

Individual and collective identities in consocial communities: Theorising new forms of on and offline social practice in relation to tensions between individual and collective identities

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Abstract

In this paper we theorize about the consocial, brand-related consumption community as a new form of on and offline social practice. Consumption community is seen from a process ontology in which tensions between individual and collective identities are regarded as performances which express and expose underlying tensions between collective and individual identities. We apply self-determination theory as a micro-level empirical lens through which to study and understand individual's relationship to the community and Actor-Network Theory and Practice Theory to understand the meta-level processes and interactions at the collective level. Whilst community culture is a well explored area, highlighting the stable cultural attributes of such communities, this paper empirically explores, through the analysis of a running community (often called running crews), less cohesive, loose coupled communities that are characterized by weak interdependency reflecting modern urban lifestyles. The aim of the paper is to develop a theory of these fluid, heterogenous and complex consocial communities from the collective AND the individual levels.

Keywords: *Consumption Communities; Consociality; Self determination theory*

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