

Power Stories: A Qualitative Investigation into Consumers' Narratives of Powerfulness and Powerlessness

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Cite as:

Anin Camille, VALETTE-FLORENCE Pierre (2021), Power Stories: A Qualitative Investigation into Consumers' Narratives of Powerfulness and Powerlessness. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 50th, (94727)

Paper from the 50th Annual EMAC Conference, Madrid, May 25-28, 2021



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Abstract

Consumer power is both a managerial buzz-word and a contested concept in the literature. In an ever-changing world where the marketplace is a key institution to ensure transition toward more sustainable societies, knowing more about how consumers define their own power and experience it could help firms and public policies to harness the transformative potential of consumer power and to potentially tie it closer to the notion of common good. This research builds on a constructivist grounded theory approach to explore the nature and characteristics of consumers' subjective experiences of power. Two types of power dynamics are highlighted: consumer-market interactions (power as potential influence or escapism from market influence) and consumer-market-society interactions (power as a moral or social force). The relationships between power and transgression shed light on the temporality of power. Implications for future research in brand relationships are discussed.

Keywords: *consumer power; grounded theory ; consumer-brand relationships*

Track: Consumer Behaviour