

Trickster Consumers: Applying the Trickster Lens to Understand Socially-Unconstrained Appetite-Seeking Consumption

Nathan Warren
BI Norwegian Business School
Linda Price
University of Wyoming

Cite as:

Warren Nathan, Price Linda (2024), Trickster Consumers: Applying the Trickster Lens to Understand Socially-Unconstrained Appetite-Seeking Consumption. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 53rd, (119587)

Paper from the 53rd Annual EMAC Conference, Bucharest, Romania, May 28-31, 2024



Trickster Consumers: Applying the Trickster Lens to Understand Socially-Unconstrained Appetite-Seeking Consumption

Abstract

Marketplace mythologies drawing on psychological archetypes shape consumer cultures. The recurrent presence of trickster characters in global mythology led prominent psychologists to suggest the trickster archetype reflects a fundamental part of the human psyche. Surprisingly, there is almost no consumer research on tricksters. What insights into consumer psychology and culture does the trickster archetype reveal? This paper distinguishes the trickster from related archetypes by emphasizing the trickster's pre-social mindset and lack of social orientation. Unbound from society, the trickster is driven by insatiable appetites, which result in unbridled, self-focused, gratification seeking. We employ the trickster as a lens to examine 'dirtbag' consumers—a subculture of consumers who are singularly driven by their insatiable appetites for wilderness consumption. The trickster lens may be uniquely useful for understanding consumption that is driven by insatiable appetites, lacks a social orientation, and is sustained by creative tricks that result in ambiguous collateral social disruptions.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Theory and Philosophy of Marketing*

Track: Consumer Behaviour