Urban Archetypal Hedonistas (34:00)
Marylouise Caldwell, The University of Sydney, Australia
Paul Henry, The University of Sydney, Australia

A meta-analytic review of research into a market orientation suggests that successfully implementing a marketing orientation associates with higher revenue and profits (Kirca, Jayachandran and O’Bearden 2005). Yet academic literature provides limited guidance as to how this goal is practically achieved (For an exception see Gebhardt, Carpenter and Sherry 2007). One observed barrier is an inability by firm personnel to readily empathize with target consumers and understand their values, consumption priorities and lifestyles. In this film, we present representations of female consumer archetypes found to resonate strongly with marketing practitioners operating in markets for food, fun, fashion and furniture in Sydney Australia. The representations are the result of academic research, consultation with market researchers and empirical testing of the film on consumers and marketing professionals.

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The consumption of spaces and places within our homes is expressive of culture. Using observation and ethnographic depth interviews with 30 middleclass Qatari families, we hoped to understand the meanings of home spaces and artifacts in their lives. We find that the home and its spaces and objects are encoded differently by men and women, particularly in terms of notions of privacy. Historically, the idea of personal versus shared spaces within homes is a relatively new one. Tuan (1982) shows that it is only within the last few hundred years that notions of privacy and of separate public and private spaces within the home have emerged. Notions of private space are also encoded architecturally and intimacy within the nuclear family is a concept that has grown as the presence of extended families sharing the same home has diminished. As Rybchynski (1986) points out, it was highly unusual for someone in the sixteenth century to have his or her own room and it was another century before people had rooms where they could retreat from the public view. In the process of privatization of areas of the home, individual family members began to think of areas of the home as being their territories (Altman 1975). Even when a particular area like the bathroom must be shared with other family members, it is common to temporarily claim private space for hygienic, purifying, and beautification rituals, on either a scheduled or first-come/first-served basis (Kira 1970). All of these distinctions are expanded in the Arabian Gulf. When these spaces are encroached upon by others, there is a sense of violation of privacy and person. There is therefore an inclination to formally or informally designate spaces and boundaries defining personal space, spaces for close kin, and spaces where gender-segregated friends, neighbors, and strangers can meet within the home.

The Middle Eastern sense of what is totally private is more absolute, due largely to the moral concerns of Islam. Within Arab Muslim homes, there is a sharper distinction between men’s and women’s spaces as well as transitional spaces in moving from one to another. Compared to the West there is also a sharper distinction in these homes between public and private space, often with high exterior perimeter walls and inward facing rooms. Furthermore, there is a sense of private space that a Muslim woman carries with her as she goes from home to marketplace. As Cooper (2001) found for women in Niger, creating and decorating a room of their own was extremely important to their identities as well as their sense of social and economic status. Although some (e.g., Nageeb 2004) have called this enclaving of space a “neo-harem,” reducing rather than increasing women’s sense of space and of control over their lives, our informants find it liberating. While there are also gendered areas within Western households, we find sharper and more formally drawn boundaries within the present study in Qatar. The basis for these differences are cultural and do not arise from prescriptions within Islam, although there is disagreement on this point (Campo 1991; Nageeb 2004).

If clothing can be thought of as a second skin for the individual, home and personal possessions may be seen as a third skin defining who we are by forming a part of our extended self (Belk 1988). Wallendorf and Arnould (1988) found that Americans’ favorite objects were more likely to be linked to personal memories, while those from Muslim Niger were more likely to mention objects linked to social status. They also found gender differences, with men in Niger more likely to cite the Quran and women more likely to cite silver jewelry as well as objects given to them by others. On the other hand, we found less difference, with favorite possessions within the home likely to be sentimental objects, especially for women in out study. The present video focuses more on home spaces and provides a context for further on-going examination of favorite possessions.

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Bodily Experiences of Second Life Consumers
Ebru Ulusoy, The University of Texas-Pan American, USA
Handan Vicdan, The University of Texas-Pan American, USA

This video studies the meanings of the body concept in virtual worlds to provide an alternative perspective to the embodiment/disembodiment debate. We explore whether the body is present in virtual worlds, and if it is, how this presence takes place.

The concept of body has long been an interest for consumer researchers. The main focus of this interest evolved around the corporeal body, 1) as a means of self-presentation and socialization (Thompson and Hirschman 1995), and 2) as a project that modern consumers work on (Featherstone, Hepworth and Turner 1991; Schouten 1991). Thus, modern consumers treated their bodies as not an ‘end’ but a ‘means’ of conveying a desirable image to others. Moreover, with the emergence of new communication technologies, the focus of the debate among social scientists has become the presence of the body. Some argued that these technologies have enabled people to break out of the finitude of their embodiment and engage in disembodiment (Balsamo 2000; Stone 2000; Turkle 1995; Ward 2001). Others have contested the idea of the body becoming futile in virtual worlds, and advocated the essential role of embodiment in any human experience (Argyle and Shields 1996; Flichy 2007; Froy 2003; Hansen 2006; Mingers 2001). These perspectives in the literature have been briefly reviewed in the video.

The growing semiotic potential of the virtual worlds allows for visual representation of one’s physical self through images such as avatars and photos, which brought another perspective to the embodiment/disembodiment debate. In this videography, we explore the symbolic and experiential construction of body through avatars, which can be defined as “graphic icons representing users through various forms” (Chung 2005, p.538), in a three-dimensional virtual world called Second Life (SL), where experiences are completely user created.