

# Proposition of a Pleasurable-Ends Model of Manipulation in Marketing

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## **Abstract**

Despite frequent accusations of manipulation by the public and the media, the debate within the marketing community has only just begun. We argue that, in the absence of a common position, broadening the community's perspective to other domains can be fruitful. In this article, we adopt the perspectives of philosophy to better understand what constitutes undue manipulation in marketing. We propose a Pleasurable-Ends Model of Manipulation in Marketing that is based on the use of cues that alter the emotional attraction of some end relevant to consumers, such that this end appears more desirable, thereby making it more likely that consumers will buy to reach this end. Based on this definition, we discuss when manipulation in marketing is (un)ethical, and identify manipulation that violates consumer trust to be especially problematic. We close with a discussion of implications for marketing practitioners.

**Keywords:** *marketing; manipulation; consumers*

**Track:** Social Responsibility & Ethics