art deco furniture or classic American muscle cars, for example? Unless consumers are experts about specific brands (e.g., 1965 Mustangs) or product categories (e.g., classic cars), they likely possess little information. Consumer judgements of vintage products are often fragmented and based on less-than-ideal information.

Even when consumers possess less-than-ideal information, they still must use whatever insights are available to construct beliefs or opinions. During initial encounters with vintage items, consumers may access their existing knowledge by conjuring-forth the last time they “experienced” the vintage product in question. Depending on product type, it is unlikely that consumers frequently experience vintage items. Vintage products are usually sold by the sort of non-traditional retailers that few consumers visit. Moreover, because vintage products are often treasured by prior owners, consumers might not routinely encounter high-demand vintage items even if they routinely visit non-traditional retailers (Brough and Isaac, 2012; Price et al., 2000).

Vintage products are scarcer than contemporary products. After all, products never achieve vintage status unless someone has retained them for extended periods. Moreover, even when their owners handle products carefully, intending to keep them “forever,” products deteriorate over time either through use or natural decay. Vintage products have necessarily withstood the test of time and avoided acute deterioration that often occurs with consumer goods before items can be positioned as vintage in the present (Sarial-Abe et al., 2017). Most consumers dispose products long before they can earn vintage status because the items no longer deliver sufficient value. These factors make vintage products difficult to acquire in acceptable or working condition at prices that most consumers are willing and able to pay. Relatedly, their

owners or users are often unwilling to part with vintage products because they become sacred possessions (Belk, 1991; Belk et al., 1989).

Scarcity arises wherever demand for products exceeds their supply. Scarcity also arises when supplies of products are limited due to natural or artificial causes, when demand for products are extremely high, or when conditions of high demand and insufficient supply concurrently exist (Gierl and Huettl, 2010; Lynn, 1991).

Consumers often desire products that are perceived as or are actually scarce. Marketers often exploit these naturally-arising desires by promoting “limited quantities available” or artificially constraining supplies of desirable products (Aggarwal et al., 2011; Balachander and Stock, 2009). The desire for scarce products often proves so powerful that consumers compete aggressively to obtain them (Gupta and Gentry, 2016; Kristofferson et al., 2017). The supply of products deemed as vintage naturally grows more limited over time. Individuals are often reluctant to divest vintage items once they acquire them (Belk, 1991; Brough and Isaac, 2012). The presence of limited supplies of vintage products and high demand for certain vintage products implies that situations arise in which more consumers want vintage products than can actually acquire them. This study hypothesizes:

H1: Consumers perceive that vintage products are scarcer than new or second-hand products.

Consumer Pastness

Vintage items simultaneously represent and capture the past, present, and future. Vintage items consequently feature the ability to link consumers to moments in time (Sarial-Abe et al., 2017). This temporal interconnection with vintage items creates meaning by tapping back into “the intangible sense of past that is conveyed through such objects” (Belk, 1991, p. 118).

Consumers may access and leverage these connections to the past to help them overcome

challenging moments in their present-day lives, such as confrontations with reminders of their impending mortality (Sarial-Abi et al., 2017). At a minimum, consumers may determine two things from the presence of such connections. First, that vintage products are old. Second, because they are old and have survived the passing of time to reach this moment, vintage products are scarce (Cervellon et al., 2011). The link between the perceived age of products and perceptions of product scarcity has not been examined. To address this oversight, this study suggests the degree to which consumers perceive that vintage products are scarce relates to their perceptions that vintage products feature temporal associations, meaning that vintage products are often associated with specific eras or points in time.

When objects have value because they feature perceptible traces of age, archeologists and anthropologists (each discipline studies cultural artifacts) assert that objects have *age value* (Riegl, 1982). Humans often ascribe high value to older objects because they are old and embody earlier eras (James, 2015). The concept of age-value as it relates to cultural artifacts is analogous to how the elderly are often valued for their wisdom regardless of their intelligence. Many people believe that age is accompanied by experience and other desirable traits that merit respect and admiration (Cupit, 1998). Older objects may similarly be valued due to the benefits/solutions they delivered in the past and not necessarily for values they can generate now, in the present. Older objects may have value because they are accompanied by legacies worth preserving.

Consumers may determine products' age values based on perceptible product cues that identify items' current condition and age (Riegl, 1982). Such cues could include observable traces of decay that occur due to use or the passage of time. Certain cues, like stamped years of production, are obvious and identify products' exact age without signaling anything about

products' condition (Santana et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2016). Other cues like wear and tear or patina are more subtle. Each factor may confer aged-appearances to products and provide information about their conditions without identifying exactly when products were made (Holtorf, 2017). Such cues help facilitate mental connections to the past in the minds of consumers (Belk, 1991). If noticeable product cues are absent, consumers cannot ascribe age value to products. Instead, consumers must rely on other forms of value related to objects' histories.

Vintage products have historical and cultural biographies that tell stories (Kamleitner et al., 2019; Parsons, 2006). When old objects have value because they remind us of specific significant historical events, those objects have *historical value* (Abdelrahman et al., 2020; Riegl, 1982). Historical value is induced through contagion processes insofar as products that have previous historical associations may revolt or delight consumers – or exercise no effects at all (Morales et al., 2007). Revulsion emerges when consumers' thoughts about products' historical associations are unfavorable. In brief, perceptions about prior historical associations arise that contaminate products in undesirable ways (Argo et al., 2006). However, consumers may relish the thought that particular products feature links to historical circumstances that predate themselves (Kamleitner et al., 2019), especially when objects' histories are personally meaningful to consumers. For example, if someone famous previously owned an item or the item was touched by someone who is attractive, powerful, and/or famous, the product might accrue historical value due to prior associations with those people person (Argo et al., 2008; Newman et al., 2011). Family heirlooms also have historical value because of their historical associations with consumers. However, these types of historical values matter only to individual consumers (Belk, 1991).

While age and historic value explain why individuals find objects appealing, they do not account for the subjective opinions of consumers (Holtorf, 2013; 2017). Age truly is in the eye of the beholder (Mazis et al., 1992). An item that one consumer considers vintage might be viewed by another as junk. Consumers themselves determine when an object is old enough to have age value; physical traces of decay alone are insufficient. As such, determining when something is sufficiently old enough to have age value is difficult because consumers might not perceive that an object is old at all. Additionally, as reproductions and re-releases of old products proliferate throughout markets, ascertaining items' correct age value becomes even more uncertain (Brown et al., 2003). Consumers may assign age values to remakes without realizing that they are not authentic (Holtorf, 2017). But reproductions may still be classified as vintage if consumers perceive them as such. This is especially true of re-released products that were produced during different eras. The need to develop and use more subjective measures of how consumers ascribe value to older objects is both necessary and useful.

Archeological research proposes that more focus on the role played by individual perceptions is necessary when assigning value to old things. In other words, when consumers perceive objects are "of the past" (i.e., embody the past), items may "earn" value in the form of pastness. Pastness captures individuals' beliefs that objects come from earlier eras (Holtorf, 2013; 2017). Holtorf (2013) developed the concept of pastness from Riegl's (1982) concept of age-value to try to explain why people have different individual perceptions when it comes to determining whether or not something has value simply because of its age. Pastness does not rely on proven information. Instead, the subjective nature of pastness permits products that consumers perceive come from other earlier eras to have value even when the items are actually not old. Pastness explains why reproductions of important historical artifacts have value and are

often exhibited in museums even though they are not genuine or original.

The presence of pastness similarly might explain how and why reproductions of old products earn and accrue value, although such items are neither original nor authentic (Brown et al., 2003; Newman and Bloom, 2012). The pastness concept might also explain why some consumers might believe that an item from the 1990s is vintage while others do not. This research suggests consumers perceive that vintage items contain greater levels of pastness than other types of products. This study hypothesized:

H2: Vintage products are perceived to contain more pastness than new or second-hand products.

Pastness is subjective, as noted. But this subjectivity does not diminish the importance of understanding how consumers determine whether certain products contain pastness. Objects contain pastness when their appearance evokes another time (era) through the presence of some combination of material cues, individual expectations, or a meaningful narrative. Material cues are physical traces of wear and tear, disintegration, and decay (Holtorf, 2013). Material cues also might include serial numbers or production dates indicating when and where objects were made (Smith et al., 2016). Material cues, in brief, are tangible signals of the past that objects accumulate with the passage of time. Material cues indicate whether objects have age-value (Reigl, 1982).

But material cues alone are insufficient to demonstrate whether objects contain pastness. The reason is because pastness also incorporates consumers' prior beliefs about vintage objects (Holtorf, 2017). Consumers develop expectations of what specific vintage products should look like. These expectations generally derive from their prior- past-experience with the same items. For example, consumers who lived-out part or all of their twenties during the 1970s should generally understand what styles were popular during that decade (Schindler and Holbrook,

1993). However, consumers need not necessarily have first-hand experience with vintage items to develop expectations about them. Consumers can develop expectations about products through various media that they consume (Knowles, 2015).

For products to contain pastness, they must align with consumers' expectations about the past. The degree to which vintage products feature combinations of qualities (design, materials, colors, etc.) that articulate and resonate with the past and correspond with salient cultural assumptions that contemporary observers harbor about previous eras should mirror the degree to which given products match consumers' expectations of pastness. The more closely that products align with consumers' expectations of pastness, the more likely those same consumers will deem them vintage.

A final criterion for pastness is that objects should tell stories (Holtorf, 2017). Similar to historic value, vintage objects must directly or indirectly "tell" meaningful narratives about their histories. Historical stories link the past and objects' original meanings to the present and objects' contemporary meanings (Sarial-Abe et al., 2017). Informing consumers about products' pasts can increase demand for those products (Kaleitner et al., 2019). Similarly, when objects tell meaningful stories, the comparative affirmative power of those stories should increase or decrease consumers' perceptions of pastness. Objects can tell stories by having meaningful historical connections to important people (Newman et al., 2011) or to consumers themselves (Belk, 1991; Holbrook and Schindler, 1994). However, objects can tell meaningful stories even in the absence of such connections.

The presence of pastness may correct shortfalls associated with the age value concept by accounting for differences in individual perceptions that result in consumers assigning value to objects that feature some but not excessively "old" ages (Holtorf, 2017). Consumer perceptions

of pastness are what make given products vintage, or so we propose. Products cannot be vintage unless consumers perceive that they contain pastness and embody the past. Because few products contain pastness, consumers should believe that products that are of the past are scarcer than products that do not contain pastness. Thus, consumers' perceptions of the presence of pastness should contribute to perceptions that products they deem of the past are also scarce. When consumers encounter scarce products, their preexisting knowledge of and cognitive responses to those objects inform them about the rarity of the product in question. Such perceptions should elevate purchasing intentions.

Vintage products are often perceived as higher in quality than their modern alternatives. These favorable perceptions are driven by beliefs that things were better-built in the past. The appeal of vintage products consequently should increase due to these quality perceptions (Balachander and Stock, 2009). Purchase intentions should also increase for vintage products as opposed to equivalent new or second-hand products because they feature more consumer pastness and are more difficult to find (Chivers Yochim and Biddinger, 2008). This study hypothesized:

H3: Consumer pastness and perceived product scarcity will mediate the relationship between product type and purchase intentions.

Second-hand Products and Consumer Contagion

Differences between vintage products and second-hand products can be evaluated to further affirm the subjective nature of consumer pastness. By definition, vintage products are also second-hand products (Sarial-Abe et al., 2017). Consumers cannot walk into local superstores and buy "brand new" vintage pieces. Consumers can only acquire vintage products directly from others who previously owned the items or indirectly inside non-traditional retail settings (Cervellion et al., 2012). However, while consumers must buy vintage pieces in the

same non-traditional retail outlets where many second-hand or used pieces are sold, consumers do not perceive vintage pieces the same way. Consumers should perceive that vintage products contain deep-seated elements of pastness whereas second-hand products do not. This does not imply that second-hand products do not contain any pastness. Many second-hand products could be classified as vintage inside different consumer contexts (Brown et al., 2003; Cervellion et al., 2012). The difference between the two types of products stems from feelings of consumer contagion induced by prior owners of second-hand items that suppresses consumers' pastness perceptions (Argo et al., 2006). Actions with respect to second-hand products carried out by previous owners somehow may have negatively affected the product; diminishes its prospects for being deemed vintage.

Consumers perceive that vintage products have pasts that make them special (Maisel, 1974). Similar to repurposed products that feature salient past identities, vintage products have pasts that make them more desirable than other types of products when consumers are made aware of those pasts (Kamleitner et al., 2019). However, with second-hand products, consumers usually interpret products' past identities negatively. These negative interpretations may negate or attenuate positive effects of consumer pastness that otherwise might result. This negativity-bias results from consumer decisions to focus on the previous use associated with second-hand items. Consumers may believe that products labeled "second-hand" are contaminated by products' previous owners, which may contribute to feelings of disgust (Argo et al., 2006) and lower purchase intentions (Morales et al., 2007). Consumers are less likely to purchase or rent products when they know previous owners are emotionally attached to them (Graul and Brough, 2020). While marketers logically might try to reassure consumers that second-hand products are "as good as new" or claim that second-hand items have been cleaned thoroughly to help remove

any negative stigma, bringing this type of information to consumers' attention actually may increase feelings of consumer contagion (Ackerman and Hu, 2017).

Vintage products avoid the problems associated with consumer contamination because the passage of time attenuates feelings of contagion (Argo et al., 2006). The perceived pastness of vintage products also makes them more desirable and scarcer in the minds of consumers. Items identified as second-hand are consequently perceived by consumers as less scarce and less desirable than vintage products. Even when two products are identical, second-hand "attributions" may negate any positive outcomes generated by pastness because the labeling reminds consumers of the product's previous owner and use. Marketers typically should seek to increase consumer perceptions of pastness without reminding them about products' previous use and triggering contagion feelings.

Marketers also might achieve similar ends by highlighting the historical lineages associated with second-hand items. Products and brands sometimes feature pedigrees that merit respect and admiration (Brown, 1999; Brown et al., 2003). By focusing on products' connections to the past, marketers can manage second-hand products' narratives, increasing those items' perceived levels of overall pastness. Marketers can manipulate perceived pastness by highlighting the lineage of focal products and by turning attention to products' production histories. Providing background information about products such as when they were originally designed or produced may suffice (Abdelrahman et al., 2020). Or, marketers could assure consumers that second-hand products are faithful representations of the original product design. By managing narratives associated with consumer pastness, marketers can increase consumers' overall perceptions of pastness associated with second-hand items. Associated products' levels of perceived scarcity should increase while the effects of consumer contagion should decrease.

However, including this information should have no effect on vintage products because they are already perceived to contain elements of pastness. Thus, by telling stories about historical lineages associated with second-hand items, the differences in labeling something as vintage or second-hand should attenuate. This study hypothesizes:

H4a: Differences in scarcity perceptions for comparable vintage and second-hand products will be attenuated when consumers are informed about histories associated with second-hand items.

H4b: Differences in pastness perceptions for comparable vintage and second-hand products will be attenuated when consumers are informed about histories associated with second-hand items.

H4c: Differences in contagion perceptions for comparable vintage and second-hand products will be attenuated when consumers are informed about histories associated with second-hand items.

Methodology

Hypotheses were examined through three studies. Study 1, a pilot study, demonstrated that consumers perceive that vintage products contain traces of age while second-hand products do not. Study 2 demonstrated that consumers perceive vintage products are scarcer than equivalent new or second-hand products (H1) and that vintage products feature higher levels of consumer pastness (H2). Study 2 also revealed that pastness and scarcity mediate the relationship between product type and consumer willingness to purchase (H3). Finally, Study 3 was structured to include information about the lineage of second-hand products. The inclusion of this information attenuated any significant differences between vintage and second-hand products (H4).

Study 1 (Pilot Study)

The goal of the pilot study was to show that vintage products have perceptible traces of age. To accomplish this objective, the study asked participants to complete a qualitative word

association task. Word association tasks ask subjects to “list the thought or thoughts they have when they think about a particular word, concept, or idea,” which here were vintage products (Luna and Peracchio, 2002, p 463).

Subjects were asked to “write the first five words that come to mind when I say a product is vintage.” As a comparison point, the instructions asked subjects to “write the first five words that come to mind when I say that a product is second-hand or previously owned.” The study included second-hand products to determine whether perceivable differences existed between two types of similar products. While most, if not all, vintage products are second-hand, research suggests consumers might perceive the two types of products differently (Cervellion et al., 2012; Sarial-Abe et al., 2017).

To mitigate bias caused by the first word association task, the order in which participants first saw either the vintage or the second-hand task was randomized. For vintage products, it was assumed that subjects would focus more on the product’s age because the term vintage draws attention to an object’s past. For second-hand products, it was assumed that participants would focus more on products’ previous owners or use because the term second-hand highlights that an object was previously owned. Thus, this pre-test was designed to illustrate how consumers perceive vintage products and whether differences arose in consumer perceptions of vintage versus second-hand products.

Ninety-four university students (55.3% female) completed the study in exchange for course credit as part of a large group of unrelated studies. Participants read the prompt and completed the word association task by completing five blanks provided directly below the prompt. Since each participant provided five words for both vintage and second-hand products, participants provided 470 words in total.

After subjects completed Study 1, the written results were visually examined to determine whether any telling patterns were present in the subjects' responses. Specifically, each occurrence of a word given by participants was first tabulated. Common responses were then classified together based on revealed themes. The categorized responses were then shared with other academics not involved in the study to determine whether similar themes were identified. The same themes were acknowledged.

One expectation was that subjects would generate substantially more age-related words (e.g., old, classic, retro, historic) than any other characteristic or trait when asked to write descriptive words about products labeled as vintage as opposed to second-hand. The results support this proposal. Subjects listed age-related words 166 times when asked about vintage products. In comparison, participants listed age-related words only 36 times when asked about second-hand products. This result supports the belief that consumers perceive that vintage products are of the past (i.e., contain pastness). This result also supports the belief that products labeled as second-hand are not perceived to contain pastness.

A second expectation was that subjects would generate substantially more use-related words (e.g., used, worn) than any other characteristic or trait when asked to write descriptive words about products labeled as second-hand as opposed to vintage. The results also supported this proposal. Subjects listed words related to use 79 times when mentally referencing second-hand products versus only 15 times when referencing vintage products.

Descriptive words related to hand-me-downs, older siblings, or product contamination (e.g., dirty, smelling of smoke) also appeared for second-hand products but not for vintage products. This observation provides support for the belief that consumers think about previous use more when deliberating second-hand rather than vintage products. This result also provides

preliminary evidence that for second-hand products consumer contagion supersedes consumers' pastness perceptions.

Overall, the pilot study results provided preliminary support for the notion that consumers will perceive that vintage products have noticeable traces of age, differentiating vintage products from other types of products. This tentative finding was developed by comparing consumers' word association task responses about vintage products to consumers' word association responses about second-hand products. Subjects associated more words related to age with vintage as opposed to second-hand products. Subjects likewise associated second-hand products more with words related to previous use, further highlighting differences between two otherwise similar types of products. However, this pilot study was qualitative. These results therefore remain subject to multiple interpretations. Nor did Study 1 investigate purchase intentions or subjects' perceptions of product scarcity. To rectify this shortfall, Study 2 directly investigated the role of both purchase intentions and product scarcity.

Study 2

The goal of Study 2 was to demonstrate that participants perceive vintage products as scarcer (H1) and contain higher levels of consumer pastness (H2) than equivalent new or second-hand products. Study 2 also aims to determine whether consumer pastness and product scarcity makes consumers more willing to purchase vintage items (H3). This was done by manipulating product type (vintage vs. new vs. second-hand) while holding the product constant across conditions.

Procedure

One hundred fifty-nine participants (67 females, $M_{age} = 32.92$ years, $SD = 10.69$) were recruited from Prolific.co to participate in the experiment in exchange for \$1.00. The experiment

used a three-cell design, with product type (vintage vs. new vs. second-hand) as the main predictor.

Prolific.co subjects were invited to partake in a study that sought people's thoughts and opinions about an accent chair. A furniture item was chosen as the focal product in this study for three reasons. First, determining the actual age of furniture from pictures alone is difficult, as a manipulation check confirmed ($F(2, 156) = 37.881, p < .001$). Follow-up post hoc analysis revealed that participants in the vintage condition ($M_{vintage} = 5.63$) perceived that the chair was significantly older than participants in both the new ($M_{new} = 2.74$) and the second-hand ($M_{second-hand} = 3.88$) conditions. The results suggested the study could use the same accent chair across all three conditions. Second, vintage furniture is routinely marketed inside resale market settings. Indeed, furniture stores frequently sell accent chairs like the ones used in the manipulation. Third, furniture is not widely studied in the vintage literature. This study sought to address this deficiency by using a furniture item as the focal product.

After agreeing to contribute, participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions (vintage vs. new vs. second-hand) and shown a photograph of an accent chair. A short vignette was featured underneath the photo. This vignette functioned as the primary manipulation for this experiment. The vignette asked participants to "imagine that you are walking around a store, and you come across an accent chair like the one pictured above." Above the vignette, participants were shown a picture of an accent chair. The vignette then "informed" participants that they were curious about the chair and had "decided to check the tag posted on the chair." In the vintage condition, the tag told participants that the chair "was produced in the mid 1950's, meaning it is a real vintage piece." In the new condition, the tag told participants that the chair was made "sometime this year, meaning it is a brand new piece."

Finally, in the second-hand condition, the label provided no information about when the chair was made but instead informed subjects that the chair “was previously owned by another individual, meaning it is a real second-hand piece.” The vignette then asked participants to (a) imagine themselves examining the chair closely, to (b) visualize all the chair’s features in their mind, and to (c) think about how the chair would feel in their hands for thirty seconds.

Next, after reading the vignette, participants completed a consumer pastness scale developed specifically for this study. Pretests were conducted to develop a reliable measure of consumer pastness based on the three subconstructs identified by Holtorf (2013; 2017). Twenty-four items were developed based on the existing literature. Participants ($n = 241$, 56% female, students from a U.S. university) were exposed to a similar vignette to the one used in Study 2 and were asked to express their overall agreement with the suggested items (1=Strongly Disagree; 7=Strongly Agree). This data were used to check for the factor structure and to purify the scale items. Scale items were subjected to a preliminary principal component analysis. Items failing to load on the proper construct or featuring factor loadings less than 0.3 were deleted. After removing twelve items (four from each subconstruct) the final pastness scale included twelve items with four items in each subconstruct.

The remaining twelve items were subjected to further validation. Two hundred and nine participants (57% Female, $M_{\text{age}} = 38.75$, $SD = 13.49$) were recruited from Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (Mturk) to participate in exchange for monetary compensation. After agreeing to contribute, participants were exposed to the same procedure used previously. The data was first subjected to a principal component analysis. The rotated factor structure, percentage of variance explained, and Cronbach’s alpha were consistent with the previous study. The data was next subjected to CFA (SPSS AMOS 26). Average variance extracted (AVE) and composite

reliabilities (CR) were determined for each subconstruct. All standardized factor loadings (λ) were above 0.5, all values of CR were above 0.75 and the AVEs for all items were above 0.5. The overall fit indices were also acceptable. This information is summarized in Table 1.1 and indicates acceptable levels of internal consistency and validity for this scale.

Table 1.1: CFA Results (n = 209, 57%Female, Mage = 38.75, SD 13.49)

Consumer Pastness (12 items)	Material Cues	Consumer Expectations	Meaningful Narrative
By simply looking at the _____, one can tell it was made in an earlier era.	.84		
The _____ shows physical traces of being from the past.	.82		
The noticeable age of the _____, attracts my attention.	.78		
The _____ ‘speaks’ about a heritage from another time.	.69		
The _____ matches my assessment of what a product from an earlier era should be.		.89	
The _____ aura (impressions or feelings) aligns with my opinions of what a _____ from another time period should project.		.87	
Based on what I know about the past, the _____ captures what products used to look like.		.75	
The product matches my sense of what a _____ should look like from this time period.		.57	
The _____ tells a story.			.89
The _____ tells a well-defined tale.			.87
The _____ demonstrates a series of events unfolded over time.			.85
The _____ links the past to the present.			.71
AVE	.62	.61	.70
CR	.86	.85	.90

CFI Fit Indices: chi-square = 144.525; df = 51; p-value = 0.00; GFI = 0.90; AGFI = 0.84; NFI = 0.91; CFI = 0.94

After completing the consumer pastness scale, participants completed measures designed to estimate their perceptions of product scarcity and their willingness to purchase an item. First, participants indicated how scarce they thought the chair was by completing items that measure

both demand- and supply-side scarcity. The specific items were “the chair is rare; “the chair is scarce;” “the supply of the chair is limited;” “the demand for the chair is high;” “more people want the chair than can actually acquire it; and “only so many units of the chair are available for purchase at any one point in time” (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; $\alpha = .90$; Mukherjee et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2016). Next, participants completed a five-item scale designed to measure consumers’ willingness to purchase an item. The specific items were “the likelihood that I would purchase this chair is high; “if I was interested in buying a chair like this, I would buy this chair; “ “the probability that I would buy this chair is high; “my willingness to buy this chair is high: and “at the price shown, I would buy this chair” (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; $\alpha = .92$; Dodds et al., 1991).

After completing the willingness to purchase scale, participants were asked to respond to a two-item scaled designed to estimate an individual’s current feelings of nostalgia. The two items were “I feel nostalgic at the moment” and “right now, I am having nostalgic feelings” (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; $\alpha = .96$; Wildschut, et al., 2006). A preliminary correlation analysis revealed that nostalgia significantly correlated with willingness to purchase ($r = .545$, $p < .01$), scarcity ($r = .537$, $p < .01$) and consumer pastness ($r = .610$, $p < .01$). On this basis, nostalgia was thereafter treated as a covariate in subsequent analyses. Finally, participants in Study 2 answered several demographic questions.

Results

Validity

Before testing the hypothesized relationships, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using SPSS AMOS 26. Each emergent construct possessed sufficient factor loadings (i.e., all λ were above 0.5). Additionally, CR for each construct exceeded 0.85. The AVE for

each construct exceeded 0.5 and exceeded all the square correlations between all pairs of constructs. Thus, all constructs possessed sufficient convergent and discriminate validity.

Scarcity

Study 2 hypothesized that consumers would perceive that vintage products are scarcer than other types of products (H1). A three-way (vintage vs. new vs. second-hand) ANCOVA was executed to test this hypothesis and control for the effects of nostalgia on scarcity. Scarcity functioned as the dependent variable while nostalgia served as a covariate. The results revealed a main effect for product type ($F(2, 155) = 5.617, p < .01$). This effect held even though nostalgia was significant as a covariate ($(F(1,155) = 51.341, p < .001)$). Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that participants in the vintage condition ($M_{vintage} = 4.62$) perceived that the chair was scarcer than participants in both the new ($M_{new} = 3.42$) and the second-hand ($M_{second-hand} = 3.67$) conditions. The results of this experiment provide support for the first hypothesis.

Consumer Pastness

Study 2 likewise hypothesized that consumers would perceive that vintage products contain higher levels of pastness than other types of products (H2). To control for the effects of nostalgia on consumer pastness, another three-way (vintage vs. new vs. second-hand) ANCOVA was performed wherein pastness functioned as the dependent variable and nostalgia as a covariate. The results revealed a main effect for product type ($F(2, 155) = 6.378, p < .01$). Post hoc comparisons revealed that participants in the vintage condition ($M_{vintage} = 5.00$) perceived the accent chair to contain greater pastness than participants in either the new ($M_{new} = 3.72$) or second-hand conditions ($M_{second-hand} = 3.83$). This effect held even though the nostalgia was significant as a covariate ($(F(1,155) = 76.554, p < .001)$). Overall, the results of this experiment

suggest that consumers perceive that vintage products contain more pastness than either new or second-hand products, providing support for the second hypothesis.

Table 1.2: ANOVA Comparisons for Study 1

Condition	n	Scarcity		Tukey's HSD Comparisons		Pastness		Tukey's HSD Comparisons	
		Mean	SD	Vintage	New	Mean	SD	Vintage	New
Vintage	54	4.62	1.22			5.00	1.14		
New	53	3.42	1.60	< .001		3.72	1.74	< .001	
Second-hand	52	3.67	1.49	< .005	Not Sig.	3.83	1.56	< .001	Not Sig.

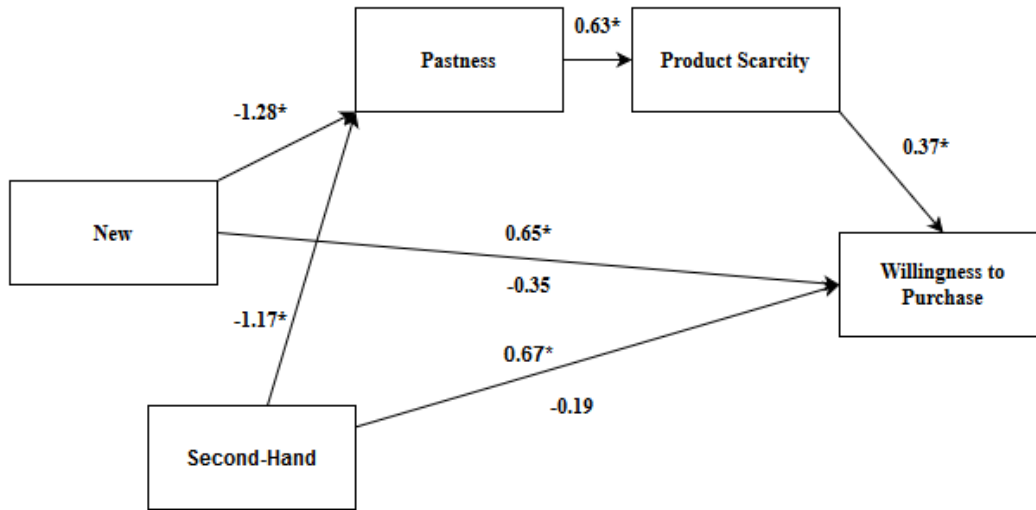
Serial Mediation

Study 2 also sought to test the indirect effects of consumer pastness and perceived scarcity on willingness to purchase. A serial mediation analysis with 10,000 bootstrapped samples (Hayes 2017; PROCESS SPSS macro; model 6) was conducted for this purpose. This analysis used product type as the independent variable, consumer pastness as the first mediator, product scarcity as the second mediator, and purchase intentions as the dependent variable. Researchers followed the procedure outlined by Hayes and Preacher (2014) for statistical mediation with a multicatagorical independent variables. Researchers dummy coded product type, in which two variables were created to compare the “second-hand” and “new” product categories to “vintage.” Vintage was treated as the baseline condition.

Results confirmed a significant indirect effect of product type on consumer willingness to purchase through consumer pastness and product scarcity. In this serial mediation, participants in the new condition were less willing to purchase the product than participants in the vintage condition ($\beta = -.3021$, $SE = .11$, 95% CI: $-.5328$, $-.1203$). In addition, participant in the second-hand condition were also less willing to purchase the product than participants in the vintage condition ($\beta = -.2760$, $SE = .10$, 95% CI: $-.5040$, $-.1047$). Combined with the previous study, the

mediation provides additional support for the third hypothesis.

Figure 1.1: The Effects of Product Type on Willingness to Purchase through Pastness and Scarcity



* $p < .001$. Note: The vintage condition is the baseline condition.

Study 2 Discussion

The results of Study 2 showed that consumers perceive that vintage products are scarcer (H1) and contain higher levels of consumer pastness (H2) than equivalent new and second-hand products. The study also revealed that consumer pastness and product scarcity mediate the relationship between product type and willingness to purchase.

To further test the generalizability of these results Study 2 was replicated using a different product category. One hundred and sixty participants (64 females, Mage = 35.51 years, SD = 10.99) were recruited from Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (Mturk) to participate in the experiment in exchange for \$0.20. The experiment utilized the same design as Study 2. However, participants were asked to share their thoughts and opinions about a tan leather jacket rather than an accent chair. The results were identical to the results of study 2. Participants in the vintage condition ($M_{vintage} = 4.99$) perceived the jacket to be scarcer than participants in both the new ($M_{new} = 4.44$) and the second-hand ($M_{second-hand} = 3.8$) conditions ($F(2, 157) = 14.511, p <$

.001). Participants in the vintage condition ($M_{vintage} = 5.40$) also perceived that the jackets contained greater pastness than participants in the second-hand ($M_{second-hand} = 3.85$) and new ($M_{new} = 5.03$) conditions perceived ($F(2, 157) = 25.439, p < .001$). Taking the results of both studies together, strong supporting evidence suggests that consumers purchase vintage items because they perceive that vintage items are of the past (i.e., contain higher levels of pastness) and are scarcer than other types of products.

However, the current findings don't explain why consumers perceive that vintage items contain more pastness and are scarcer than equivalent second-hand products. Since vintage products by definition are second-hand products, the striking differences between the two product types merits further investigation. The third study attempts to answer these questions by investigating how retailers might eliminate the differences between vintage and second-hand products. Study 3 proposed that by manipulating consumers' feelings of pastness, specifically consumers' expectations of how an object from another era should look, differences in perceptions of vintage and second-hand should attenuate.

Study 3

The goal of Study 3 was to attenuate differences between vintage and second-hand products (H4) by manipulating subjects' perceptions of the historical lineage associated with a second-hand item. To accomplish this task, further evidence of the subjective nature of consumer pastness was manipulated by adding information about the second-hand products' historical lineage to the product description that accompanied the focal product.

Procedure

One hundred ninety-nine participants (113 females, $M_{age} = 32.58$ years, $SD = 10.88$) were recruited from Prolific.co to participate in the experiment in exchange for \$0.80. The experiment

utilized a 2 (Product Type: vintage vs. second-hand) x 2 (lineage information: present vs. absent) between subjects design. Scarcity and contagion functioned as the dependent variables.

Participants on Prolific.co were invited to participate in a study that sought consumers' thoughts about a pair of sunglasses. The sunglasses product category was chosen for reasons similar to those identified in the prior studies (i.e., a unisex fashion item for which determining the year of production is difficult). After agreeing to contribute, participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions and shown a pair of sunglasses. The sunglasses shown in the picture were Ray-Ban Aviator Classics, with all identifying characteristics including the Ray-Ban logo removed from the picture. Aviator sunglasses were selected because they are a popular design marketed since the 1940's that remains popular today.

A short vignette was shown under sunglasses photo. The vignette functioned as the primary manipulation for this experiment. The vignettes utilized in this experiment were similar to those utilized in the Study 2 experiments. However, unlike those prior experiments, participants in the lineage conditions were provided with additional information about the history of the particular type of sunglasses they were evaluating. Specifically, participants were informed that the sunglasses were "originally designed in the 1940's" and that "this style of sunglasses has been a fashion favorite for a long time." The vignette also informed participants, for the first time, that the sunglasses "have a history and are worthy of respect" and that this particular pair of sunglasses is a "perfect representation of the original design created decades ago." The study "presumed" and proposed that highlighting the lineage and representativeness of this pair of sunglasses would increase consumers' perceptions of consumer pastness.

Next, after reading the vignette, participants completed two manipulation checks. The first manipulation check was a single item (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) that asked

participants to what extent they agreed with the following statement: “the sunglasses pictured above were previously owned by someone else.” The second manipulation check was a single item that gathered historical lineage perceptions by asking participants to state their level of agreement with the following statement: “The sunglasses have a prestigious history.” After completing the manipulation checks, participants completed a consumer contagion scale developed by Argo et al., 2006 (“In your opinion, how dirty are the sunglasses?”; “In your opinion, how unsanitary are the sunglasses?,” ($\alpha = .87$). Participants completed the same consumer pastness ($\alpha = .92$) and scarcity ($\alpha = .85$) scales that were previously used and answered demographic questions as they finished the study.

Results

Validity

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted before the hypothesized relationships were tested. Each construct possessed sufficient factor loadings (i.e., all λ exceeded 0.5), except for the item “the sunglasses show physical traces of being from the past” ($\lambda = 0.45$). The CR for all constructs exceeded 0.75. The AVE for each construct exceeded 0.5 except for the material cues subconstruct (AVE = 0.47). The AVE of all constructs exceeded the square correlations between all pairs of constructs. Overall, all constructs possessed acceptable convergent and discriminate validity.

Manipulation Checks

The results generated by the first manipulation check confirmed that participants in the second-hand product condition perceived that the sunglasses were previously owned by another individual to a greater extent than participants in the vintage condition ($F(3, 195) = 16.405, p <$

.001). The results associated with the second manipulation check was also confirmatory. Participants in the historical lineage conditions perceived that the sunglasses had more prestigious history than participants in the non-lineage conditions ($F(3, 194) = 12.895, p < .001$).

Scarcity

This study proposed that participants in the second-hand condition would share similar perceptions of product scarcity with participants in the vintage condition if and when a brief narrative about the history of the product accompanied the product (H4a). An ANOVA with scarcity as the dependent variable was ran to test H4a. The ANOVA results revealed a main effect for product type ($F(3, 195) = 3.514, p < .05$). A follow-up post hoc analysis revealed that participants in the vintage condition ($M_{\text{vintage}} = 4.03$) perceived the pair of sunglasses was more scarce than participants in the second-hand condition ($M_{\text{second-hand}} = 3.20$). This finding supports the previous findings observed in the last study. Moreover, as proposed, the effects of product type on scarcity perceptions were attenuated when the historical lineage information was introduced ($M_{\text{vintage}} = 3.46$ vs. $M_{\text{second-hand}} = 3.70, F(2, 98) = -.873, p = .385$). Thus, participants exposed to the additional information about the history of the product in the second-hand condition were characterized by the same scarcity perceptions as participants in the vintage condition.

Consumer Pastness

H4b predicted that participants in the second-hand condition would have similar perceptions of consumer pastness as participants in the vintage condition if a brief lineage narrative about the history of the product accompanied the product. The results of the ANOVA with consumer pastness as the dependent variable revealed a main effect for product type ($F(3, 195) = 3.515, p < .05$). Supporting our predictions from the previous studies, post hoc analysis

revealed that participants in the vintage condition ($M_{\text{vintage}} = 4.66$) perceived the pair of sunglasses to contain greater pastness than participants in the second-hand condition ($M_{\text{second-hand}} = 3.96$). The expected interaction also emerged ($F(1, 195) = 6.449, p = .012$). Supporting hypothesized results, the effect of product type on pastness perceptions was attenuated when the historical lineage information was introduced ($M_{\text{vintage}} = 4.44$ vs. $M_{\text{second-hand}} = 4.59, F(2, 98) = 0.622, p = .535$). Thus, participants in the second-hand condition had the same pastness perceptions as participants in the vintage condition when information about the history of the product accompanied the second-hand item.

Consumer Contagion

Finally, H4c predicted that information about the history of the focal product would attenuate any negative perceptions of consumer contagion. Results of ANOVA yielded a significant main effect for product type ($F(3, 195) = 4.411, p < .01$). Post hoc analysis revealed that participants in the second-hand condition ($M_{\text{second-hand}} = 3.42$) perceived that the sunglasses were contaminated to a greater extent than participants in the vintage condition ($M_{\text{vintage}} = 2.52$) and both conditions with the lineage information present ($M_{\text{vintage}} = 2.47$ and $M_{\text{second-hand}} = 2.63$). However, the primary focus of H4c was the hypothesized moderating effect of historical lineage information. The hypothesized interaction was significant ($F(1, 195) = 8.073, p < .01$). Participants who received the additional lineage information ($M = 2.63$) did not perceive that the sunglasses were contaminated to the same extent as participants who did not receive this information ($M = 3.42, F(2, 97) = 2.408, p < .05$).

Table 1.3: ANOVA Comparisons for Study 2

Condition	n	Mean	SD	Tukey's HSD Comparisons		
				Vintage	Second-Hand	Lineage V
Scarcity						
Vintage	50	4.03	1.25			
Second-hand	49	3.20	1.30	< .05		
Lineage V	50	3.46	1.35	Not Sig.	Not Sig.	
Lineage SH	50	3.70	1.39	Not Sig.	Not Sig.	Not Sig.
Pastness						
Vintage	50	4.67	1.25			
Second-hand	49	3.96	1.61	< .05		
Lineage V	50	4.44	1.43	Not Sig.	Not Sig.	
Lineage SH	50	4.56	1.68	Not Sig.	< .05	Not Sig.
Contagion						
Vintage	50	2.52	1.25			
Second-hand	49	3.43	1.61	< .05		
Lineage V	50	2.47	1.43	Not Sig.	< .01	
Lineage SH	50	2.63	1.68	Not Sig.	< .05	Not Sig.

Discussion of Study 3

The results of Study 3 demonstrate that including background narratives about second-hand products' historical lineages can increase consumers' perceptions of scarcity and pastness to levels similar to those seen for vintage products. This effect occurs because of lineage information's ability to stimulate consumer pastness. Despite the fact that the second-hand product itself is not stated as being from another time (as was the vintage product), once some information about the product's history was featured consumers perceived that the second-hand product embodied the past to a significantly greater extent than when such information was not provided. Pastness is revealed to exist as a subjective measure that marketers can leverage to achieve positioning promotional advantage as they seek to elevate the desirability of second-hand items.

The provision of additional information about second-hand products' past diminished

negative feelings of consumer contagion. Study 1 demonstrated that consumers perceive second-hand products are contaminated to a greater extent than vintage items. Study 3 demonstrates how marketers can manage consumer pastness to negate such perceptions. Study 3 results offer additional evidence about how consumer pastness influences their product perceptions.

General Discussion

This research was framed by and grounded in the development and integration of a new construct: consumer pastness. Four related hypothesis were investigated. First, that consumers will perceive vintage products as scarcer than other types of products. Second, that perceptions of scarcity are driven by consumers' perceptions that vintage products are "of the past." Third, that consumers perceptions of product scarcity in combination with their sense of given products' pastness can function to increase consumers' desires to acquire vintage products. Fourth, that any differences observed between vintage and second-hand products can be minimized by increasing consumer perceptions of pastness for the second-hand product.

The three studies reported above demonstrate how material product cues, consumer expectations about given products, and the association of meaningful historical narratives associated with given products can be strategically combined to influence consumers' perceptions about vintage products. The experimental results also suggest how the subjective nature of consumer pastness can be managed in ways that make second-hand products appear more desirable.

This study introduces pastness as a prospective concept and construct that provides theoretical and practical value for the consumer decision-making literature. The pastness construct is refined and applied in ways that demonstrate why the designation as "vintage" is subjective and how marketers might leverage the vintage designation's subjectivity to their own

and consumers' advantages. This study provides novel insights into how consumers develop their perceptions of vintage products. Drawing from principles developed inside the archaeological literature, this study generates insight into how subjective interpretations that objects are "of the past" increases the value that consumers ascribe to products. The results uniformly demonstrated across both the furniture and apparel categories that products perceived to manifest pastness are correspondingly perceived as scarcer and more desirable than products that don't feature pastness. Insights were generated into how marketers can create or sustain meaningful differentiation between vintage offerings and other types of products.

This research also provides insight regarding why consumers develop different perceptions when evaluating vintage as opposed to second-hand or new products. Specifically, insights were generated that shed new light onto what makes the vintage designation special, or different in ways that cut through the noise that would typically characterize either the apparel or home furnishing product categories - and presumably other market settings. Vintage product cues apparently matter, greatly, as do consumer expectations and their exposure to appealing narratives about "vintage" items.

Answers to questions about what makes products vintage were subjective in nature; i.e., answers were determined by perceptual interactions between individual products and consumers. However, this research conclusively demonstrates that their perceptions of focal products' pastness help determine whether consumers categorize products as vintage. If consumers perceive objects embody the past and contain pastness they are more likely to deem the products as vintage. These findings further imply that the perceptual designation of pastness may be leveraged to advantage consumers and marketers alike. Consumers may benefit, because they accrue more value from owning and/or using the vintage item. Marketers may benefit, because

another means of successfully positioning/differentiating products is revealed. The subjective nature of pastness was shown to explain why certain consumers designate a given product as vintage while other consumers do not.

However, pastness is not exclusive to vintage products. In consumer settings, pastness is present in all objects that embody the past (Holtorf, 2013). As such, products such as reproductions (Brown et al., 2003), products that have meaningful past identities (Kamleitner et al., 2019) or are connected to someone important from the past (Newman et al., 2011) all contain pastness. Second-hand products can also contain pastness. However, consumer beliefs that second-hand products are contaminated by their previous owners can reduce the positive effects of pastness, as demonstrated. These findings likewise suggest marketers can manage the effects of consumer pastness by informing consumers about the historical lineage associated with the product. By managing consumer expectations in this manner, marketers can increase consumers' beliefs that products embody the past and thus those individuals' perceptions of pastness. Marketers consequently enjoy opportunities to augment second-hand products' overall desirability by elevating consumers' perceptions that said products contain pastness (Holtorf, 2017; James, 2015).

Despite these findings, more research needs to be done on the nature, scope, and potential effects of consumer pastness. Specifically, researchers should seek to uncover and validate additional methods through which marketers can increase perceptions of pastness. While this research identified one positioning tactic (i.e., linking products' histories to focal products), additional methods for increasing consumer pastness may exist. One method that might increase perceptions of consumer pastness entails linking consumers' feelings of pastness that may be associated with a person (e.g., a celebrity) to unrelated consumer products (Newman et al.,

2011). Consider, for example, the long-deceased 1960s-era rock hero Jimi Hendrix and his still well-known association with the Fender guitar brand name. Consumers' feelings of connection with the Hendrix brand might transfer to branded products not directly connected to the rock star and increase the desirability of Fender-branded sunglasses or leather jackets. The prospect that consumer pastness might drive the desirability of such products should be investigated

Mentioning that certain styles or designs were favorite of admired figures or celebrities from yesteryear, or mentioning that products were designed with such in mind might increase consumer perceptions of pastness for focal products. The prospect should be investigated.

While not directly linked to important figures, consumers perceptions of pastness associated with important people might transfer to focal products, increasing products' perceived pastness and their desirability.

Finally, associations may exist between consumer pastness, vintage products, and consumer status. Does owning products that are perceived to feature strong connections with the past elicit additional feelings of prestige and status in their owners? Do the resulting feelings extend beyond the emotional value associated with owning and using contemporary luxury products? If such products were found to elicit sensations of prestige and/or respect, this might explain why consumers often desire vintage luxury products more than newer luxury products. Regardless, products that embody the past represent special possessions that are worthy of respect for having survived the trials and tests of time.

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ESSAY 2

ORGANIZED CHAOS AND THE THRILL OF THE HUNT

Introduction

Second-hand stores are notoriously cramped and cluttered. Often packed to the brim with used and antiquated merchandise, second-hand retailers are not known for their acute organization skills. Piles and piles of merchandise packed on shelves and stacked in the aisles can deter even the toughest of shoppers. Yet consumers continue to frequent these cluttered stores in record numbers. On average, U.S. consumers spend billions of dollars at second-hand retailers each year, with massive growth expected in the second-hand market over the next few years and beyond (Orleans, 2019; Padmacathy et al., 2019; Thredup, 2018;2020). With so much growth expected in the second-hand market, now is the perfect opportunity to examine why consumers are willing to go to such lengths to shop at second-hand retailers that are often cluttered and crowded.

Thus, the present investigation seeks to make several contributions. First, the research uniquely combines literature on shopping goals and crowding effects with knowledge themes identified in 1152 posted reviews of second-hand retailers and proposes that consumers shop in spatially crowded second-hand retailers because of a treasure hunting mentality (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Kotler, 1973; Schlosser, 2003). Second, the research contributes to our understanding of crowding effects in a second-hand retailer by investigating how browsing vs. searching shopping goals influence downstream responses (Experiment 1). Third, the study investigates browsing as an obstacle that suppress purchase intentions and identifies how this obstacle can be overcome (Experiments 1, 2, and 3).

The findings reveal that: (1) even though treasure hunting is essentially the same for both

searchers and browsers, a browsing goal suppresses purchase intentions in a crowded second-hand retailer, while a searching goal increases purchase intentions; (2) the suppression effect of a browsing goal on purchase intentions can be overcome with purposeful merchandise displays, while random displays lead to lower purchase intentions; and (3) a treasure hunting mentality provides a viable mediating explanation for the observed effects of the browsing goal.

Literature Review

Spatial Density and Crowding

The retail atmosphere, or the physical space in which consumers purchase products, can influence consumer behavior in a variety of ways (Eroglu et al., 2005b; Kotler, 1973; Spence et al., 2014). As such, researchers and retailers alike have tried to understand how a retailer's atmospherics can affect consumers' perceptions of both the products they buy in the store and of the retailers themselves. Once retailers have an understanding of how atmospherics influences consumers, they can design their retail space to produce specific effects in buyers that lead to positive outcomes for the retailer (Foster & McLelland, 2015; Kotler, 1973; Roggeveen et al., 2020).

Retail density has two components that specify either the number of people or the number of objects occupying a limited retail space (Van Rompay et al., 2008; Stokols, 1972). Thus, retail density can occur because of human density or the density of objects in the store (Eroglu et al., 2005b). While numerous studies have been devoted to understanding the effects of human density, the goal of the present research is to investigate crowding brought on by the spatial density of objects in a second-hand store (Blut & Iyer, 2020; Eroglu et al., 2005a; Evans et al., 2000; Kim et al., 2016; Van Rompay, et al., 2008).

Spatial crowding is a situation in which the consumer perceives that retail space is

cramped, confining, cluttered, and in need of additional physical space (Mehta, 2013). Spatial crowding relates to feelings of being restricted due to high levels of spatial density (Eroglu & Machleit, 1990; Kim et al., 2016; Mehta, 2013; Pons, et al., 2014; Poon & Grohmann, 2014; Stokols, 1972). Customers do not like to feel spatially crowded (Blut & Iyer, 2020; Eroglu et al., 2005a; Meheta, 2013). As a result, spatial crowding often leads to negative evaluations and outcomes for the retailer, such as lower purchasing intentions (Eroglu & Harrell, 1986; Harrell & Hutt, 1976; Harrell et al., 1980; Machleit et al., 2000).

The Case of the Second-hand Retailer

Second-hand shopping refers to the consumer acquisition of previously owned goods through non-traditional retail outlets (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Padmavathy et al., 2019; Roux & Guiot, 2008). Non-traditional retail outlets consist of locations of exchange that are normally distinct from conventional retailers that sell new products exclusively. This includes places like swap meets (Belk et al., 1988), flea markets (Sherry, 1990a; Sherry, 1990b; Maisel, 1974), thrift stores (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005), garage sales (Herrman, 1995; Herrman & Soiffer, 1984; Soiffer & Herrman, 1987), auctions (Palmer & Forsyth, 2006), locally owned boutiques (Cervelleon et al., 2012), and car boot sales (Gregson & Crewe, 1997a). Consumers patronize these second-hand markets to purchase items that they cannot purchase from traditional retailers. For example, items like antiques (Belk, 1991), collectibles (Pearce, 1995), second-hand electronics and housewares (Mukherjee et al., 2020), used cars (Gabbott, 1991), vintage fashion (Cervelleon et al., 2012; McColl, et al, 2013; McRobbie, 1989; Sarial-Abi et al., 2017), vintage vinyl records (Chivers Yochim & Biddinger, 2008; Goulding & Derbaix, 2019), and other types of products change hands in these non-traditional second-hand markets regularly. Consumers looking for less conventional items and a unique shopping experience go to second-hand retailers

to engage in this alternative form of consumption (Ferraro et al., 2016; Maisel, 1974).

Second-hand shopping is distinct from conventional retail (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Parsons, 2005; Roux & Guiot, 2008). As such, second-hand stores employ unique retail tactics. For example, one technique often employed in antique retailing and other forms of second-hand retailing is referred to by Kotler (1973, pg. 57) as “organized chaos.” With an organized chaos approach, the retailer randomly mixes better pieces with low-quality pieces in the same retail space. This is often done unintentionally, making the store seem cluttered.

The Role of Shopping Goals

Research indicates that consumers have different goals when they go shopping (Moe, 2003). For example, some consumers are looking for something specific when they are shopping (i.e., searching), while other consumers are just browsing the store and not looking for anything in particular (i.e., browsing; Schlosser, 2003). When consumers are browsing, they have a more open-ended approach to looking around with no specific item or group of items in mind. The consumer is unfocused, just exploring the store while enjoying their shopping experience (Bloch et al., 1986; Janiszewski, 1998). On the other hand, when consumers have a searching goal, they are on a mission to search for and find a particular item or group of items. The consumer’s behavior is directed, deliberate, and producing the appearance of hunting or looking for something in particular (Moe, 2003).

The items that consumers are searching for or just browsing through in second-hand retailers are less conventional than the items sold in traditional retailers and are often hard to find in good condition (Gabbott, 1991; McCree, 1984). Unlike traditional retailers, it is the hunt for that one special item or items that drives many consumers into second-hand stores (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Cervellion et al., 2012; Ferraro et al., 2016; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Maisel, 1974).

For these customers, the search is part of the experience. Having to look through piles of merchandise and row after row of displays is why they enjoy shopping at second-hand retailers (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Cervellion et al., 2012; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Maisel, 1974).

The Role of Treasure Hunting

Consumers do not appear to mind the high spatial density and the perceptions of crowding that result while shopping in second-hand stores. For consumers that enjoy the second-hand shopping experience, they are motivated to go into densely packed retail space for the sake of finding something of value. Unlike traditional retailers, one of the critical motivations explaining why consumers enjoy shopping at second-hand retailers is treasure hunting (Belk et al., 1988; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Sherry, 1990a). Treasure hunting is the “the possibility of hitting the jackpot, of finding that diamond in the rough before anybody else” (McCree, 1984, pg. 48). Researchers believe that treasure hunting is a strong motivation for why consumers purchase items from second-hand stores (Belk et al., 1988). Although the buying of second-hand products carries many risks (Akerlof, 1970; Gabbott, 1991; Gregson & Crewe, 1997b), consumers are still willing to go to second-hand retailers if there is a chance that they might find a piece of treasure buried beneath the piles of worthless merchandise (Gregson & Crewe, 1997a; Maisel, 1974). For many consumers, finding something at a second-hand retailer is like winning the lottery. In other words, shopping at second-hand retailers is about the thrill of the hunt for buried treasure.

Qualitative Study

The purpose of the qualitative study is to utilize the strengths of real-world data to examine the perceptions and experiences of consumers in actual retail settings. To accomplish this goal, researchers conducted a qualitative study by examining a random sample of customer

reviews written by consumers that shop at second-hand retailers. Researchers collected customer reviews because they give consumers the chance to talk objectively about the retailer and their overall retail experiences. Additionally, customer reviews let consumers talk about themselves and their general preferences in a low-risk social setting, ensuring an honest assessment of the retail establishment (Kozinets, 2016).

The selection of customer reviews was designed to access knowledge themes related to spatial crowding, consumer shopping goals in a second-hand store, treasure hunting, and comments about merchandise displays. Accessing these knowledge themes was guided by definitions from prior literature. The definition of spatial density is drawn from previous literature which conceptualizes spatial density as feelings of being crowded as a result of spatial density of objects in the retail environment (e.g., Blut & Iyer, 2020; Eroglu et al., 2005a). Shopping goals followed the work of Schollosser (2003) and was defined as either searching for something specific or browsing and not looking for anything in particular. Treasure hunting followed the definition of McCree (1984, p.48) and included conceptualizations such as “the possibility of hitting the jackpot.” While researchers followed the conceptualization of Kotler’s (1973) idea of organized chaos in merchandise displays, they remained open to reviewer comments that might reveal other thematic instances of merchandise displays.

Sampling Frame Selection and Procedure

Five steps were undertaken to accomplish the goals of the qualitative study. The first step of the investigation was to select a sampling frame. Researchers selected an independent, crowd-sourced website that specialized in the compellation of customer reviews of the service industry (i.e., Yelp.com). Researchers selected Yelp.com because it has more than 70 million reviews of various service providers. Each retailer on Yelp.com also includes numerous pictures of the

store and its selection of merchandise that researchers could use in future analysis. Yelp.com is also the market leader in service reviews and consumers have a high level of trust in Yelp.com as an information source. This trust combined with the high number of posted reviews made Yelp.com the perfect website to obtain reviews for examination in this field study (Luca and Zervas, 2016).

Second, investigators searched for second-hand retailers with reviews posted to Yelp.com that were suitable for use in this qualitative analysis. Researchers narrowed their search by focusing on retailers that specialized in the sale of second-hand merchandise. Specifically, researchers restricted their investigation to shops posted to Yelp.com under the used, vintage, and consignment designation.

Third, in addition to restricting their search to reviews of second-hand retailers, researchers narrowed their search to retail establishments located in U.S. cities with populations greater than 300,000. This investigation focused on large city retailers for several reasons. First, focusing on large cities improved the chance for a large sample size because larger cities have a higher number of potential customers available to write reviews. Additionally, large cities have more second-hand retailers to choose from than smaller cities, making it easier for investigators to draw a random sample. Finally, by focusing on all U.S. cities with populations greater than 300,000 people, it ensures that this research includes retailers located in all four geographic regions (i.e., West, Midwest, South, and Northeast) of the United States.

Fourth, researchers randomly selected one retailer from each U.S. city that had a population greater than 300,000. To select a retailer, investigators first numbered all second-hand retailers located in each city from one to one hundred. Investigators then randomly selected one retailer based on the results of a random number generator. Once the random number

generator selected a retailer, researchers then cataloged all reviews written for that retailer in a separate spreadsheet. In addition to the customer reviews, researchers also recorded the date the review was posted, the name of the retailer, where the retailer was located, and the star rating given to the retailer based on the consumers level of satisfaction with their retail experience. This resulted in a final sample of 1152 reviews from sixty-six different second-hand retailers located across the United States.

Fifth, after generating a random sample of customer reviews, researchers began their qualitative analysis of second-hand retailers. To facilitate their investigation of the customer reviews, investigators uploaded the reviews to MAXQDA¹². Accessing knowledge themes proceeded as follows. Researchers examined all reviews for the presence of keywords related to spatial crowding and coded all occurrences for further analysis. This included all references to feeling crowded, cramped, or claustrophobic as well as any specific references to the word clutter or the overall organization of the store. In addition, researchers also looked at any words related to searching, browsing, mentions of merchandise displays, and treasure hunting activities. This included all references to discovery or the potential discovery of treasure, gems, and rare items.

Clutter/Crowding: Findings, Synthesis, and Interpretation

Overall, most reviews were positive when it came to crowding, the general layout of the store, and the organization of the retail establishment. This lack of negative references to spatial crowding and clutter in the store is surprising. Most second-hand retailers have some degree of spatial crowding. Stores reviewed for this study were no exception. Pictures supplied by Yelp.com and the reviewers themselves provided enough evidence that retailers in the sample suffered from cluttered retail environments. If spatial crowding leads to negative retail

outcomes, it makes sense that customer reviews would have referenced it as something that diminished their retail experience. While some consumers complained about merchandise being hard to search through, most dismissed it as being a minor annoyance at worst. Consumers were more likely to praise the high volume of merchandise as a positive, even if they had to search extensively to find anything of quality. One reviewer said it best when they claimed that the store they were reviewing was the “perfect place to spend an hour browsing the racks, not so perfect for those preferring the more sterile retail conglomerates.”

Based on the reviews and the small number of negative references to spatial crowding or clutter, investigators believe that consumers have certain expectations when they go to second-hand retailers. One of those expectations is that the consumer will experience some form of spatial crowding, leading to extensive search behavior on the part of the consumer. Consumers that shop at second-hand stores searching for specific items know that the quality and variety of merchandise is unstable and constantly changing. As such, undesirable merchandise tends to build up and clutter the retail environment while quality merchandise is often difficult to find. This difficulty also means the consumer can only find something of value if they are willing to search for it. Thus, when consumers shop in a crowded second-hand store, it did not negatively affect their shopping experience; it is part of the experience.

The reviews collected for this study support this assertion. Reviewers that referenced spatial crowding often mentioned that clutter and crowded second-hand stores are a given. For example, one reviewer mentioned when talking about a retailer that “... the place is a bit messy, but you should never trust a vintage store that isn’t cluttered.” Another reviewer said something similar when they stated that the store “seems a bit messy in here, but heck, it’s a thrift shop, not downtown retail!” Additionally, it appears that consumers make a distinction between random

spatial crowding and spatial crowding with some reason or purpose behind it. In general, consumers disliked having to browse through cluttered merchandise that the store threw together without any apparent thought put into its arrangement. One reviewer specifically mentioned that the store “had random boxes piled everywhere” throughout the entire store. A reviewer in another store had a similar impression of the retailer they had visited. The reviewer stated that the store’s merchandise was “stacked from the floor to the ceiling” and that the sheer amount of chaotically stacked merchandise could be overwhelming for those who just wanted to browse and look around. These browsers appeared to prefer merchandise arrangements that bring some structure to an open-ended shopping approach. However, it appears that reviewers with a searching goal did not have any problems with the crowded merchandise. Instead, these reviews welcomed the opportunity to search.

However, consumers did not appear to mind browsing through the clutter if there was some method to the apparent chaos. Difficulties only appeared to arise when consumers indicated that they did not like to search. These browsing consumers stated that they just did not have the patience to search through large amounts of merchandise just for the chance to find something of value. If the retail space was small or packed full of merchandise that was arranged by product type, the consumer was more likely to accept some spatial crowding while browsing the store. Numerous consumers mentioned how the retailer they were reviewing was well curated, drawing a comparison to museums more than retail stores. One reviewer stated it best when commenting about the retailer they were reviewing: “There is a ton of stuff, but it’s artfully arranged to showcase items; it’s not just a random jumble of junk collecting dust.” Another browsing reviewer specifically mentioned feeling cramped, but still praised the store because it was well organized.

Treasure Hunting: Findings, Synthesis, and Interpretation

Consumers do not appear to mind the high spatial density in second-hand stores. For consumers that enjoy the second-hand shopping experience, they are motivated to search or browse through densely packed retail space for the sake of finding something of value. Based on the customer reviews, it seems that spatial crowding in second-hand retailers often creates a treasure hunting mentality (Belk et al., 1988). Many consumers mentioned feeling excited by what they might find before entering the second-hand retailer, using phrases like “going on an adventure” or “going on a treasure hunt,” comparing themselves to treasure hunters to describe their trips to the store. These consumers express excitement, saying things along the lines of this reviewer: “It’s like a treasure hunt! Who knows what you’ll find here....” Reviews also mentioned looking through the stores’ merchandise and finding a piece of hidden treasure that they did not expect to find. Consumers that find quality merchandise or hidden treasure are particularly interesting, as these consumers write reviews more like a classic adventure tale than a retail review.

Consumers who mentioned treasure hunting specifically in their review did not seem to mind spatial crowding. Of the numerous customer reviews that expressed a treasure hunting mentality, none of the reviews mentioned spatial crowding in a negative context. Spatial crowding seemed to add to these consumer’s shopping experiences. Many of the customer reviews expressed enjoyment with having to search or browse through large amounts of merchandise to find that hidden gem. In their success stories, consumers mentioned looking through the vast amounts of merchandise as a trial they need to overcome to find the pieces they desired. Consumers expressed feeling the thrill of the hunt and were more than happy to search through the trash to find the treasure; it was part of the experience.

Summary of the Qualitative Study and Plan for Experiments

The results of this initial analysis provided real-world support for the assertion that customers of second-hand retailers do not object to spatial crowding. Additionally, the qualitative study provided additional insights into why consumers do not appear to mind spatial crowding in second-hand stores. First, searchers and browsers both mentioned that treasure hunting was part of the experience. Second, the qualitative analysis revealed the presences of two distinct types of spatial crowding: random and purposeful. Moreover, the qualitative analysis revealed that purposeful merchandise displays are more effective for browsing consumers. While the qualitative study provided the researchers with real-world insights into themes found in customer reviews, three experiments were developed and implemented to bolster our current understanding of relationships among these knowledge themes.

Hypothesis Development

The following hypotheses were based on a combination of the aforementioned literature review and the findings of the qualitative study. Specifically, previous literature and the findings of the qualitative study indicated that searching through piles of merchandise and row after row of displays is part and parcel of the second-hand retailer experience (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Cervellion et al., 2012; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Maisel, 1974). Thus, when the shopping goal is searching through a spatially crowded second-hand store looking for a specific product, it is likely that purchase intentions will be higher than for consumers with browsing goals and looking for nothing in particular. Likewise, customer reviews expressed enjoyment with searching or browsing to hunt for hidden treasures; it was simply part of the experience. The following hypothesis captures this argument:

H1: Even though treasure hunting is the same for browsing and searching, consumers with a searching goal will have higher purchase intentions than consumers with a browsing goal in a spatially crowded second-hand retailer.

Likewise, relying on Kotler's (1973) idea of organized chaos and the findings of the qualitative study, merchandise display themes related to both random displays and more purposeful displays. The findings of the qualitative study indicate that for those who were searching for something in particular, it did not seem to matter how the merchandise was arranged as the goal was to find that special item. However, for those who are just browsing, the findings of the qualitative study indicated that they preferred a purposeful arrangement that brings structure to an open-ended shopping approach rather than a random one does not. Likewise, researchers predict that purchase intentions for browsing are improved because of treasure hunting made possible by the purposeful arrangement of merchandise. The following hypotheses summarizes these expectations:

H2: Spatially crowded merchandise that is purposefully arranged will lead to greater purchase intentions than merchandise that laid out randomly in the browsing condition.

H3: Treasure hunting mediates the relationship between merchandise crowding type (purposeful vs. random) and purchase intentions in the browsing condition.

Experiment 1

The first experiment tests whether a consumer's shopping goal (i.e., browsing versus searching) has an influence on consumers purchasing intentions while shopping at a crowded second-hand retailer. Specifically, the study tests the idea that consumers searching for a specific item in a second-hand retailer have greater purchase intentions than consumers who are just browsing around the store without a specific item in mind.

Pretest

Researchers conducted a pretest to see if feelings of spatial crowding could be

manipulated with a photograph. One hundred three participants ($M_{age} = 34.69$ years, $SD = 11.8$) from Prolific.co took part in a pretest in exchange for \$1.00. Researchers invited participants on Prolific.co to take part in a study looking for people's thoughts and opinions about a bookstore. Investigators chose a bookstore as their focal retailer for numerous reasons. First, second-hand bookstores are one of the most common forms of second-hand retailers in the United States. While researchers do not know the exact number of used bookstores operating inside the U.S., research estimates that books make up thirteen percent of the entire resale market (Thredup, 2018). Second, utilizing bookstores allowed investigators to control for product type. Second-hand retailers sell a diverse selection of merchandise across numerous product categories (Turnen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015). Researchers believed that product type and differences in the products themselves might influence participants. Specifically, researchers thought that any noticeable products in the manipulations might affect participants. As such, researchers controlled for the effects of product type by using retailers that sell a single type of product (i.e., books) in both conditions.

After agreeing to contribute, researchers showed participants a picture of a bookstore aisle accompanied by a set of instructions. In the crowded condition, researchers showed participants a picture of a bookstore aisle with books stacked high on the shelf and on the floor along both sides of the aisle. Researchers choose this picture as their manipulation because it featured a large amount of cluttered merchandise. In the neutral condition, researchers showed participants a picture of a bookstore aisle taken at a similar angle as the picture used in the previous condition. However, the aisle pictured in this condition had noticeably less spatial crowding. After viewing the pictures, participants completed three items related to spatial crowding: "It is difficult to enter and move about the store"; "There is evidence of an excessive

accumulation of items in the store”; and “In general, this store feels very cluttered” (1-7 scale; Halliday and Snowdon, 2009). The results of the pretest revealed that participants shown the crowded picture ($M= 4.62$) experienced greater levels of spatial crowding than participants shown a neutral picture of a bookstore without books in the aisleway ($M = 2.54$, $SD = 1.51$; $t(101) = -7.80$, $p < .001$).

Main Experiment Procedures

Researchers recruited one hundred five participants (54 females, $M_{age} = 34.06$ years, $SD = 11.72$) from Prolific.co to take part in the experiment in exchange for \$1.00. The experiment used a two-cell design with shopping goals (searching vs. browsing) as a predictor of purchase intentions.

Researchers invited participants on Prolific.co to take part in a study looking for people’s thoughts and opinions about a bookstore. Participants were then showed the same picture of a crowded bookstore aisle used in the pretest. Beneath the picture of the bookstore was a short vignette that instructed participants to imagine themselves in the bookstore for thirty seconds. This vignette functioned as the primary manipulation in this experiment. In the searching condition, the vignette asked participants to imagine themselves looking for a specific book and that they “are trying to find this specific book as efficiently as possible.” In the browsing condition, the instructions asked participants to imagine themselves “simply looking around for books that they might find interesting or entertaining.” Studies have shown that manipulations like this one are effective and can manipulate participants’ shopping motivations (Schlosser, 2003). After reading the vignette, participants completed items measuring consumers searching and browsing motivations respectively: “I imagined myself searching/looking for something

specific” and “I imagined myself browsing/not looking for anything in particular” (1-7 scale; Schlosser, 2003).

After completing the manipulation check, participants completed a purchase intentions scale, which functioned as the primary dependent measure for this study. The study asked participants to “please describe your overall feelings about buying something from that store”: (e.g., never purchase/definitely purchase; 1-7 scale; Spears & Singh, 2004; $\alpha = .95$). Next, participants completed some measures designed to estimate someone’s treasure hunting mentality (e.g., at this store, I would be on the look-out for a real treasure; 1-7 scale; Guiot & Roux, 2010; $\alpha = .92$). Finally, participants completed some demographic variables before being debriefed and concluding the study.

Results

Manipulation Check

Confirming the shopping goal manipulation, participants in the searching condition focused more on searching than those in the browsing condition ($M_{\text{searching}} = 5.88$ vs. $M_{\text{browsing}} = 4.11$, $t(1, 103) = 5.144$, $p < .001$). Additionally, participants in the browsing condition focused more on browsing than those in the searching condition ($M_{\text{browsing}} = 5.02$ vs. $M_{\text{searching}} = 3.56$, $t(1, 103) = -3.631$, $p < .001$). Therefore, the goal manipulation was successful.

Treasure Hunting

H1 predicted that participants would have similar treasure hunting mentalities regardless of their shopping goals. The results of the independent samples t-test confirm this prediction, participants in the searching condition ($M = 5.25$, $SD = 1.47$) had statistically identical treasure

hunting scores to participants in the browsing condition ($M = 5.26$, $SD = 1.43$; $t(103) = -.03$, $p = 0.97$).

Purchase Intentions

H1 predicted that participants in the searching condition would have greater purchasing intentions than participants in the browsing condition. The results of the independent samples t-test confirm this prediction, participants in the searching condition ($M = 5.31$, $SD = 1.34$) had greater purchasing intentions than participants in the browsing condition ($M = 4.80$, $SD = 1.32$; $t(103) = 1.952$, $p = 0.05$).

Discussion of Experiment 1

The results of Experiment 1 demonstrate that, compared to the browsing condition, consumers with a searching shopping motivation have higher purchase intentions in spatially crowded second-hand retailers. Likewise, the findings reveal that the treasure hunting mentality is essentially the same whether browsing or searching is the goal.

It is interesting to note that even though the results of Experiment 1 indicate that purchase intentions are lower for browsing consumers, the qualitative analysis revealed that a number of consumers do go to second-hand retailers to browse and engage in treasure hunting behaviors. Likewise, the qualitative analysis also revealed that those browsing consumers make a distinction in their minds between random clutter and purposeful clutter.

Experiment 2

The findings of Experiment 1 revealed that those with a searching goal have greater purchase intentions, compared to browsing. Experiment 2 was designed to investigate whether changes to merchandise displays can improve purchase intentions for those with a browsing goal.

Thus, building on the findings of the qualitative study and Experiment 1, this experiment focused on the browsing condition to test whether the type of spatial crowded display (purposeful vs. random) can improve purchase intentions for browsers and to test treasure hunting as a mediator of the observed effects.

Procedure

Researchers recruited one hundred and fifty-one participants (70 females, $M_{age} = 31.90$ years, $SD = 11.97$) from Prolific.co to take part in the experiment in exchange for \$0.80. The experiment used a two-cell design with merchandise crowding type (random vs. purposeful) as a predictor of purchase intentions.

Researchers invited participants on Prolific.co to take part in a study looking for people's thoughts and opinions about a bookstore. After agreeing to contribute, researchers showed participants the same picture of a bookstore aisle used in the previous experiment accompanied by a short vignette. Participants were assigned to one of two conditions. In the random condition, the vignette informed participants that the layout of the books throughout the store was completely random and lacking in "any clear plan, purpose, or pattern." Furthermore, the vignette described the store as haphazardly organized and that the books are "stacked all throughout the store without any arrangement." In the purposeful condition, the vignette informed participants that the books were arranged purposefully and "positioned intentionally and carefully organized by genre." Additionally, the vignette also informed participants that the books are "meaningfully stacked all throughout the store with careful arrangement." Finally, the vignette primed participants to have a browsing goal by instructing them that they were not looking for anything specific and were just looking at what this store had to offer. Results indicate that participants in both conditions had higher browsing intentions ($M_{purposeful} = 6.17$ &

$M_{\text{random}} = 6.12$ respectively, $p = \text{not significant}$) than participants in the previous experiment.

After reading the vignette and completing the browsing measure, participants completed three items designed to measure the randomness of the store's layout regarding its merchandise: (e.g., books were placed randomly in piles across the store; $\alpha = .95$). Next, participants completed the same measures for treasure hunting ($\alpha = .90$; Guiot & Roux, 2010) and purchase intentions ($\alpha = .95$; Spears & Singh, 2004) used in the previous experiment before completing some demographic variables and concluding the experiment.

Results

Manipulation Check

Investigators averaged the three items of the random scale into a single item to measure a participant's beliefs that the layout of the bookstore in the vignette was random ($\alpha = .95$). As expected, participants in the random condition perceived that the layout of the stores merchandise was more random than participants in the purposeful condition ($M_{\text{random}} = 5.66$, $SD = 1.04$ vs. $M_{\text{purposeful}} = 1.69$, $SD = 1.33$; $t(149) = -20.48$, $p < .001$).

Purchase Intentions

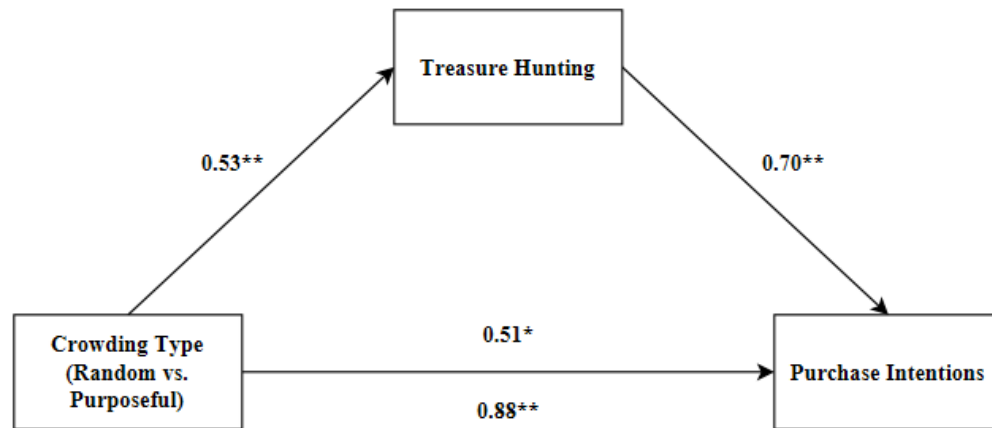
Researchers predicted that participants in the purposefully spatially crowded condition would have greater purchasing intentions than participants in the randomly spatially crowded condition. The results of the independent samples t-test confirm this prediction, participants in the purposeful condition ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 1.23$) had greater purchasing intentions than participants in the random condition ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 1.49$; $t(149) = 3.983$, $p < .001$).

Mediation Analysis

Researchers conducted a mediation analysis using 10000 bootstrapped samples (Hayes

2012; PROCESS SPSS macro; model 4) with merchandise crowding type (purposeful vs. random) as an independent variable, purchase intentions as a dependent variable, and treasure hunting as a mediator. The results revealed a significant indirect effect of treasure hunting ($\beta = .3705$, $SE = .16$, 95% CI: .0590, .7031).

Figure 2.1: Experiment 2 - Mediation Via Treasure Hunting on Purchasing Intentions



Mediation analysis with 10,000 bootstrap samples (model 4 in PROCESS; Hayes 2013). Coefficients significantly different from zero are indicated by asterisks (* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$).

Discussion of Experiment 2

The results of the second experiment demonstrate that, in the browsing condition, participants in the purposeful condition had higher purchasing intentions than those in the random one. The findings suggest that second-hand retailers can overcome the lower purchase intentions of browsing consumers by arranging their spatially crowded merchandise in a more purposeful manner. Treasure hunting mediated the observed effects.

Experiment 3

The goal of experiment 3 was to bolster confidence in the results of Experiment 2 with more mundane realism to test the same hypothesized relationships. That is, instead of manipulating shopping goal, this experiment allowed respondents to form their own shopping

goals to see if the effects observed in the second experiment were replicated. To accomplish this 124 participants (74 female, $M_{age} = 36.71$) from prolific.co agreed to participate in an experiment for \$0.80. Researchers used the exact same manipulations used in experiment 2. However, researchers removed the browsing goal from the vignette so that consumers could form their own shopping goal. Participants then completed the same measures for searching/browsing, randomness ($\alpha = .95$), treasure hunting ($\alpha = .87$), and purchasing intentions ($\alpha = .94$) used in the previous study.

Results

Manipulation Check

Researchers conducted a paired samples t-test. Overall, participants indicated that they were browsing not looking for anything in particular ($M = 5.10$, $SD = 2.07$) to a greater extent than they were searching ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.92$; $t(123) = -2.69$, $p < .01$). As expected, participants in the random condition perceived that the layout of the stores merchandise was more random than participants in the purposeful condition ($M_{random} = 5.66$, $SD = 1.04$ vs. $M_{purposeful} = 1.69$, $SD = 1.33$; $t(149) = -20.48$, $p < .001$).

Purchase Intentions

The results of this replication were consistent with the second experiment. Participants in the purposeful condition ($M = 5.28$, $SD = 1.22$) had greater purchasing intentions than participants in the random condition ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 1.44$; $t(122) = 3.464$, $p = .001$).

Mediation Analysis

Researchers conducted a mediation analysis using 10000 bootstrapped samples (Hayes 2012; PROCESS SPSS macro; model 4) with merchandise crowding type as an independent

variable, purchase intentions as a dependent variable, and treasure hunting as a mediator. The results replicated the previous study and revealed a significant indirect effect of treasure hunting ($\beta = .2855$, $SE = .16$, 95% CI: .006, .6276). Therefore, this replication demonstrates the robustness of the effect observed in Experiment 2.

General Discussion

The purpose of this research is to examine why consumers spend billions of dollars at typically crowded second-hand retailers each year. Several contributions to theory and practice are noteworthy. In a second-hand retailer context, the research uniquely combines knowledge themes revealed in 1152 customer reviews with literature on shopping goals and crowding effects and provides evidence that: (1) even though a treasure hunting mentality is essentially the same for both browsers and searchers in a second-hand retailer, this mentality does not produce the same purchase intentions for both shopping goals. Specifically, a browsing goal suppresses purchase intentions, while a searching goal increases intentions; (2) the browsing goal's suppression effect on purchase intentions can be overcome with purposeful merchandise displays that bring structure to an open-ended shopping approach, while random displays suppresses purchase intentions; and (3) a treasure hunting mentality provides a viable mediating explanation for the observed effects of the browsing goal.

While part research has argued that spatial crowding has a negative impact on consumer outcomes, the present research presents counterintuitive findings that contribute to our understanding of the potential for positive spatial crowding effects in a second-hand retailer (Blut & Iyer, 2019; Mehta, 2013). In particular, the findings contribute to our understanding of how the characteristics of a retail store intertwine with consumer shopping goals to overcome any potential negative impact of spatial crowding. Likewise, the findings contribute to

understanding how strategies such as merchandise displays can be used to overcome the negative effects of crowding in a second-hand retailer.

The research contributes to our current understanding of treasure hunting by investigating the important role this mentality serves in hunting for gems in a second-hand retailer (Guiot & Roux, 2010). The present research demonstrates that consumers are willing to accept spatial crowding to find the treasure hidden among less desirable merchandise. Thus, the results indicate that the impact of spatial crowding on consumer outcomes depends upon the shopping context and the retail setting (Kim et al., 2016). While researchers have used treasure hunting to explain why consumers shop at second-hand retailers (Guiot & Roux, 2010), scholars have yet to investigate treasure hunting as a mediator to explain the effect of shopping goals or merchandise displays (Cervellon et al., 2012).

The qualitative study provided real-world knowledge themes that contributes to our understanding of why browsers and searchers do not appear to mind spatial crowding in second-hand stores, because both types of goals appear to enjoy treasure hunting. The qualitative study also revealed two distinct types of spatially crowded merchandise displays: random and purposeful. However, these two types of shopping goals appeared to have different views on spatially crowded merchandise. Indeed, the qualitative findings suggest that purposeful merchandise displays that bring structure to an open-ended shopping approach are more effective for browsing consumers, while the searchers who are looking for that special item did not seem to mind whether merchandise was purposeful or random.

The results of the investigation have practical implications for second-hand retailers trying to decide how to get the most out of their retail space. The results reveal that spatial crowding does not have the same adverse effects on consumer outcomes. However, the results

also reveal that second-hand retailers should pack their stores with merchandise without any purpose to its arrangement. Specifically, retailers specializing in the sale of second-hand products should emphasize treasure hunting when designing the layout of their store. One way is through the organized chaos approach outlined by Kotler (1973), which necessitates the retailer consistently having high-quality pieces mixed in with lower quality items. Another is to arrange the merchandise by product type or other product categories. Furthermore, second-hand retailers need to stimulate a searching shopping goal in their customers. Retailers can accomplish this by advertising through social media specific items that consumers' can find in their stores.

To gain a better understanding of how treasure hunting effects consumer outcomes, future research should examine why treasure hunting increases purchase intentions. One explanation is the results of the shopping experience goes above-and-beyond the consumers expectations, leading the consumer to feel surprised (Vanhamme, 2000). As the qualitative study demonstrated, consumers have certain expectations when it comes to second-hand retail. The consumer expects that they will be looking through a large variety of merchandise that is unstable and constantly changing. Thus, the consumer has low expectations that they will find anything of value. However, it is because of these low expectations that second-hand stores can surprise consumers. One reason consumer shop at second-hand retailers because they are looking for hidden treasures and gems buried among the piles of merchandise. Investigators believe that consumers feelings of surprise might influence how they perceive spatial crowding. Specifically, the consumer might perceive that the crowded second-hand store is full of surprises, stimulating their desire to find a piece of treasure.

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ESSAY 3

WHAT IS ART? VINTAGE PRODUCTS AS DISPLAY PIECES

Introduction

What is art? In response to this question, many consumers automatically think of well-known works of art. Iconic paintings like the *Mona Lisa*, famously painted by Leonardo da Vinci, are often the first things that come to mind. Other consumers might envision more pedestrian examples of art. For example, some people might consider a 1968 Fastback GT Ford Mustang, made famous by the 1968 movie *Bullitt* starring Steve McQueen, a work of art. While the exact nature of art is difficult to define (Wartenberg, 2012), it is apparent that ordinary individuals can summon several different answers when asked to provide an example of art. Consumers can consider anything from famous paintings to consumer products and anything in between to be works of art. Despite this fact, marketing academics have yet to investigate consumer products as “works of art.” Instead, researcher has focused exclusively on traditional forms of art like paintings. This lack of focus is alarming, particularly when considering the role, appeal, and prevalence of vintage products such as the 1968 Ford Mustang mentioned above.

Vintage products are second-hand products produced in an earlier era (Sarial-Abi et al., 2017). Like traditional forms of visual art (i.e., paintings), retailers routinely treat vintage products as works of art in their stores. Vintage products are often used as display pieces and are featured prominently in many second-hand retail outlets (Hamilton and Wagner, 2014). Individual consumers frequently hold vintage products in the same high esteem that they hold traditional art (Belk, 1988). Museums display many of the most famous works of art in the world and also routinely showcase vintage products (Pearce, 1995). Yet, despite the parallels, research has not looked at the effects of vintage products as works of art in a retail setting. Instead, most

research has focused exclusively on how vintage products are bought and sold in the second-hand marketplace (Cervellion et al., 2012; McColl et al., 2013; McColl et al., 2018). Marketing researchers and practitioners should understand why consumers buy vintage products. The same set of marketers (theorists and practitioners) should also understand any additional effects vintage products might exercise inside the retail environments.

This research investigates the effects of vintage products as works of art. Extending the art infusion effect purposed by Hagtvedt and Patrick (2008a), this research shows that using vintage products as works of art can enhance product evaluations for other products that are promoted in association with a vintage product. This research specifically theorizes that consumers' attitudes towards vintage products crossover to neighboring products promoted with the vintage items. Positive attitudes toward vintage products are shown to generate more favorable evaluations for promoted products. These transfer effects explain how second-hand and other types of retailers can benefit from using vintage products and imagery as display pieces in their retail atmosphere. This research also demonstrates that this effect does not occur inside contexts where the perceived fit between the vintage product and the promoted product is deficient. These effects are demonstrated through three experiments.

Three core findings are revealed. The first is that promoted products displayed near vintage products have higher product evaluations than promoted products presented near modern products. The second is that this effect occurs because vintage products cause an art spillover effect in which consumers' positive attitudes towards vintage products transfer from the vintage product to the neighboring promoted product. The third finding is that if consumers perceive that the vintage product and the promoted product do not complement or fit well together, this effect does not occur.

Literature Review

Art in Marketing

The quest for an exact definition of art has inspired a long-standing debate. As such, the term “art” remains vague and subject to numerous interpretations (Naletelich and Paswan, 2018; Wartenberg, 2012). However, some common ground exists. For example, despite its vague nature, broad agreement exists that consumers perceive art differently from other objects (Joy and Sherry, 2003). Art is not mundane, common, or ordinary (Chailan, 2018). Art is sacred; an entity to be revered and respected (Belk et al., 1989). Art is filled with symbolic and cultural meaning (Naletelich and Paswan, 2018). As such, what is and is not considered art is open to some interpretation and is in the eye of the beholder – as this text circles back to this paragraph’s original point.

This research consequently defines art as what individuals categorize it as such, leaving the exact nature of art open to consumer perception (Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2008a). In other words, if consumers perceive that something is art, then it is art.

There are numerous reasons why art is held in such high regard by consumers and why the distinction between art and non-art is important. When an entity is regarded as art, the entity features value that extends beyond its functional benefits (Hagtvedt, 2020). Art is unique, as such it acquires value differently than other products. One such way art acquires values is through the buying and reselling process. Art acquires value over time as it circulates through the market. As art transfers from one owner to another, it gains value in the form of exposure and notoriety (Joy, 1996).

Art can also generate value through its historical associations. Original works of art can contain the essence of those that created it, making the once new but still unique piece more

valuable than reproductions and remakes of the same piece (Newman and Bloom, 2011). Any art form is fundamentally contaminated by the one who created it and by individuals who thereafter “touched” it. However, unlike most forms of consumer contamination (Argo et al., 2006) this contamination imposes positive effects on consumer perceptions (Newman and Bloom, 2011; Newman et al., 2011).

Researchers has recently shown that art influences marketing in a variety of ways (Estes et al., 2018). Specifically, art has been used to denote luxury and prestige (De Angelis et al., 2020; Chailan, 2018; Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2008a). This is not surprising. Indeed, marketers often describe luxury products as works of art in promotional messages, trying to establish associations between their products and the fine craftsmanship known to be associated with works of art (Hagtvedt, 2020; Newman and Bloom, 2011). As such, art has been shown to influence how consumers perceive other products. The very presence of art elicits positive emotions in consumers, which can generate positive spillover effects from the artwork onto other products (Estes et al., 2018). Even if the artwork is not well known by consumers, artwork can still have a spillover effect, transferring a general sense of luxury to associated products (Lee et al., 2015).

Contemporary retailers are increasingly seeking to reap benefits from the positive spillover effects of art. Modern luxury retailers such much in common with art galleries. Each marketing entity often displays works of art next to high-end products (Joy et al., 2014). Essentially, these luxury retailers are trying to capitalize on the art spillover effect to make their products appear more desirable by creating purchasing contexts – or environments - that optimize class and luxury. Traditional retailers can also benefit from using art in their retail environment. Research shows that the consumers shopping motivation and the type of art used in

the retailer (i.e., abstract vs. realist) can influence consumer behavior and purchase intentions inside of a retail setting (Naletelich and Paswan, 2018). Regardless of the store type, art has an influence on how consumers perceive objects that marketers can capitalize on to make their brands more desirable (Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2008b).

Vintage Products

People often use the term vintage to describe items that epitomize earlier eras or meaningful historical periods (Amatulli et al., 2018). By extension, vintage products are products produced in an earlier time whose very nature allows them to simultaneously represent multiple periods (i.e., the past, present, and future, Sarial-Abe et al., 2017). Like art, vintage products are revered and respected to the point of being considered sacred (Belk et al., 1989). Consumers revere vintage products because they have survived the natural entropy of time and have traveled through history to arrive and abide in the present. Age adds value and highlights the superior quality of vintage products (James, 2015). For consumers, this makes vintage products unique and differentiates them from the mundane goods produced today. Consumers perceive vintage products as more durable than traditional goods (Amatulli et al., 2018). Additionally, consumers often seek out vintage products because they provide various benefits that consumer cannot obtain from traditional products. For example, vintage products can connect consumers with others from the past and can protect consumers from threats that arise in their lives (Loveland, et al., 2010; Sarial-Abe et al., 2017).

Vintage products allow consumers to connect to the past because they carry the history of those who came before (Belk, 1990). Like art, vintage products tend to circulate inside of a second-hand market. As vintage products circulate from consumer to consumer, they acquire value from each of their previous owners along the way (Abdelrahman, et al., 2020; Applegren

and Bohlin, 2015). Over time, as vintage products circulate the marketplace, they develop unique product narratives. In other words, over time vintage products develop culturally relevant biographies. Because of these biographies, vintage products can produce a positive emotional commitment from their owners (Kamleitner et al., 2019). These commitments add value to vintage products and combine with the prestige that vintage products often acquire for having survived through history. The net is that vintage products often acquire a unique essence (James, 2015; Newman et al., 2011). For consumers, this essence gives vintage products status and makes them more authentic than their modern alternatives (Newman and Dhar, 2014; Turunen and Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015). This status assigned to vintage products is why, like art, museums often showcase vintage products (Belk, 1990; Hollenbeck et al., 2008; Pearce, 1995). When products reach vintage status, they grow more “worthy” of preservation and admiration.

But products only become vintage over time and the fact remains that most products never achieve vintage status. Products become vintage because an individual decided that the product was worth holding on to and preserving for future generations (Belk, 1991). Typically, this includes products that were important to the consumer or luxury products that are prestigious and built to last (Amatulli et al., 2018; Turunen and Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015). As such, consumers cannot buy vintage products at traditional retail outlets. Instead, consumers must acquire vintage products at non-traditional retail outlets such as flea markets (Sherry, 1990a; Sherry, 1990b) or locally owned boutiques (McColl et al., 2013; 2018). Consumers can only obtain vintage products second-hand from consumers who have decided to part with them (Applegren and Bohlin, 2015; Brough and Isaac, 2012; Price et al., 2000).

Consumers are expressing renewed interests in vintage and retro products (Brown et al., 2003). Driven by a wave of nostalgia, consumers have expressed a greater interest in products

that represented critical moments in their lives (Holbrook and Schindler, 1989; 1994; Schindler and Holbrook, 1993; 2003). Retailers have tried to capitalize on this wave by modifying their retail space to have a retro feel (Hamilton and Wagner, 2014). While luxury retailers are looking more like art galleries (Joy et al., 2014), vintage and second-hand retailers are starting to look more like history museums, incorporating the past directly into their store design (Foster and McLelland, 2015). These retrosapes incorporate numerous elements of the past that remind consumers of a bygone era (Brown, 1999; Spaid, 2013). Retailers accomplish this by incorporating vintage products and imagery into the store's atmosphere that highlight the retailers' specialized knowledge (Crewe et al., 2003; McColl et al., 2013). In doing this, second-hand stores can build a brand identity that differentiates them from the competition. Retailers can also utilize the past by using vintage products in their marketing messages, highlighting the history and prestige of the brands they have for sale (Brown et al., 2003). Nevertheless, retailers that sell second-hand products see the value in utilizing vintage products in their stores to increase the value of their products.

This research suggests that because of the similarities between art and vintage products, a spillover effect will occur for vintage products like the one observed for visual art (Estes et al., 2018; Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2008a). Art is revered, acquires value through object circulation, and is often used in the retail environment to increase the prestige of other products. Similarly, vintage products are also revered and considered sacred (Belk et al., 1989). Like art, vintage products gain significance through object circulation (Abdelrahman, et al., 2020). Vintage items are also used in the retail environment, creating a museum like atmosphere (Hamilton and Wagner, 2014). Vintage products are also positively contaminated by those who have touched and owned the product in the past, just like famous works of art (Newman and Bloom, 2011).

Compared to vintage products, modern products do not generally feature historical or cultural significance (Belk, 1988). Additionally, the passage of time simultaneously nullifies any contamination that may arise from the product being second-hand (Argo et al., 2006). Thus, because of the similarities between vintage products and works of art, this research suggests that, compared to equivalent modern products, vintage products have a more positive effect on the product evaluations of other products promoted near them. Stated formally:

H1: Products promoted near vintage products employed as works of art will have higher product evaluations than products promoted near equivalent modern products.

This research also proposes that the hypothesized effect occurs because consumers have more positive attitudes towards vintage products. Research indicates that consumers often form attitudes towards a product based on the product's association with another stimuli, resulting in the consumers attitude towards the stimuli spilling over to the product in question (Ratlif et al., 2012). Research indicates that vintage products are often more desirable than modern alternatives (Sarial-abe et al., 2017). Like art, vintage products provide additional value beyond their functional benefits (Cervellon et al., 2012). The presence of this additional value buttresses theoretical beliefs that consumers should display more positive attitudes towards vintage products than towards modern alternatives. Similar to attitude spillover effects observed for art (Estes et al., 2018), positive attitudes towards vintage products should spill over to other products presented in their vicinity. Consumers' positive attitude towards vintage products transfers over to other products promoted near the vintage product. Stated formally:

H2: The consumers positive attitude towards the vintage product creates an art spillover effect that mediates the relationship between product type (vintage vs. modern) and product evaluations.

The Role of Fit

The very presence of art has been shown to impose positive effects on product

evaluations. This effect occurs regardless of the consumer's knowledge about the artwork (Lee et al., 2015) or the type of product associated with that artwork (Estes et al., 2018). However, research also indicates that the type of art used in the retail setting influences purchase intentions. Specifically, research shows that realist art has a weaker effect on purchase intentions than other forms of art (Naletelich and Paswan, 2018). Realist art is art in which the artist tries to faithfully reproduce something that already exists (Kuspit, 1976). Vintage products, if perceived by consumers to be works of art, would fall under the realist category. Unlike with paintings and other forms of visual art, vintage products are consumer goods that at one point in time were bought and sold in a traditional marketplace. If retailers use vintage products in their stores or in their marketing messages, they will use the actual vintage product or realistic images of that product (e.g., photographs). Thus, it is possible that any attitude transfer and spillover effects that might occur would be muted by the fact that the piece of art (i.e., a vintage product) was realistic.

Research indicates that attitude transfer among products is strongest when the products belong to the same brand or group (Ranganth and Nosek, 2008; Ratlif et al., 2012). When two products enjoy a known association, attitude transfer is more likely to occur. To account for the fact that vintage products might have weaker effects on product evaluations than other types of art, researchers believe that the vintage product needs to fit with the product being evaluated for any positive transfer effect to occur. Fit, in this context, means that the consumer perceive that the two products match up and go together (Koering and Page, 2002). Products fit or match up with each other when either the two products in question complement each other (i.e., the two products are routinely consumed together) or when they belong to the same product category/group (i.e., same brand or same type of product).

Vintage products belong to known product categories and to, at one time (and may still),

have served a functional purpose. Unlike art, vintage products are not purely aesthetic pieces; vintage products can satisfy consumers' needs beyond the purely symbolic. As such, when promoted next to other consumer products, consumers will compare the two entities. If consumers do not believe that the products go together, either because the items belong to different product categories or because their respective product categories are not congruent, attitudes will not transfer and spillover effect will not arise. Thus, the positive spillover effect only occurs if the vintage product matches up with the promoted product. Stated Formally:

H3: Positive effects of vintage products will not occur when there is not a good fit between the vintage product and the neighboring promoted product. As such, there will be no difference between vintage and modern products employed as works of art if the promoted product does not fit.

Experiment 1

The first experiment tests whether the presence of a vintage product exercise any influence on the product evaluations of other promoted products in its vicinity. Specifically, the first experiment examines the idea that vintage products used as works of art have a positive influence on how consumers evaluate other products presented near the vintage product (H1).

Experiment 1 Pretest

Before conducting the main study, researchers ran a pretest to see if consumers perceive vintage products as works of art. Researchers believed that consumers would rate vintage products more favorably as works of art than they would equivalent modern products. While consumers can perceive that both vintage and modern products are special or scared possessions (Belk et al., 1989), vintage products are perceived to be more art like because of their historical associations and their ability to represent the past (Belk, 1990). Modern products do not carry the history or cultural significance that vintage products have (Belk, 1988). As such, vintage

products should be revered and perceived as more art like than modern alternatives.

One hundred five- participants (57 females, $M_{age} = 34.14$ years, $SD = 13.74$) from Prolific.co took part in the study in exchange for \$0.23. Participants were randomly assigned to either a vintage or a modern product condition and were shown a picture of black sports car. Researchers chose a sports car as their primary manipulation because vintage cars have a distinctive look that easily distinguishes them from modern alternatives (Schindler and Holbrook, 2003). In the vintage condition, the sports car was a 1966 black Ford Mustang. In the Modern condition, the sports car was a 2020 black Ford Mustang. Utilizing the same model and brand of sports car across conditions allowed researchers to control for potentially confounding variables such as brand name, model type, and color. After viewing the image of the sports car, participants completed three items that functioned as a vintage manipulation check: “the car pictured above is old”; “the car pictured above is considered a classic”; “the car pictured above was produced in an earlier era” ($\alpha = 0.93$), before rating the degree to which the image they just saw “*could be considered a work of art*”(1-7 scale; Estes et al., 2018). Participants concluded the study by answering demographic questions.

The three items of the vintage manipulation check were averaged to form an overall measure. The results confirmed that the manipulation was successful. Participants in the vintage condition ($M = 6.04$, $SD = 0.92$) perceived that the sports car was older than participants in the modern condition ($M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.41$; $t(103) = 14.774$, $p < .001$). Additionally, the results of an independent samples t-test confirmed that participants in the vintage condition ($M = 5.36$, $SD = 1.26$) perceived that the sports car was a work of art to a greater extent than participants in the modern condition ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.58$; $t(103) = 4.735$, $p < .001$). Pretest results confirm that participants perceive that vintage products are works of art to a greater extent than modern

alternatives.

Main Experiment Procedures

One hundred seven participants (59 females, Mage = 31.90 years, SD = 11.28) were recruited from Prolific.co to participate in the experiment in exchange for \$1.00. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions in an experiment with product type (vintage vs. modern) as the main predictor of product evaluations.

Researchers invited participants to complete a study that examined people's thoughts and opinions about an online product listing. Investigators utilized a product listing as their manipulation for a couple reasons. First, a significant portion of vintage and second-hand products are bought online. Since 2019, the online second-hand market where vintage products are sold has grown by 69 percent (Padmavathy et al., 2019; Thredup, 2020). Thus, it would make sense for researchers to utilize an online product listing. Second, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no research examines the art infusion effect in an online setting. If this research finds that the art infusion effect can occur in an online context, then it extends the scopes of its effect.

Once participants agreed to participate in the study, they were shown a picture of a fictitious product listing accompanied by a set of instructions. The product listing featured a picture of a tan leather jacket, which functioned as the primary promoted product, and a brief product description. At the top of the product listing were the same images of a sports car used in the pretest. In the vintage condition, the sports car was a 1966 Ford Mustang accompanied with the slogan "imagine the good times of the 1960s." In the modern condition, the sports car was a 2020 Ford Mustang with the slogan "imagine the good times of the 2020s." Once participants finished viewing the product listing, they completed the same three item manipulation check used in the pretest ($\alpha = 0.93$).

After completing the manipulation check, participants completed a series of questions about the leather jacket from the product listing. First, participants evaluated the jacket on the same seven-point differential scale used by Hagtvedt and Patrick (2008a, $\alpha = 0.96$). Next, after completing the product evaluation scale, participants answered various questions regarding the aesthetic appeal of the sports car used in the manipulation. Research indicates that aesthetics has an impact on how consumers perceive products (Hagen, 2021; Hoegg et al, 2010). It is possible that any difference observed between the two conditions is because one of the cars is perceived to be more aesthetically pleasing than the other and not because the car is vintage. To control for this prospect, participants were asked to “please rate the car pictured above on the following dimensions”: (e.g., beautiful, pretty, artistic, aesthetically pleasing; 1-7 scale; Wu et al., 2017; $\alpha = 0.87$). Researchers also asked participants for their general attitudes towards leather jackets ($\alpha = 0.97$) and Ford Mustangs ($\alpha = 0.96$) as additional controls (1-7 scale; Van Horen & Pieters, 2017). Finally, participants completed some demographic variables before concluding the study.

Results

Manipulation Check

The results confirmed that the manipulation was successful. Participants in the vintage condition ($M = 6.13$, $SD = 0.88$) perceived that the sports car was older than participants in the modern condition ($M = 2.42$, $SD = 1.24$; $t(105) = 17.887$, $p < .001$). Additionally, there was no significant difference between conditions when it came to the aesthetic appeal of the car ($M_{\text{vintage}} = 5.49$ vs. $M_{\text{modern}} = 5.30$, $t(105) = 0.976$, $p = .33$), attitude towards leather jackets ($M_{\text{vintage}} = 4.47$ vs. $M_{\text{modern}} = 4.77$, $t(105) = -0.139$, $p = .89$), and general attitude towards Ford Mustangs ($M_{\text{vintage}} = 5.24$ vs. $M_{\text{modern}} = 5.31$, $t(105) = -0.299$, $p = .76$).

Product Evaluation

Researchers predicted that participants in the vintage condition would evaluate the jacket more favorably than participants in the modern condition. The results of an independent samples t-test confirmed this prediction, as participants in the vintage condition ($M = 4.72$, $SD = 1.39$) had more favorable product evaluations than participants in the modern condition ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 1.53$; $t(105) = 1.856$, $p = 0.06$). Thus, the results reveal that the presence of a vintage product favorable influences product evaluation compared with an identical modern product.

Discussion of Experiment 1

The results of the first experiment demonstrate that vintage products used as works of art have a positive influence on product evaluations, supporting the first hypothesis. This effect occurs even though the two sports cars are the same brand/model, color, and are statistically identical when it comes to aesthetic appeal. Thus, because the car is vintage, product evaluations for the jacket are higher because it is presented in its vicinity.

Experiment 2

The goal of experiment 2 is to replicate the results of the first experiment (H1). Furthermore, experiment 2 demonstrates that the results observed in the first experiment are because of consumers' positive attitude towards vintage products spilling over to the promoted product, and thereby improving its product evaluations (H2). This study is also designed to demonstrate the robustness of the hypothesized effect by using a different product category for both the vintage product and the product promoted near it.

Experiment 2 Pretest

Like the previous study, researchers ran a pretest to see if consumers perceive that

vintage products are works of art. One hundred and six- participants (53 females, $M_{age} = 30.37$ years, $SD = 10.46$) from Prolific.co took part in the study in exchange for \$0.23. Participants were randomly assigned to either a vintage or a modern product condition and were shown a picture of a stove and a refrigerator (i.e., kitchen appliances).

Researchers chose kitchen appliances as their primary manipulation because retro kitchen appliances have a classic and distinctive look that easily distinguishes them from modern appliances. To control for various factors (e.g., color, brand, and condition) across conditions, researchers selected an appliance brand that specialized in the sale of modern and “retro styled” appliances instead of selecting vintage products. While not truly vintage, researchers believed that participants would assume that the retro styled kitchen appliances were vintage despite the fact they were modern reproductions of the vintage style. To demonstrate this, participants completed a manipulation check similar to the one used in the first experiment (e.g., The appliances pictured above look old; $\alpha = 0.87$). Finally, participants concluded the study by completing the same art item used in the previous study and some demographic questions.

The three items of the vintage manipulation check were averaged to form an overall measure. The results confirmed that the manipulation was successful. Participants in the vintage condition ($M = 5.52$, $SD = 1.06$) perceived that the appliances were older than participants in the modern condition ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 1.38$; $t(104) = 7.123$, $p < .001$). Additionally, the results of an independent samples t-test confirmed that participants in the vintage condition ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.53$) perceived that the kitchen appliances were a work of art to a greater extent than participants in the modern condition ($M = 2.57$, $SD = 1.34$; $t(104) = 1.625$, $p = .10$). Thus, the results of the pretest confirm that participants perceive that vintage products are works of art to a greater extent than modern alternatives.

Main Experiment Procedures

Researchers recruited one hundred seven participants (65 females, Mage = 34.64 years, SD = 12.38) from Prolific.co to take part in the experiment in exchange for \$0.65. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions in an experiment with product type (vintage vs. modern) as the main predictor of product evaluations.

Like the previous experiment, researchers invited participants on Prolific.co to take part in a study looking to examine people's thoughts and opinions about an online product listing. The product listing was identical in style to the previous study, with the primary manipulation (i.e., the vintage product) at the top and the neighboring product listed at the bottom. However, instead of looking at a fashion item (i.e., a leather jacket) displayed near the vintage product, the product for this study was a cast iron skillet. Additionally, instead of a sports car, the primary manipulation for this study was the same picture of kitchen appliances used in the pretest. In the vintage condition, the kitchen appliances were retro styled and accompanied with the slogan "imagine cooking in the 1950s." In the modern condition, the kitchen appliances were modern styled with the slogan "imagine cooking in the 2020s." Once participants finished viewing the product listing, they completed the same three item manipulation check used in the pretest ($\alpha = 0.93$).

After completing the manipulation check, participants evaluated the skillet on the same scale used in the previous study ($\alpha = 0.96$). Additionally, participants completed an attitude scale designed to measure consumers attitudes towards the kitchen appliances used as the manipulation. Participants were asked to please express your general attitudes towards the appliances (negative/positive, unpleasant/pleasant, bad/good, unfavorable/favorable; 1-7 scale; $\alpha = 0.97$; Van Horen & Pieters, 2017). Finally, participants completed measures of product

scarcity before completing the study. Research indicates that consumers have a strong desire to acquire scarce products and will compete aggressively with other consumers to acquire them (Gupta and Gentry, 2016; Kristofferson et al., 2017). It is possible that because vintage products are hard to acquire, consumers might perceive that they are scarcer than newer alternatives (Belk, 1991; Brough and Isaac, 2012). Thus, it is possible that it is not the consumers attitudes towards vintage products that spills over but the consumers perception of scarcity. To control for this, participants completed two measures that looked at the consumers perception of scarcity regarding the skillet (the skillet pictured above is rare, the skillet pictured above is scarce; 1-7 scale; $\alpha = 0.98$; Smith et al., 2016).

Results

Manipulation Check

The three items of the vintage manipulation check were averaged to form an overall measure. The results confirmed that the manipulation was successful. Participants in the vintage condition ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 1.00$) perceived that the kitchen appliances was older than participants in the modern condition ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 1.58$; $t(105) = 3.675$, $p < .001$). Additionally, there were no differences in scarcity perceptions across conditions (Vintage 1.70 vs Modern 2.01; $t(105) = -1.21$, $p = .228$). Thus, the results observed in this study are not because of a scarcity transfer.

Product Evaluation

Researchers predicted that participants in the vintage condition would evaluate the skillet more favorably than participants in the modern condition. The results of an independent samples t-test confirmed this prediction, as participants in the vintage condition ($M = 5.92$, $SD = 1.24$)

had more favorable product evaluations than participants in the modern condition ($M = 5.50$, $SD = 1.22$; $t(105) = 1.734$, $p = 0.08$).

Attitude Toward the Appliances

Researchers predicted that participants in the vintage condition would have more positive attitude towards the kitchen appliances than participants in the modern condition. The results of an independent samples t-test confirmed this prediction, as participants in the vintage condition ($M = 5.15$, $SD = 1.29$) had more positive attitudes towards the kitchen appliances than participants in the modern condition ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 1.23$; $t(105) = 2.235$, $p < 0.05$).

Mediation Analysis

Finally, researchers conducted a mediation analysis using 10000 bootstrapped samples (Hayes 2012; PROCESS SPSS macro; model 4) with product type (modern vs. vintage) as an independent variable, product evaluations as a dependent variable, and attitude towards the vintage products as the mediator. The results revealed a significant indirect effect of attitude towards the kitchen appliances ($\beta = .2807$, $SE = .13$, 95% CI: .0366, .5595). Thus, the results of the serial analysis confirmed the research hypothesis. The difference observed in participants product evaluation regarding the skillet were the result of the consumers attitude towards the vintage appliances transferring onto the cast iron skillet.

Discussion of Experiment 2

The results of the second experiment provided further evidence that vintage products cause an art spillover effect onto neighboring promoted products, providing additional support of the first hypothesis. The experiment replicated the results of the previous experiment while also showing that the effect can occur in various product categories. Additionally, this study also

showed that it is the consumers positive attitude towards the vintage product acts as a mediator that causes product evaluations to increase, supporting the second hypothesis.

Experiment 3

The goal of the third experiment is to demonstrate that fit between the vintage product and the promoted product is important for any positive spillover effect to occur. Specifically, the goal of the third experiment is to show that perceived fit is a boundary condition to the effects observed in the previous studies (H3). To test this, this experiment tests the effects of vintage versus modern products as works of art on the product evaluations of neighboring promoted products like the previous studies. However, this study utilizes a neighboring product that does not fit well with the art products.

Experiment 3 Pretest

A pretest was conducted to determine fit between the vintage product and promoted products. Researchers believed that products that did not complement each other would not fit well together. One hundred twenty-two participants (65 females, $M_{age} = 36.94$ years, $SD = 13.32$) from Prolific.co took part in a pretest in exchange for \$0.20. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions (good fit vs. bad fit). Participants were asked to determine the degree of fit between the same vintage products used in the previous study (i.e., retro appliances) and another promoted product. In the good fit condition, participants were shown the same picture of a cast iron skillet used in the second experiment. Researchers believed that the skillet complement the kitchen appliances because both are utilized together in the same environment. In the poor fit condition, participants were shown the same picture of a leather jacket used in the first experiment. Researchers believed that the jacket did not complement the kitchen appliances because they are not typically consumed together. Participants were then asked three questions

regarding how well they perceived the products “fit” with each other ($\alpha = 0.83$, Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2016) before concluding the pretest. The results of the an independent samples t-test confirmed that participants in the good fit condition ($M = 4.81$, $SD = 1.19$) perceived that the products fit together better than participants in the poor fit condition ($M = 2.75$, $SD = 1.19$; $t(120) = -9.564$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, the pretest confirmed that a leather jacket was not a good fit with the kitchen appliances.

Main Experiment Procedures

After confirming that a leather jacket was not a good fit with the kitchen appliances, researchers proceeded to the main study. Researchers recruited one hundred and nine participants (65 females, $M_{\text{age}} = 34.80$ years, $SD = 11.07$) from Prolific.co to take part in the experiment in exchange for \$0.65. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions in an experiment with product type (vintage vs. modern) as the main predictor of product evaluations.

Like the previous experiment, researchers invited participants on Prolific.co to take part in a study looking to examine people’s thoughts and opinions about an online product listing. Additionally, just like the previous experiment, the product listing featured appliances (either vintage or retro) listed at the top and another product listed near it at the bottom. However, instead of looking at a cast iron skillet, participants were shown a picture of a leather jacket used in the pretest. Participants then completed the same vintage manipulation check, product evaluations scale, and attitudes towards appliances scale used in the previous experiment before concluding the study.

Results

Manipulation Check

The results confirmed that the manipulation was successful. Participants in the vintage

condition ($M = 5.27$, $SD = 1.22$) perceived that the kitchen appliances was older than participants in the modern condition ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 1.44$; $t(107) = 4.506$, $p < .001$). Thus, participants perceived that the appliances were vintage in the vintage condition.

Product Evaluation

Researchers predicted that a spillover effect would not occur because the promoted product did not fit the vintage product. As such, participants in the vintage condition should have identical product evaluations as participants in the modern condition. The results of an independent samples t-test confirmed this prediction, as participants in the vintage condition ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 1.44$) and the modern condition ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 1.40$) had statistically identical product evaluations ($t(107) = 1.250$, $p = 0.214$). Additionally, researchers probed the results of the experiment to see if fit had any effect on consumers attitudes towards the vintage appliances. The results revealed that consumers attitudes towards the vintage appliances ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 1.42$) and the modern appliances ($M = 4.86$, $SD = 1.26$) were statistically identical ($t(107) = 1.325$, $p = 0.188$). Thus, a lack of fit between products had a negative effect on the consumers attitude towards the appliances.

Discussion of Experiment 3

The results of the third experiment provide an important boundary condition for the effects observed in the previous experiment. For any type of positive spillover effect to occur from vintage products, they must fit with the neighboring promoted product, confirming the third hypothesis. If there is no fit between the products, consumers attitudes towards the vintage product will not transfer and a spillover effect will not occur.

General Discussion

The purpose of this research is to examine vintage products as works of art. The results show that vintage products influence other products through a spillover effect. Like the spillover effect observed for visual art (Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2008a), this research shows that consumers perceive products more favorably when they are presented near vintage products. This effect occurs because consumers' positive attitudes towards the vintage products transfer from the vintage product to the neighboring promoted product. However, this effect does not occur if the consumer perceives that the products do not fit well with each other.

This research contributes to our understanding of vintage products by showing how vintage products influences consumers' perceptions of other products. While previous research has shown that vintage products are perceived differently by consumers (Amatulli et al., 2018), this research is the first to show that vintage products can have a positive influence on other products. Specifically, this research is the first to show that consumers positive attitudes towards vintage products can transfer from the vintage product to another product promoted near it.

Additionally, this research extends the scope of the art spillover effect. While previous research has shown that visual art has a positive influence on product evaluations (Estes et al., 2018; Naletelich and Paswan, 2018), research has not shown that other, more pedestrian items can have a similar effect. However, unlike with more traditional forms of art, this research shows that a spillover effect for vintage products only occurs if the vintage product is a good fit with the promoted product. Thus, while vintage products are like more traditional forms of art, the fact the vintage products are still consumer products provides an additional complication.

The results of the investigation generate practical implications for retailers. Specifically, this research shows the value of using vintage products in their retail atmosphere. By utilizing vintage products, retailers can increase the value of the other products bought and sold in their

retail environments. This is especially true for second-hand stores that routinely sell vintage products because they routinely carry vintage products anyway. By strategically utilizing vintage products, second-hand retailers can increase the value of their products while simultaneously marketing the vintage product for sale. In other words, retailers can benefit from utilizing vintage products.

To gain better insights into this transfer effect future research should examine this effect a physical store setting. While researchers believe that the effects observed in this research should generalize in a real-world setting, all experiments utilized in this research took place in a fictitious online setting. To provide additional external validity, future research should conduct an experiment in a physical retailer to see if the effects observed in this research generalize to a physical retail environment or if they are exclusive to an online setting.

Future research should also investigate whether there are any additional differences between how consumers piece vintage products and traditional art. While this research showed that fit is important for vintage products, researchers believe that there is other difference between vintage products and traditional forms of art that might hamper or improve the spillover effect observed in this research. For example, does the age of the vintage product have an influence on attitude transfer? Research shows that consumers value vintage products because they are old. It is possible that the older product is (i.e., the more vintage a product is) the greater the spillover effect will be on other products.

Finally, future research should investigate whether if vintage products have any other downstream spillover effects in the retail environment. Specifically, research should investigate to see if vintage products make retailers feel more luxurious. While research shows that art is often used to make retailers feel more luxurious (Joy et al., 2014), the effects of vintage products

on the retail environment has not shown the same effect. While research has shown that vintage products make retailers feel like museums (Foster and McLelland, 2015), the downstream effects of this have not been examined. It would be interesting to see if vintage products can also be used to convey luxury in the retail environment just like traditional forms of art.

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