

ESSAY

Submitted 12.01.2019. Approved 04.22.2020

Evaluated through a double blind-review process. Scientific Editor:

Translated version

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0034-759020200406>

NETWORKS OF DESIRE OR ENJOYMENT? CONSUMPTION EXPERIENCE AND NEW TECHNOLOGICAL AGENCIES

In the international debate on consumer studies, the literature on “consumption experience” has been available for more than three decades since its beginning with the seminal study of Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) on hedonic consumption, and that of Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) on the experiential aspects of consumption. These studies aimed to define a consumption experience as a search for fun, fantasy, sensory excitement, and pleasure, all resulting in a magical, extraordinary, and memorable experience.

The importance of esthetic, symbolic, and emotional aspects in consumer studies goes back to the 1950s, with works by Gardner and Levy (1955), Levy (1959), and Levy and Czepiel (1974). However, consumption experience only became the dominant theme when studies by Hirschman and Holbrook argued in favor of retrieving the feelings and emotions involved in the consumption process. Holbrook (2006, p. 259) even criticized the number of publications that failed to mention the research on the theme that had already been created, and insisted that the theme of consumption experience was already present in analyses, such as those by Alderson (1957) and Abott (1955). He suggested that the roots of the concept might be traced to the contributions made by classic economic scholars as mentioned in the treatise on happiness by Lebergott (1993). Even so, Holbrook and Hirschman were repeatedly cited as the founders of a new era in which consumer experience had become “a key element in understanding consumer behavior and, for some, a basis for the economics and marketing of the future” (Carù & Cova, 2003, p. 267).

Although the roots of the “consumer experience” concept appeared before the 1980s, something was happening in the historical context that gave new meaning to the debate on this topic and transformed Hirschman and Holbrook’s articles into founding texts in the field of consumer and marketing studies. I am referring to the moment when a new type of social life started to take shape as the result of a new economic order on one hand, and a new type of time–space experience on the other. The latter was called the “postmodern experience” by the American cultural critic Fredric Jameson. The emergence of a “post-industrial or consumer society, the society of the media or the spectacle, or multinational capitalism” (Jameson, 1998, p. 3) was related to a cultural about-turn that transformed consumption into “an act of producing experiences” (Firat & Dholakia, 1998, p. 96). Under these circumstances, consuming experiences became a new approach in the field of consumer and marketing studies (Carù & Cova, 2003; Gilovich, Kumar, & Jampol, 2015; Jantzen, Fitchett, Ostegaard, & Vetner, 2012; Lanier & Rader, 2015; Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Schmitt, 1999; Woodward & Holbrook, 2013).

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Hirschman and Holbrook's articles do not highlight the importance of the historical context of the 1980s in their proposition of the notion of consumption experience. However, they do reveal the importance of this new moment when they show an interest in discussing the experiential aspects of consumption based on a specific class of products, namely, cultural and esthetic products. According to Hirschman and Holbrook, these products are more akin to the concept they propose, given the capacity of these products to generate strong emotional involvement. The authors were interested in presenting the limits of the "information processing model"—considered to be the hegemonic model of consumer research—to understand the new type of consumption that was emerging. In the two above-mentioned articles they ended up condensing two objectives that are directly related to the debate on consumption experience: On the one hand, they proposed a way of understanding this category that is epistemologically and methodologically different from the way of understanding it based on the dominant model. On the other hand, they suggested mobilizing the consumption experience concept to understand the aforementioned specific class of products. They insisted that "all products can be hedonically experienced by consumers" (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982, p. 96). However, the emphasis they placed on the consumption of immaterial goods ended up generating a certain conceptual overlap between the two fields of analysis of a consumption experience. The first field proposes the understanding of a "consumption experience" as constituting any consumption practice; the second field regards the consumption of an experience as a specific type of consumption, in which what is being sold is a conception of an experience as a commodity (Campbell, 2007; Lanier & Rader, 2015).

In their search for a differentiation that they considered necessary for "consumption experience," Carù and Cova (2003) attributed a more sociological conception to it, which would accommodate simple, ordinary experiences outside the market—whatever it might be that people enjoy in their family lives, with their friends, or as citizens. As a counterpoint to this, they proposed the concept of "consumer experience," meaning experiences emanating from the market, particularly those aimed at the extraordinary and memorable, which is the focus of "experiential marketing." When Woodward interviewed Holbrook, however, the latter claimed that this differentiation made no sense, since "consumption experience" defines the whole of our experience of life (Woodward & Holbrook, 2013).

In my opinion, "consumption experience" is already being used as a marketing category, and it makes no sense to extrapolate its meaning beyond the bounds of the market. Although Holbrook emphasized that there are experiences outside

the market, the term "consumption experience" already has its own particular birthmark, in the sense that it has redefined the concept of experience in the context of consumer and marketing studies. According to Holbrook, the proposition of this category generated resistance in the academic field from those who still insisted on "the good old days when we were concerned with the behaviour of buyers" (Woodward & Holbrook, 2013, p. 326). However, the term was novel for a field in which an understanding of the consumer as a mere rational being was no longer enough. The "consumption experience" category also finally shaped a new way for the market to operate, which was based on "selling experiences." Despite insisting that this was not his intention, Holbrook admits that the idea of consumption experiences fueled a trend toward experiential marketing.

When Pine and Gilmore (1999) proposed a new type of experience economy, it was not a coincidence that they argued that the sensations and emotions involved in consumer experiences already existed but that they had not yet been understood as capable of generating value. When the authors wrote a book that, according to Holbrook (2006, p. 259), followed the Harvard Business Review's best practices style, they were aiming at new ways of adding value to companies by focusing on the various business opportunities created when sensations and emotions are marketed. Pine and Gilmore managed to go beyond the initial academic analyses of Holbrook and Hirschman. The reason was that while the latter were busy recovering the academic marketing field's lost focus on the experience of consumption, the former were already seeking to transform experience into merchandise. This stage was served well by the concept of "consumption experience." I now return to Holbrook's statement that "ALL experiences are consumption experiences and that these consumption experiences constitute most of what we do during our waking and even non-waking lives" (Woodward & Holbrook, 2013, p. 325 – my emphasis). This sentence was a premonition of a time, the present time, where it is the market that has invested in transforming all human experiences into consumption experiences.

The term "consumption experience" contains a complex word, "experience," the meaning of which cannot be understood without digressing significantly and examining the thought tradition to which the concept belongs (Carù & Cova, 2003; Jay, 1994; Lasch, 2006). Although Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) do not propose a definition of experience, they create a new concept category, "consumption experience," and assign a meaning to it. That meaning, according to the authors, is related to an "experiential perspective" that is "phenomenological in spirit and considers consumption as a mainly subjective

state of consciousness, with a variety of symbolic meanings, hedonic responses, and esthetic criteria” (p. 132). To indicate the theoretical bases of this category, although the authors do not provide any details, they mention the Freudian concept of the “pleasure principle,” emphasizing its importance from an “experiential perspective” that aims to understand consumption as a search for satisfaction, which in turn is understood as fun and pleasure. If we follow the Freudian analysis, however, the pleasure principle does not fully explain one’s search for the experience of satisfaction. To do so, Freud developed his “beyond the pleasure principle” (Freud, 1996). This referred to an incessant search for satisfaction, understood as a repetition compulsion that is not always synonymous with pleasure, or that might lead someone to find pleasure in displeasure; there are certainly several gradations between these two poles. I shall return to this point because it is central to the argument I develop in this essay.

Before that, however, it is important to highlight that it was from the idea of pleasurable, memorable, and extraordinary experiences that an entire field of research was developed around the concept of consumer experience, although some critical voices indicated the need to consider the risks of excesses that the idea of extraordinary could lead to (Carù & Cova, 2003). Recent analyses show excessive types of consumption, which are experienced in the form of pain (Scott, Cayla, & Cova, 2017) or charged with negativity (Raymen & Smith, 2017; Smith & Raymen, 2017). These challenge the positive conception of “consumption experience” and raise new questions with regard to the idea of pleasurable and extraordinary experiences (Arnould & Price, 1993; Belk & Costa, 1998; Kozinets, 2002), or even to our understanding of what ordinary consumption experiences are (Carù & Cova, 2003).

The current circumstances include an expansion in marketing that promises endless experiences (Loose, 2015) and technological transformations that indicate an increase in our passion for consumption that also tends toward the extreme (Kozinets, Patterson, & Ashman, 2017). Thus, I believe that the consumption experience concept is necessary if we are to examine this excessive appeal to a type of satisfaction that can also become excessive. Research into forms of excessive consumption, however, does not use the concept of consumption experience; it has been limited merely to analyzing the magical universe of consumption and its pleasurable forms. These are two thematic currents that do not intersect; it is as if they belonged to different epistemological and theoretical fields. Therefore, the purpose of my essay is to propose a relationship between these two forms of consumption. I argue that the excessive consumption analyzed in the aforementioned research refers to the same search for satisfaction that is found in the consumption experience concept

proposed by Holbrook and Hirschman, and that the difference may be only one of degree. I suggest, therefore, that we understand consumption experience as a search for drive satisfaction, or for enjoyment (*jouissance*). Thus, this essay begins by discussing what drive satisfaction is: a Freudian concept that was later extended by Lacan (1998), based on enjoyment (*jouissance*). This theoretical path is necessary for us to understand the role that certain cultural forms play in containing or summoning this search for satisfaction/*jouissance*. We shall see how, throughout the 20th century, consumer culture has been transformed into a privileged *locus* for summoning *jouissance*, especially in the final decades of the 20th century with the emergence of new technologies and the rise of the digital era. It is under these circumstances that the excessive call for a consumption experience that is also excessive begins to flourish. To illustrate the theory, I shall be using some empirical examples, particularly from the research conducted by Kozinets *et al.* (2017) on the passion for consumption in the form of sharing images of food online. That research is based on the Deleuzian theory of desire and on its conception of agency—understood as the network itself, the articulation between bodies, machines, algorithms, statements, affects, and others. Therefore, the essay ends by proposing a necessary interconnection between the psychoanalytic notion of drive and the notion of desire in Deleuze (David-Ménard, 2014; Žizek, 2011). Technological agencies can be understood as a way of summoning the *jouissance* that the culture of contemporary consumption has been promoting. Rather than simply being a more in-depth examination of a specific theoretical field or a contribution to it, this essay aims to contribute by proposing certain possibilities for analyzing the field of critical consumption studies. It proposes an interrelation between the experience of consumption and excessive consumption through the concepts of drive and *jouissance*. At the same time, it also argues that the concept of drive satisfaction/*jouissance* has a great deal to contribute to a critical perspective of contemporary studies on consumption and the new technological agencies being supported by the Deleuzian theory of desire.

Consumption experience as a search for drive satisfaction or a search for *jouissance*

I now return to the part where I mentioned the use of Freud’s theory of the pleasure principle in Holbrook and Hirschman’s initial studies on consumption experience. As already mentioned, when discussing the Freudian pleasure principle, Freud’s proposition of a “beyond the pleasure principle” must be addressed. This

is because, as a psychoanalyst, Freud believed that the human search for satisfaction would always result in paradoxical satisfaction: satisfaction that is partial and momentary, that might not result in pleasure, and that would always appeal to excess, with this being reflected in the culture of the time. This search for satisfaction is what Freud called drive.

Drive is one of the most important and complex concepts in Freudian metapsychology and refers to something that operates in a zone of indeterminacy, one of indistinction between the body and the psychic apparatus. This is its source is always somatic, and it only becomes accessible through its psychic representative (Freud, 2014a, 2014b; Ianninni, 2014). According to Žizek (2011), this was the Freudian theory that first raised the fundamental question of the “eroticized body, sustained by libido, organized around erogenous zones; precisely the non-animalistic, non-biological body” (p. 137). That is why this body drive becomes the object of psychoanalysis: the body “as a surface for the inscription of traits of trauma and excessive pleasure, the body through which the unconscious speaks” (p. 138). In the final articles that form the compendium of psychoanalysis (Freud, 2014b), the concept of drive gains a central epistemological status from which all other concepts are derived, such as the unconscious, for example. Freud considered drive to be the main object of psychoanalysis because it determines the human way of desiring, having pleasure, and suffering, involving a body that is formed and transformed by culture.

Drive is characterized as a constant force emerging from inside the body, and the subject has no possibility of escaping from the resulting state of tension. Removing internal excitation, relieving the tension, is what drive aims for, so as to become satisfied, but as this force is constant, satisfaction is always temporary, and the relief that is felt as drive satisfaction can also lead to sensations that are considered unpleasant. When faced with this paradox, Freud developed his concept of “beyond the pleasure principle” (1996), to represent something that takes the individual beyond pleasure and that is not linked to forms that are culturally determined as objects of satisfaction. Being beyond pleasure means that the individual can be led “to not seek their own good” (Copjec, 1994, p. 87). It is due to the development of this “beyond the pleasure principle” that Freud’s initial names for drives - the ego, or self-preservation drive, and sexual drive (Freud, 2014a) – have been changed and renamed as life and death drives. In this essay, I study the death drive notion in more depth, for two reasons: (1) because Freud indicated the association between this concept and “repetition compulsion,” and (2) because of the way the concept was absorbed and explored in greater depth by Lacan (1998), which in turn allows it to be connected to contemporary culture.

Jacques Lacan returned to the problem of the Freudian “beyond the pleasure principle,” starting from the *jouissance* category. Assuming that “the use of the drive function has no other value than that of questioning what is satisfaction” (Lacan, 1998, p. 158), the French psychoanalyst defined drive as the search for *jouissance*, a search that always leaves a vestige of dissatisfaction. He insisted on the impossibility of an empirical object that is capable of fully satisfying the drive, which, “on reaching its goal, learns somehow that this is precisely not the way to achieve satisfaction” (Lacan, 1998, p. 159).

Therefore, drive is always bypassing an unreachable object that is configured as a remnant of a *jouissance* to be recovered. *Jouissance* can be understood as the impossible satisfaction that every drive aims for, which is why for Lacan there is only one drive. This is the death drive, since even libido—which Freud considered to be a life drive—is found in this repetitive circuit, in this compulsion to repetition, and in the search for an impossible satisfaction. In line with this perspective, Žizek (2011) argues that the Freudian death drive, in the sense of the “beyond the pleasure principle,” means the radical “insistence of an organism on endlessly repeating the state of tension” (p. 46).

It is the symbolic instance that bars access to *jouissance*, and thus allows the emergence of the subject of desire and maintains the imaginary coherence of the ego. In other words, to desire, one must accept a loss of *jouissance*. If drive cannot be fully satisfied, it is because the entire assembly of drives and their destinations are in a permanent relationship with the drive inscription in the culture register, the latter understood as being a depository of law and language. For this very reason, Freud developed his thesis of malaise in civilization, based on a central aphorism: that civilization is the result of the renunciation of the direct satisfaction of our drives (Freud, 2011). Lacan insists on this perspective, indicating the symbolic instance that acts as a barrier to *jouissance* and the operation necessary for the emergence of the subject of desire. *Jouissance* is only accessible when the subject becomes lost. It is no coincidence that in Lacan, “the emergence of drive is constantly surrounded” “by the theme of an enjoyment that flirts with the formless enjoyment beyond the pleasure principle, which means, at bottom, enjoyment beyond the submission to representations” (Safatle, 2007, p. 170). This is why Lacan states that “the course of the drive path is the only form of transgression that is permitted to the subject in relation to the pleasure principle” (Lacan, 1998, p. 174). The satisfaction that drive achieves, and that is always partial, is the only possible way to a form of satisfaction that does not abolish one’s being. Therefore, drive can have many destinations and a variety of objects, in the search for something that is invariable: its satisfaction. The barrier to *jouissance* thus

constitutes the subject of desire, which, supported by the pleasure principle, fantasizes about full satisfaction and repeatedly seeks substitute objects and satisfactions to accomplish that impossible satisfaction/enjoyment. Among such objects are the objects of consumer culture.

Drive theory, therefore, is relevant to studies on the theme of “consumption experience,” insofar as the search for drive satisfaction is constitutive of any form of consumption, whether commercial or non-commercial, material or immaterial, and solid or liquid (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2017). For this reason, I consider that the search for drive satisfaction has been the raw material in consumer culture ever since consumer research and marketing became established as a field of knowledge aimed at understanding “what consumers want.” After all, consumer studies have always tried to understand and provide what consumers seek, namely sensory, esthetic, and psychic satisfaction. We have already seen that it was with this objective in mind that the concept of “consumption experience” emerged, including only experiences that were considered “pleasurable” in the extraordinary and positive realm of consumption. What would happen to a culture, however, and to its members, if, instead of barring experiences, this culture were to stimulate experiences of excessive consumption?

Management of enjoyment by consumption: The cultural way in which the operator provides drive satisfaction

Drive theory has rarely been used directly in the field of consumer studies. An exception is Loose (2015), who analyzes the use of art by commercial advertising based on the relationship between drive, consumption, and excess. The author questions how the relationship between science and the market has been sought as a way to guarantee satisfaction beyond the pleasure principle. According to Loose, this involves a logic that operates through addiction, which has become a contemporary response to the search for drive satisfaction through consumption.

In Freud’s drive theory, culture has always been the shield against excess, but it is important not to confuse culture as a symbolic instance—in which prohibiting enjoyment is structural—with the cultural forms that develop under this instance (Lacan, 1998). Our cultural form encourages excessive production and consumption, and promotes satisfaction so that it is constantly consumed. We live in a society of “commanded enjoyment”—an excellent expression used by McGowan (2004, p. 7)—whose functioning logic is organized on the basis of summons to

enjoyment in the form of merchandise. This cultural form is a direct result of a stimulus for consumption that intensified in the second half of the 20th century and gained new impetus with the innovations promoted by technology.

This push toward excess through multiple calls to enjoyment has already been a subject of analysis in the field of consumption in the following ways: (1) in the form of material consumption, or cases of violence in extreme purchasing experiences (Smith & Ramen, 2017); (2) in specific forms of experiential consumption through a strange search for feeling pain (Scott *et al.*, 2017); (3) in the addiction that arises from new modalities of technological consumption, such as in the relationship between electronic games and deviant leisure (Raymen & Smith, 2017); or, (4) in the phenomenon of sharing images of food on social networks (Kozinets *et al.*, 2017). Although such approaches do not use Freud’s drive theory, some of them are based on theoretical fields that derive directly from this perspective (Raymen & Smith, 2017; Smith & Raymen, 2017), or are related to it (Kozinets *et al.*, 2017). In the former case, the authors, aided by the Lacanian approach to enjoyment and based on the interpretation of Slavoj Žižek (2002), analyzed the relationship between capitalism, consumption, and excess. Kozinets *et al.* (2017), on the other hand, drew on Deleuze and Guattari’s (1983, 1987) desire theory to discuss how technology has increased people’s desire for consumption and pushed it to extremes.

These studies illustrate well how contemporary consumer culture calls people to enjoyment. Kozinets *et al.* (2017) reveal these calls occur in the form of new technological agencies, through which the experience of material consumption has been increasingly driven by the virtual world, while simultaneously feeding it. There is an overlap between these forms of consumption through the flow of data and passions that circulate between the virtual world and the real world, driven by the interests of a technological capitalism that, in turn, relies on the “high levels of passionate consumer engagement” (Kozinets *et al.*, 2017, p. 678). The authors delineated what they call the desire production circuit—food consumption, or images of it—in which consumers, software, algorithms, and corporations are engaged in a complex and dynamic feedback system that results in the constant circulation of consumerist passions. The example they provide is consumers sharing their desire for a particular type of food through an image and other consumers reacting to this. Software and algorithms come into play and promote other connections involving food-related companies, from agribusiness firms to supermarkets, and specialty stores to restaurant menus. New images and products are offered, awakening new consumer desires in an immensely wide circuit. This is a process in which

social networks have played a fundamental role in organizing and appealing to people's passions/drives.

In the specific case of the search for satisfaction through the production and consumption of food images, the authors identified a push toward excess, which they called “food porn,” in the sense of pornography as something that is excessive. This excess can occur both in its physical and its imagery sense. There is, however, a biological limit to how much one can eat, and if this is exceeded, the body suffers. The virtual, on the other hand, promotes unlimited consumption, freeing the body from its physical constraints. It conveys images of food—either ordinary or extreme—and channels a flow of desires that extend beyond food or images of food; one craves the spectacle itself—the fantastic event that one must share. This circuit goes from the real to the virtual and vice versa—because there is no longer a way of separating an online version of life from its offline version, as the authors rightly indicate—. In this circuit, the consumer is invited to enjoy so as to set in motion a machine that “passionately devours food, not only with the mouth, but also with the eyes, thumbs, and ears. The machine consumes food and images linked to other desiring-machines such as cameras, smartphones, Instagram photos, friends, bloggers, websites and corporations” (Kozinets *et al.*, 2017, p. 672). In the end, it is what is excessive in terms of its call (Prado, 2013) in the context of techno-capitalism that has been transforming the nature of consumption, consumer research, and marketing, as well as the human search for satisfaction through consumption.

Kozinets *et al.* (2017) provide a good illustration of consumption experience as the search for drive satisfaction that I have proposed in this essay. The authors do not use the “consumption experience” category but there are numerous passages in the text that consider the relationships among experience, consumption, and the search for excessive satisfaction. Some of these passages reveal that the authors are aware of the use this concept has acquired in marketing, in the sense of to what extent “an experience design mentality underlies the intimate intertwining of information and consumer technology, capitalism and consumer behavior” (p. 663). Other references highlight a more psychoanalytic use of the concept of experience and its relationship to drive, as when they argue that “the virtuality of technology raises open-ended possibilities for new experiences of body and passion, and its hunger for attention-grabbing images elicit transgressive extremes in order to build a liberated flow of energy” (p. 675). This conception of experience is supported by the desire theory of Deleuze and Guattari's (1983, 1987), who understand desire as energy and flow. Freudian psychoanalysis, however, also introduces a conception of energy through the drive concept. Drive

in Freud is a constant flow of energy in search of satisfaction. It is intensive and always excessive. Desire is formed precisely due to the barrier to this search for total satisfaction. Therefore, although a greater elaboration was necessary to establish the theoretical affinities between the conceptions of desire as energy in Deleuze and Guattari, of drive in Freud, and of *jouissance*/enjoyment in Lacan, we can state that there is a profound interrelation between their meanings, as Zizek (2011) and David-Ménard (2014) argued. Thus, when Kozinets *et al.* (2017) state that the current technology network is the complete realization of the idea of desire as an incessant movement of energy, one can link this idea with that of the movement of drive. This is a machine for producing enjoyment, an “impassioned and commercially-directed collective connection,” that, according to the authors, represents the current state of consumer culture (p. 679).

If we assume the psychoanalytic perspective as expressed in this essay, however, the promise of enjoyment does not mean surrendering to it; even in a culture that calls on its subjects to enjoy, full enjoyment is structurally forbidden. However, what happens to the subject's experience when nothing changes from the point of view of the barrier to enjoyment/*jouissance*, but from the point of view of what is on offer, everything changes? On the subjective level, if we return to the definition of drive as a search for full but impossible satisfaction, a cultural form structured around the promise of enjoyment does not allow the subject any more relief, even if it is temporary. The reason is that the more drive satisfaction is promised, the “more frustrated and, therefore, reinitiated it becomes, as happens with all addition mechanisms” (Dufour, 2013, p. 386), being characterized by a compulsion for repetition. This is precisely what feeds the “network of desire,” in the sense attributed to it by Kozinets *et al.* (2017).

Final considerations on the short circuit of drive in consumption experience

Throughout this essay, I have argued in favor of theorizing consumption experience as being a search for drive satisfaction or enjoyment. Based on this, I have proposed to expand the concept of “consumption experience” to include analyses of the forms of excessive consumption present in consumer studies literature, especially those studies that have examined virtual consumption. Such analyses have shown how much these forms of consumption have invested in extreme satisfaction experiences.

The drive for satisfaction was presented as transgressive in repressive cultural forms, which explains the belief of Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 1987) in human emancipation through the release

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of desire as flow of energy. In a culture of enjoyment, however, this drive is short-circuited in the service of a technological capitalism of consumption that places transgression on another level and promises to deterritorialize the body's desire by appealing to the unlimited, offering consumers the possibility of losing themselves in a flow of images and fantasies. The latter are used "for exhibiting one's life to the network and witnessing their reactions, for consuming the displays of others' private worlds exhibited in real-time, for being the first person in your networks to post something new, just as it is about to go viral" (Kozinets *et al.*, 2017, p. 679).

This push to enjoyment has resulted in greater consumption, which is increasingly expanding its sphere similar to how it has led to processes of infinite repetition. This phenomenon poses unprecedented epistemological, theoretical, and ethical challenges for the field of consumer studies. Herein, in an attempt to help in identifying these challenges, I proposed that we understand consumption experience as a search for drive satisfaction or for enjoyment. I argued that the concept of consumption experience appeared in a historical context that allowed it to serve as the foundation of experiential marketing, aimed at producing increasingly intense forms of satisfaction that have continued to accelerate with new information technologies. Using drive theory, I went beyond the phenomenological understanding of consumption experience, indicating to what extent satisfaction may not result in something pleasurable or fun, especially when one is constantly driven to a search for extreme satisfaction. From an ethical perspective, I questioned the benefits of this search for satisfaction urged by a culture that appeals to the excessive; thus, I arrived at contemporary analyses of online consumption in social networks/media, which have been praised for their passionate engagement of consumers, without discussing the consequences of this more critically. Kozinets *et al.* (2017) warn that researchers in the consumer field must be cautious and not hesitate to examine the ontological and axiological abyss that these new technological agencies have been creating. To do so, the concept of consumption experience is fundamental, provided it is removed from its definition as pleasures that are thought to be positive.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The author declare that they participated in all stages of development of the manuscript. From the conceptualization and theoretical-methodological approach, the theoretical review (literature survey), data collection, as well as data analysis, and finally, writing and final review the article.