The Routledge Companion to Happiness at Work

Joan Marques

Cook, Click, Share, and Be Happy!

Publication details

https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780429294426-21

Silvia Biraghi, Daniele Dalli, Rossella C. Gambetti

Published online on: 23 Oct 2020

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT

<div align="center">21</div>

COOK, CLICK, SHARE, AND BE HAPPY!

Eudaimonic Self-Presentation of Consumer Cooking Practices in Contemporary Technocultures

Silvia Biraghi, Daniele Dalli, and Rossella C. Gambetti

Introduction

In Italy, where our study is set, cooking practices are pervasive in consumer discourses. According to Blogmeter, Italian social food influencers, such as Benedetta Rossi and Chiara Maci, generate respectively 3.1 million and 472 thousand interactions with an average of six and seven posts per day on their social channels, mainly Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. Based on data from Extreme, Italian food bloggers' value is estimated as approximately 3 million euros, with their online contents triggering more than 15 million interactions (We Are Social, 2017). Food postings and cooking social activities have become an ever growing mass phenomenon, with cooking becoming an activity that is no longer either preliminarily, or functionally, related to eating as it used to be (e.g. when mothers cooked for the whole family, or chefs do it professionally). Currently, cooking appears to also be a self-fulfilling activity, with consumers feeling immersed and gratified, and with the food often being prepared to be exhibited, not eaten.

We have observed that consumers' and the media's attention has recently shifted from actual and mere consumption to production and its public display; from eating to cooking and showcasing the mastery of the cooking performance; from the private and intimate space of consumers' homes to its publicly shared representation on social media; from the inner force that drives self-achievement and personal improvement to an open self-disclosure in order to realize life's purposes and share them.

Our chapter is set in the context of the social representation of home cooks' and amateur chefs' cooking practices that is built and magnified by current technocultures. Technocultures have been defined as "the various identities, practices, values, rituals, hierarchies, and other sources and structures of meaning that are influenced, created by, or expressed through technology consumption" (Kozinets, 2019, p. 621). Specifically, we identify food preparation as a context that highlights the need to revise certain perspectives in consumer behavior theories. In plain language: 1) food preparation is not an instrumental activity, because food is often prepared for exhibition and not for subsequent consumption; 2) food preparation is considered a way for individuals engaged in food production to present themselves; and 3) in order for these individuals to enhance their potential, they need to exhibit food preparation in networked environments and on social media platforms where their cooking-related social presentation practices are continuously enhanced and consumed.

We regard this shift toward production as a general tendency that we also discern in other contexts (e.g. DIY, design, home decor, fashion, etc.). In fact, we perceive a potential evolution in the way we conceptualize consumers and represent their role in the consumption process: consumers behave like producers by creatively elaborating material and immaterial resources in physical and digital contexts, using their productive practices to present themselves and propagate their potential at the public level, instead of merely enhancing their consumption experience. But can we still call consumers consumers although they do not produce and consume in the traditional sense? Are they still producing to enhance their consumption experience and hedonic pleasure?

Our chapter suggests using eudaimonia—an interpretive insight from our empirical analysis—to reflect on how individuals achieve their potential and well-being through their productive and self-presentation efforts, which go beyond the pleasure they gain from consumption. We think that a focus on eudaimonia can extend consumers' traditional role beyond their search for personal hedonic fulfillment and pleasure toward their quest for eudaimonic well-being and their life purpose, which are realized at the social and communitarian levels through the self-presentation of productive work.

The chapter is organized as follows: first, we briefly review the literature on consumer behavior, highlighting the evolving roles assigned to consumers and the developments in the relationship between consumption and production. Thereafter we present the key highlights of our findings and we suggest a dynamic conceptual framework based on a continuum that elaborates how individuals pursue eudaimonia through their productive efforts' representation.

From Buying to Producing: the Role of Consumers in Consumption Experience Acquisition, Consumption, and Self-expression

Consumption has been traditionally seen as a process of acquisition, consumption (use), possession, and disposition (Arnould & Thompson 2005, p. 871; MacInnis & Folkes 2010, p. 900). Consumers buy products and services in order to satisfy their needs through actual consumption (use and possession). Consequently, we can observe consumption as a process of extracting/destructing the value that companies have added to consumption goods, but for whose acquisition consumers are willing to pay a price. Consumption can also be seen as a meaning-making activity for which consumers employ raw market resources (goods and services) that are activated and enriched in cultural and subjective terms, with the ultimate purpose of expressing their identity (Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Beckmann & Elliott, 2000; Belk, 1988; Firat & Venkatesh, 1995).

Interpretive and cultural scholars drove the transition from a theory of "buyer" behavior toward a theory of "consumer" behavior (Belk, Wallendorf & Sherry, 1989; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Traditional theories of consumption were essentially theories of buyer behaviors, but from the 1980s onward consumers were (also) represented in hedonic, experiential, and cultural terms. Consumption was no longer regarded as a type of instrumental implication following buying, but as a rich and inner-core consumer behavior dimension whose multisensory, imaginative, and emotional aspects acquired a substantive role (Sherry, 1991). Further contributions in the interpretive tradition helped scholars base the hedonic-experiential consumption dimension in consumers' social and cultural backgrounds (Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Belk et al., 1989): individuals mainly participate culturally and symbolically in the production of value (Arnould & Thompson 2005, p. 871). Decades of theoretical and empirical research have assessed and legitimized this constructive role, whether interpreted more instrumentally (e.g. as customization), or hedonically (e.g. as self-expression). Consumption can therefore be rewarding per se, because it engenders feelings, meanings, and

experiences that are not necessarily measurable in terms of added value, or effectiveness regarding the pursuit of given utilitarian and instrumental goals (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). From this perspective, the hedonic dimension emphasizes consumption's active role that can no longer be interpreted as a passive, contemplative, merely materialistic condition arising from acquisition and possession; instead, it is a constructive involvement in the forming of an experience with the goods and services that marketers provide.

In sum, in this stage, consumers are buyers and their main role as consumers is to use/consume and participate in the experience of the value that companies add to goods and services. Nevertheless, theoretical developments suggest that, in this stage, individuals—as consumers—also generate symbolic and cultural value while consuming and forming their experience with consumption goods.

Production and Consumption

A number of studies in consumption research have questioned the separation between production and consumption, and have assessed consumers' active role in the creation of value (Firat & Venkatesh 1995). The marketing and management fields have also acknowledged customers' active role in the generation of value (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo & Lusch 2004). Many of these studies focus on consumers' (customers') and companies' co-creation of value, while other studies (e.g. Hartmann & Ostberg 2013; Karababa & Kjeldgaard, 2014; Martin & Schouten 2014; McQuarrie, Miller, & Phillips 2013; Moisio, Arnould, & Gentry 2013; Moisio, Arnould, & Price, 2004; Press & Arnould, 2011), continuing the work of Firat & Venkatesh (1995), focus on the consumption side to understand whether, how, and why consumers participate in the active production of material and symbolic value. These studies highlight a key aspect of consumers' value creation that was long neglected in the previous stage—consumers also contribute to material value creation as a means of identity building.

Consumers' participation in material value creation emerges as a fundamental—often implicit—dimension of consumption practices and, as such, this differs from pure work, or pure leisure (Moisio et al., 2013, p. 299). This is true of DIY practices (Arsel & Bean, 2013; Moisio et al., 2013; Watson & Shove, 2008), such as cooking activities (Moisio et al., 2004; Chytkova, 2011) that consumers often use to demonstrate how creatively they rework market resources to construct their individual and collective identities. In this way, consumers enter the value creation process through practices that often overlap with the production and work domains. Working consumers (Cova & Dalli, 2009) are at the crossroad between production and consumption, and consequently present subtle and controversial characteristics that associate them with both categories. Recent contributions by Ritzer & Rey (2016) highlight that consumption and production cannot be conceived as dichotomous, since these practices unfold along a blending continuum.

The overall idea that emerges from the productive consumer literature (e.g. Toffler, 1980; Cova & Cova, 2012; Ritzer, 2014) is that consumers participate in the physical and cultural construction of their consumption objects (Keat, Whiteley & Abercrombie, 1994). The often implicit assumption behind these theorizations is that consumer engagement in production is a necessary, if not essential, condition for a satisfactory consumption experience.

In this stage, consumers are basically described as creators of value, because they undertake activities in the preparation and the consumption phases that contribute to the generation of material and immaterial value, which is subsequently further exploited and consumed. The focus of analysis is on consumers' contemporary performance of production and consumption, and production's key role in a satisfactory consumption.

Production and Self-presentation

Certain contemporary productive practices gradually detached themselves from their conventional consumption purposes. Schau & Gilly (2003) and Hearn (2008) report on the growing self-presentation practices online and offline: contemporary consumers employ sophisticated resources and skills to promote their identity and enhance their reputation. In other words, they produce in order to craft their sense of self through their production practices and the related outward display (Belk, 2013), using discursive strategies across multiple channels (Belk, 2014; Morreale, 2014). Self-presentation is currently a quasi-professional activity through which individuals produce and distribute value (Arvidsson, 2016; Gandini, 2016).

In this third stage, we see a potential for a significant evolution in the way we conceptualize consumers and represent their role in the consumption process: consumers do not necessarily have to consume, at least not in the traditional sense. Instead, consumers behave like producers by creatively elaborating physical, symbolic, cultural, individual, social, market, and technological resources, and by using their productive practices to present themselves beyond the traditional purpose of enhancing a consumption experience. We suggest that this could be an interesting development regarding the relationship between consumption and production (Hartmann, 2016).

In sum, in this stage, researchers focus on the practices performed in the production phase and how they are represented, because they contribute to individuals' well-being and their identity projects, without necessarily turning into actual material consumption. As an emergent contribution from our findings, the relationship between production and self-presentation currently taking shape in this third stage offers an opportunity to reflect on how individuals achieve their potential and well-being beyond the hedonic pleasure that consumption provides (Holbrook & Hirschmann, 1982), or the autotelic satisfaction they derive from the consumption (Holt, 1995) and production (Campbell, 2005) processes.

Based on this conceptual premise, can we still call consumers consumers although these individuals produce and do not consume in the traditional sense? As illustrated in the three stages and due to consumer research's historical development, there has been a tendency to interpret consumers' production in terms of hedonic enjoyment, cultural involvement, and even increased satisfaction in the final use, or consumption, of given goods and services. At this point, more questions emerge: are individuals currently only, or merely, concerned with pursuing hedonic pleasure? Do individuals merely exert efforts in respect of production to enhance their experience as consumers?

On the Way to Eudaimonia

We conducted ethnographic and netnographic multisite research (Kozinets, 2015) in Italy from the beginning of 2013 to the end of 2018. In this context, we observe "pure" consumers, foodies, gourmets, and connoisseurs, but also individuals like home cooks, amateur chefs, and professional chefs who produce and work in the food preparation domain. In addition, there are third parties, such as food bloggers, vloggers, commentators, and writers, who craft discourses around food consumption and production. Networked media contribute significantly to these discourses by offering individuals extraordinary opportunities to present themselves and their involvement in food practices.

Scholars in marketing and consumer research described a variety of practices through which consumers engage in production. Intertwined, recurrent actions and perspectives, which can be organized in oppositional representations, mark these practices. Their similarities and differences refer to, for example, material vs. symbolic (Arvidsson, 2005), instrumental vs. autotelic (Comor, 2015; Holt, 1995), object vs. interpersonal (Holt, 1995), commoditized vs. creative (Cova & Cova, 2012), laic vs. ideological (Luedicke, Thompson, & Giesler, 2010), and appropriation vs. sharing (Beer & Burrows, 2010; Collins, 2010).

Based on a contrapuntal reading (Brownlie et al., 2005; Said, 1993) of cooking practices and their representations, we employed two basic conceptual distinctions to unpack the meaning of cooking's self-presentation practices (see Figure 21.1): a) the *purpose* of the action (outcome; process) (Gummerus, 2013; Troye & Supphellen, 2012; Yang et al., 2012) and b) the *mode* of the action (mimetic; transformative) (Holt, 2002). In so doing, we relied on Holt (1995) as a source of inspiration to develop a typology of cooking's self-presentation practices.

Regarding the purpose of self-presentation practices, we distinguish between *outcome-oriented* self-presentations, where individuals show the end output of their cooking efforts, and *process-oriented* self-presentations, where they share their engagement in the doing and the enjoyment of food preparation (Marshall, 2005; McCabe & de Waal Malefyt, 2015; Ulver-Sneistrup, Askegaard, & Brogård Kristensen, 2011). Outcome-oriented practices are aimed at producing something as the end output; process-oriented practices are meant to self-sustain and self-reproduce the productive process. Marshall's (2005) paper on Scottish meals describes the intimate connection between the process and the outcome of cooking from a cultural perspective. Careful consideration of the ingredients, recipes, tools, traditions, and even the individual roles interact and define the meanings associated with both the procedure (routine, ritual, etc.) and the final output (the meal). Ulver-Sneistrup et al. (2011) discuss consumer morality and its impact on food consumption: in order to be acceptable and authentic, food should be observed from the point of view of the process that enabled its production. Ethically minded consumers prefer craft production and actually dislike industrial ones; in a sense, it is the process and not the outcome that drives them toward brand and product choice. McCabe & de Waal Malefyt (2015) analyze creativity in the kitchen, observing cooking practices from a process-based, ex-ante point of view. In addition, they compare extant literature, which they perceive as more concentrated on the output as the focal point to identify and eventually evaluate innovativeness and creativity.

Regarding the mode of self-presentation practices, we distinguish between *mimetic* self-presentations, where individuals adapt to normative pressures, and *transformative* self-presentations, where they react toward coercive authorities and rules (Holt, 2002). Mimetic practices consist of reproducing sequences of codified actions that confirm a given reality and follow mainstream rules (Belk, Ger, & Askegaard, 2003; Comor 2010; Muñiz & Schau, 2005) in order to gain social support and recognition, as well as strengthen collective ties. Transformative practices imply the existence of an agency engaged in the generation of something new (Firat, 1999) with the potential to question and change extant rules (Holt, 2002). In their study of British cookbooks of Italian cuisine, Cappellini & Parsons (2014) identify the discourse on cooking's performative and transformative dimensions. However, cookbooks also provide arguments, tools, and instructions for adequately

	Purpose **Outcome**	Purpose **Process**
Mode **Mimetic**	Conservative	Masterful
Mode **Transformative**	Innovative	Eudaimonic

Figure 21.1 A typology of consumers' production practices.

performing given socio-cultural roles (which we define as mimetic) and especially gender-driven ones. Cookbooks transform such roles, as long as the conditions in which cooking practices are enacted change dramatically over time. Chytkova (2011) observed the cooking practices of Romanian women living in Italy and describes how changing recipes, ingredients, and/or cooking styles matter in term of adhering to the original country's and history's traditional roles, or with regard to moving toward the host country's different cultural and value systems. Using the same line of reasoning, Cronin et al. (2014b) discuss the way in which cooking practices are used to implement identity construction with reference to femininity and how cooking provides confirmatory support for a given role and, simultaneously, an innovative, critical appraisal of that role. Cronin et al. (2014a) also focus their attention on food-related practices that not only enable hipsters to resist the marketization of their culture, but also enhance their ability to represent their identity in a transformative fashion.

Although they are conceptual opposites, outcome- and process-oriented self-presentation practices, as well as mimetic and transformative ones, are not meant to be dichotomous typologies: self-presentation practices often unveil average, or mixed, traits, which is why we see them as lying on a continuum.

These conceptual distinctions draw a matrix that classifies four predominant ways consumers follow when engaging in production: conservative, masterful, innovative, and eudaimonic (*Figure 21.1*) (Gambetti, Biraghi, & Dalli, 2016).

Conservative Production Practices

Conservaive production practices are repetitive routines, which are required to obtain an output, such as customers checking themselves in and out of hotels; clearing up their tables at fast-food restaurants; or working at the checkout counter at the supermarket scanning their own items (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010). These routines are part of a chain of mass-production activities which can possibly allow for mass-customized results, like consumers creating their own salad selecting ingredients from a counter displaying given options or consumers self-designing their own pairs of Nike or Converse All Star sneakers (Cova & Dalli, 2009; Deng et al., 2010).

Conservative production relies on normative routines, which supervise food preparation and grant eating properly (Marshall, 2005) as the focal end output. Food preparation is represented as rigidly organized in scalable phases and those who follow instructions are assured to get similar results to the ones obtained by professional chefs to brag about in their networks of peers. Conservative producers put their trust in tested sequences of norms developed by qualified chefs or cooks or even by peers that got an influential or authoritative role. These production practices are not self-sufficient as they rely on an external guidance to confirm the establishment and to reduce the risk of failing in realizing the expected output. Professional home cooks, rated vloggers, and TV-show chefs are entrusted and followed as masters by conservative producers. The reproduction of masters' norms is encouraged by digital and media discourses, such as the television food shows, with whom the mealtime reality of everyday life is frequently shared, contributing to reconfigure the relationships between people and the material culture implied in food manipulation (Chitakunye & Maclaran, 2014).

The time people save no longer learning how to cook in the kitchen beside the women is now being spent in leisure watching television shows about food (Matwick & Matwick, 2015), or in sharing home-cooking experiences across the social media. As Adema (2000) suggests, this producer craves a home-cooked meal but he/she does not really want to cook it, rather he/she wants to be entertained by the pleasure of experiencing something good in the comfort of the home. Although homy, this pleasure is publicly shared for outer appreciation that rewards conservative producers as capable of accomplishing the tasks related to their social roles.

Masterful Production Practices

Masterful productive practices entail participation in a process of codified actions that reveals a specific know-how that legitimizes and empowers consumers as experts: people using self-medication technologies, such as glucose monitors or pregnancy tests; self-help societies for over-coming problems of alcoholism and drug-abuse; users managing their bank accounts, accessing home-banking services; consumers assembling their IKEA furniture (Xie at al., 2008; Ritzer, 2014). Masterful consumers express their trust in self- efficacy through their actions. Uber and BlaBlaCar members rely on providing a high- standard driving experience, where consumers work as aspiring professional drivers enacting their expert skills in the transportation process (Heimans & Timms, 2014).

In this realm, which is usually parallel to and sometimes also intersecting the professional one, masterful practices are devoted to showcasing producers' proficient processes of food preparation for the sake of displaying the process, more than the output, as an art of performing better than other fellows, and of competing and winning challenges that raise them to the sought-after level of the golden professional league. In this regard, business experts like true chefs, cooks, food bloggers, journalists, and other opinion leaders are the "significant others" composing the aspirational com-munity to whom these producers ideally address their self-representation efforts, drawing a self-actualization trajectory that is marked by award winning announcements, contest memories, and anecdotes that continuously support their self-esteem.

Masterful practices entail the rigorous crafting of high cooking standards on the part of producers that only professional chefs and cooking experts can understand and appreciate thoroughly. These practices, nurtured by producers' self-referential accounts and revelations (Arnould & Price, 2000), showcase an outstanding performativity in every field these home cooks get committed. This performativity empowers them as life gurus. Moreover, it displays a dogmatic afflatus that mime-tically reproduces a self-centered reality rather than building it with others.

Innovative Production Practices

Innovative production practices aim at generating new and original outputs through which an open body of knowledge is created, shared, and continuously transformed into social value: Wikipedia contributors generate articles and continually edit and update them; Linux and Mozilla Firefox advanced users collaboratively build and improve their open-source operating systems; Yelp!, Tripadvisor, and MyMovies users review and discuss activities, locations, and tastes to orient con-sumer decision-making processes (Tapscott & Williams, 2006). This knowledge is distributed and shared as it serves and enriches the communities which have access to it.

As Schau & Gilly (2003) noted, through personal web spaces consumers construct digital collages using symbols and signs drawn from their real life, using them as authenticating acts to represent and express their self-concepts (Arnould & Price, 2000). Through creatively posting their doings and cooking acts on blogs, YouTube, and personal web pages, innovative producers express and sometimes co-construct themselves via digital media through confessing (Belk, 2014) and offering people free access to intimate aspects of their life. In sharing personal repertoire with peers, in-novative practices metaphorically "put producers on the table" for collective consumption as the final output of their creative production effort. It is then the output of this creative self-disclosure process, the ultimate issue, that is systematically under the spotlight of these production practices. These practices are also used as a cultural artifact consistent and attuned with the values and symbols shared by the community of peers to self-represent themselves as champions of the daily happiness, of the little things, with the aim of rediscovering the greatness of acting small and simple. The transformative power of innovative practices resides in their capability to make the personal life

repertoire of producers first assembled through the interaction among them, their objects, and other people, and then shared for public consumption to serve a wider community of peers that are constantly triggered to contribute to and expand the creative practices in their own lives.

With a plethora of interactive rituals and practices such as posting, commenting, and counter-commenting, followers integrate their own identity work studded with memories, imagery, feelings, and facts with the producers' work (Belk, 1988; Holt, 1995), and that constitutes the sought-after end outcome that enriches followers' own life.

Eudaimonic Production Practices

Eudaimonic productive activities involve the human tension towards well-being that is not meant as an outcome or end-state, but as a process of fulfilling or realizing one's Daimon, or true nature, one's virtuous potential and living as one inherently intended to live (Deci & Ryan, 2008). This concept is inspired by Aristotelian philosophy which distinguishes between the experience of pleasure (namely, hedonic experience) and the notion of a virtuous activity of soul, or *eudaimonia*. Eudaimonic productive consumers assess autonomy, personal growth, self-acceptance, purpose in life, and environmental mastery in a social space that is shaped in positive relations with others (Ryff & Singer, 2006). Do-it-yourself creative practices in assemblages, decorations, design, and gardening, engaging consumers in therapeutic enterprises of transforming "doing things" into "doing your own things" to build and shape themselves and their social space (Campbell, 2005; Watson & Shove, 2008) through material and symbolic moral work (Luedicke et al., 2010).

Eudaimonic production is established through community practices that are aimed to sustain and maintain continuity in the process of collaborative production in which consumers engage. Eudaimonic production does not culminate in the consumption of the dinner at the table as the endpoint of the cooking activity, rather it moves back and forth across the contexts that can nurture and innervate continuous interactions to perpetrate productive consumption processes. Eudaimonic production is conceived as a transformative enterprise to pursue individual and communal wellbeing motivated by the fulfillment of a holistic quest for a better state of existence (Thompson, 2004). At the social level, eudaimonic production triggers collective influencing dynamics, which are pro-pagated through the thick sociality network of the communities of social eaters, secret kitchen cooks, supper clubbers, and private fest organizers.

From Hedonia to Eudaimonia

Scholars have long observed consumption from the hedonic perspective (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Holbrook & Hirschmann, 1982), or from the autotelic satisfaction that consumers derive from the consumption (Holt, 1995) and production (Campbell, 2005) processes. Whether implicitly or not, scholars have observed consumers relying on the consumption experience as the main source of satisfaction, where this experience is related to using, eating, wearing, driving, etc. However, studies on well-being (Sotgiu, 2016) consider living's hedonic dimension as one of the two drivers of happiness. The second driver is the eudaimonic dimension: according to ancient Greek philoso-phers, hedonia comes from pleasure, while eudaimonia comes from insight and engagement. Hedonic satisfaction is based on enjoying life, seeking pleasure, and avoiding pain, while eudaimonia is based on fulfilling personal goals, exploiting opportunities, and one's potential (Waterman, 1993). Individuals experience eudaimonic well-being when their life activities match their values, con-tribute to their life goals, when they learn and grow as individuals, and when they feel engaged in and integrated into a social setting through their engagement (Ryff, 1989). Both hedonia and eu-daimonia are elaborated in the psychological research domains related to happiness and well-being, (Bhullar, Schutte, & Malouff, 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2013; Ryff, 1989;

Waterman, 1993). However, while consumption and marketing research has massively used hedonia as for interpreting satisfaction from consumption, it has mostly neglected eudaimonia, with the exception of a few and recent contributions (Sharma et al., 2016; Tonner, 2016; Zheng, Xia, & Fan 2016).

Our findings reveal the variety of purposes and modes through which consumers enact self-presentation in a way that is less dependent on actual consumption (eating) and more relevant in terms of production (cooking). The four sets of practices unfold into an ideal *continuum* characterized by a progression marking the path of inner maturation at the individual and social levels, which leads consumers to be open to including others in their life project. In this regard, process-oriented/outcome-oriented and mimetic/transformative cooking representation practices can be perceived as displayed along an ideal evolutionary path of personal development aimed at achieving a state of *eudaimonic actualization*.

On the continuum, individuals may evolve from proving their competence—i.e. where their mimetic and outcome-oriented practices appear merely self-contained and individualistically directed toward self-achievement—to reaching a eudaimonic state—i.e. their activities are socially co-determined in their constant pursuit of a state of actualization and well-being that is collectively co-constructed and participated. Individuals do so through either self-legitimizing acts—where the inclusion of others is mainly aimed at the aspirational league of professional cooks and chefs—or through self-disclosing revelations—where their actions and efforts are oriented to enhance a wider social collectivity's life. While self-presentation practices gradually detach themselves from the mere personal achievement (i.e. food preparation outcomes and processes), individuals embrace collective meaning-making dynamics that depict a wider communitarian life project. At the beginning of the continuum, *proving competence* to others by replicating norms is an initial stage of maturity, because self-presentation efforts are mainly dedicated to perpetuating and reifying traditions, as well as the work of professional others, in order to demonstrate abilities and respect for golden standards. These efforts still resonate with the view that production is mainly undertaken for the sake of consumption, because they focus on cooking's outcome. Nonetheless, also at this initial stage, the proving of competence practices reveals that the performed productive work's intrinsic and social nature is publicly validated. Moving along the continuum, self-presentation efforts reflect a more mature, still critical, sense of the self that is increasingly applicable in a social construction that involves other people in different ways. Individuals involve others in their *self-legitimizing* efforts aimed at achieving a quasi-professional status, which a community of followers can bestow. Moreover, they involve others by providing a large community with a socio-cultural space—the result of a creative *self-disclosure* that inspires people's change.

Finally, in *pursuit of eudaimonia*, individuals' self-presentation efforts encapsulate the highest level of maturity of the self, which moves back and forth between all physical and digital contexts, creating occasions to generate new consumer collectives and triggering new people-physical, objects–digital artifacts' relational trajectories. The transformative power of the self-presentation practices that individuals carry out generates a circuit of co-construction practices that include other people in their life project. This inclusion is not meant as an end-result to achieve and be satisfied with, but rather as a relentless process of pursuing an endless eudaimonic state realized on the sociality level. It is this social dimension of the self-actualization process that truly characterizes the quest for eudaimonic well-being in the context of cooking practices and self-presentation efforts, which, contrary to the pursuit of happiness, is subjectively achieved and felt.

Conclusions

Eudaimonic well-being goes beyond needs that are only subjectively felt and whose satisfaction leads to momentary pleasure, to encompass those needs rooted in human nature and whose realization at

the societal level is conducive to human development (Fromm, 1978). Eudaimonia is reached when individuals experience well-being that originates from their personal development, which they achieve by fulfilling their potential while contributing to the greater good (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Turban & Yan, 2016). Individuals experience personal development by engaging in activities that they find meaningful and, by being perceived as socially significant, contributing to a larger community (Turban & Yan, 2016). Individuals engaged in transformative self-presentation efforts, especially in process-oriented cooking practices, constantly strive for personal development and are relentlessly committed to perpetuating this by involving others in their life project—not as mere spectators or followers, but as active participants in a personal development trajectory that is open to being co-constructed.

In contrast to the feeling of fun and pleasure that marks hedonic experiences when people are relaxed and laid-back, Waterman (1993) argues that eudaimonia occurs when people are holistically, or fully, engaged in pursuing those values, goals, and projects that are most congruent or mesh with their sense of self. In other words, this occurs when they feel intensely alive and authentic by expressing and realizing who they really are. Accordingly, eudaimonia is associated with being challenged and exerting effort, whereas hedonic enjoyment is more related to being relaxed, away from problems, and happy. Eudaimonia emphasizes "the striving for perfection that represents the realization of one's true potential" (Ryff, 1995, p. 100) and the fulfillment of one's purpose for living. Norton (1976) notes that craft activities generate such feelings of fulfillment. Differing from pleasure experiences, which are indulgent and purely sensory by nature, crafting implies the active application of individuals' passions, knowledge, and efforts as inputs to create value rather than deplete value (Moisio et al., 2013). Our findings suggest that displaying knowledge is not enough to reach eudaimonia, even when some individuals display their mastery. Eudaimonia is manifested in the systematic labor required to blend passions, knowledge, and efforts with those of others.

Our findings support the above by showing that individuals can reach a eudaimonic state when they are intensively and increasingly engaged in the fulfillment of their sense of self in relation to others and within the setting of thick social exchanges. While the eudaimonia concept has been mainly elaborated in the positive psychology context (Seligman, 2002), therefore emphasizing the intrapsychic nature of this psychological state as experienced by the individual, our work highlights its inherent socio-cultural and transformative nature. This nature, usually neglected in psychological contributions, is indeed a distinctive character of the eudaimonic state according to the Aristotelian tradition's original formulation of the concept. As has emerged from our empirical study, eudaimonia has—beyond the psychology field—a great potential to make sense of consumers' "productive" practices in current consumer research.

References

Adema, P. (2000). Vicarious consumption: Food, television and the ambiguity of modernity. *Journal of American & Comparative Cultures*, *23*(3), 113–122.

Arnould, E. J., & Thompson, C. J. (2005). Consumer culture theory (CCT): Twenty years of research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *31*(4), 868–882.

Arnould, E. J. & Price, L. (2000). Authenticating acts and authoritative performances: Questing for self and community. In S. Ratneshwar, D. G. Mick, & C. Huffman (Eds.), *The why of consumption: Contemporary perspectives on consumer motives, goals, and desires*. New York: Routledge, 140–163.

Arsel, Z. & Bean, J. (2013). Taste regimes and market-mediated practice. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *39*(5), 899–917.

Arvidsson, A. (2005). Brands: a critical perspective. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *5*(2), 235–258.

Arvidsson, A. (2016). Facebook and finance: on the social logic of the derivative. *Theory, Culture & Society*, *33*(6), 3–23.

Beckmann, S. & Elliott, R. (Eds.) (2000). *Interpretive Consumer Research*. Copenhagen Business School Press, Copenhagen.

Beer, D. & Burrows, R. (2010). Consumption, Prosumption and Participatory Web Cultures An introduction. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *10*(1), 3–12.

Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *15*(2), 139–168.

Belk, R. W. (2013). Extended self in a digital world. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *40*(3), 477–500.

Belk, R. W. (2014). Digital consumption and the extended self. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *30*(11/12), 1101–1118.

Belk, R. W., Ger, G., & Askegaard, S. (2003). The fire of desire: A multisited inquiry into consumer passion. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *30*(3), 326–351.

Belk, R. W. Wallendorf, M. & Sherry Jr., J. F. (1989). The sacred and the profane in consumer behavior: Theodicy on the odyssey. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *16*(1), 1–38.

Bhullar, N., Schutte, N. S., & Malouff, J. M. (2013). The nature of well-being: The roles of hedonic and eudaimonic processes and trait emotional intelligence. *The Journal of Psychology*, *147*(1), 1–16.

Brownlie, D., Hewer, P. & Horne, S. (2005). Culinary tourism: An exploratory reading of contemporary representations of cooking. *Consumption, Markets, and Culture*, *8*(1), 7–26.

Campbell, C. (2005). The Craft Consumer. Culture, craft and consumption in a postmodern society. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *5*(1), 23–42.

Cappellini, B. & Parsons, E. (2014). Constructing the culinary consumer: transformative and reflective processes in Italian cookbooks. *Consumption, Markets, and Culture*, *17*(1), 71–99.

Chitakunye, P. & Maclaran, P. (2014). Materiality and family consumption: the role of the television in changing mealtime rituals. *Consumption, Markets, and Culture*, *17*(1), 50–70.

Chytkova, Z. (2011). Consumer acculturation, gender, and food: Romanian women in Italy between tradition and modernity. *Consumption, Markets, and Culture*, *14*(3), 267–291.

Collins, S. (2010). Digital fair prosumption and the fair use defense. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *10*(1), 37–55.

Comor, E. (2010). Contextualizing and critiquing the fantastic prosumer: Power, alienation and hegemony. *Critical Sociology*, *37*(3), 309–327.

Comor, E. (2015). Revisiting Marx's Value Theory: A Critical Response to Analyses of Digital Prosumption. *The Information Society*, *31*(1), 13–19.

Cova, B. & Dalli, D. (2009). Working consumers: the next step in marketing theory? *Marketing Theory*, *9*(3), 315–339.

Cova, B. & Cova, V. (2012). On the road to prosumption: marketing discourse and the development of consumer competencies. *Consumption, Markets, and Culture*, *15*(2), 149–168.

Cronin, J. M., McCarthy, M. B., & Collins, A. M. (2014b). Covert distinction: how hipsters practice food-based resistance strategies in the production of identity. *Consumption, Markets, and Culture*, *17*(1), 2–28.

Cronin, J. M., McCarthy, M. B., Newcombe, M. A., & McCarthy, S. N. (2014a). Paradox, performance and food: Managing difference in the construction of femininity. *Consumption, Markets, and Culture*, *17*(4), 367–391.

Deci, E. L. & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Hedonia, eudaimonia, and well-being: An introduction. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *9*(1), 1–11.

Deng, X., Hui, S. K., & Hutchinson, J. W. (2010). Consumer preferences for color combinations: An empirical analysis of similarity-based color relationships. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *20*(4), 476–484.

Firat, F. A. (1999). Rethinking consumption. *Consumption, Markets, and Culture*, *3*(4), 283–295.

Firat, F. A. & Venkatesh, A. (1995). Liberatory postmodernism and the reenchantment of consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *22*(3), 239–267.

Fromm, E. (1978). Primary and secondary process in waking and in altered states of consciousness. *Journal of Altered States of Consciousness*, *4*(2), 115–128.

Gambetti, R. C., Biraghi, S. & Dalli, D. (2016). A new look at cooking: it's not about eating! Prepare and exhibit food as identity representation. In *Consumer Culture Theory Conference (CCTC)*, 1–26.

Gandini, A. (2016). Digital work: Self-branding and social capital in the freelance knowledge economy. *Marketing Theory*, *16*(1), 123–141.

Gummerus, J. (2013). Value creation processes and value outcomes in marketing theory: strangers or siblings? *Marketing Theory*, *13*(1), 19–46.

Hartmann, B. J. & Ostberg, J. (2013). Authenticating by re-enchantment: The discursive making of craft production. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *29*(7/8), 882–911.

Hartmann, J. B. (2016). Peeking behind the mask of the prosumer: Theorizing the organization of consumptive and productive practice moments. *Marketing Theory*, *16*(1), 3–20.

Hearn, A. (2008). 'Meat, Mask, Burden': Probing the contours of the branded self. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *8*(2), 197–217.

Heimans, J. & Timms, H. (2014, December). Understanding new power. *Harvard Business Review*, 48–56.

Hirschman, E. C. & Holbrook, M. B. (1982). Hedonic consumption: emerging concepts, methods and propositions. *Journal of Marketing*, *46*(3), 92–101.

Holbrook, M. B. & Hirschman, E. C. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *9*(2), 132–140.

Holt, D. B. (1995, June). How consumers consume: a typology of consumption practices. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *22*, 1–16.

Holt, D. B. (2002). Why do brands cause trouble? A dialectical theory of consumer culture and branding. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *29*(1), 70–90.

Karababa, E. & Kjeldgaard, D. (2014). Value in marketing: Toward sociocultural perspectives. *Marketing Theory*, *14*(1), 119–127.

Keat, R., Abercrombie, N. & Whiteley, N. (Eds.) (1994). *The Authority of the Consumer*. London: Routledge.

Kozinets, R. V. (2019). Consuming Technocultures: An Extended JCR Curation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *46*(3), 620–627.

Kozinets, R. V. (2015). *Netnography Refined*. London: Sage Publications.

Luedicke, M. K., Thompson, C. J., & Giesler, M. (2010). Consumer identity work as moral protagonism: how myth and ideology animate a brand-mediated moral conflict. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *36*(6), 1016–1032.

MacInnis, D. J. & Folkes, V. S. (2010). The disciplinary status of consumer behavior: A sociology of science perspective on key controversies. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *36*(6), 899–914.

Marshall, D. (2005). Food as ritual, routine or convention. *Consumption, Markets, and Culture*, *8*(1), 69–85.

Martin, D. M. & Schouten, J. W. (2014). Consumption-driven market emergence. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *40*(5), 855–870.

Matwick, K. & Matwick, K. (2015). Inquiry in television cooking shows. *Discourse & Communication*, *9*(3), 313–330.

McCabe, M. & de Waal Malefyt, T. (2015). Creativity and cooking: Motherhood, agency and social change in everyday life. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *15*(1), 48–65.

McQuarrie, E. F., Miller, J. & Phillips, B. J. (2013). The megaphone effect: taste and audience in fashion blogging. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *40*(1), 136–158.

Moisio, R., Arnould, E. J., & Gentry, J. W. (2013). Productive consumption in the class-mediated construction of domestic masculinity: Do-it-yourself (DIY) home improvement in men's identity work. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *40*(2), 298–316.

Moisio, R., Arnould, E. J., & Price, L. L. (2004). Between Mothers and Markets Constructing family identity through homemade food. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *4*(3), 361–384.

Morreale, J. (2014). From homemade to store bought: Annoying Orange and the professionalization of YouTube. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *14*(1), 113–128.

Muñiz Jr, A. M., & Jensen Schau, H. (2005). Religiosity in the abandoned Apple Newton brand community. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *31*(4), 737–747.

Norton, D. L. (1976). *Personal destinies: A philosophy of ethical individualism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Prahalad, C. K. & Ramaswamy, V. (2004). *The future of competition*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Press, M. & Arnould, E. J. (2011). How does organizational identification form? A consumer behavior perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *38*(4), 650–666.

Ritzer, G. (2014). Prosumption: Evolution, revolution, or eternal return of the same? *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *14*(1), 3–24.

Ritzer, G. & Jurgenson, N. (2010). Production, consumption, prosumption. The nature of capitalism in the age of the digital 'prosumer'. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *10*(1), 13–36.

Ritzer, G. & Rey, P. J. (2016). From 'solid' producers and consumers to 'liquid' prosumers. In M. Darvis (Ed.), *Liquid sociology: Metaphor in Zygmunt Bauman's analysis of modernity*. New York, NY: Routledge, 157–176.

Ryan, R. M. & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *25*(1), 54–67.

Ryan, R. M. & Deci, E. L. (2001). On happiness and human potentials: A review of research on hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *52*(1): 141–166.

Ryan, R. M., Huta, V. & Deci, E. L. (2013). Living well: A self-determination theory perspective on eudaimonia. *The exploration of happiness*. Springer Netherlands, 117–139.

Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *57*(6), 1069–1081.

Ryff, C. D. (1995). Psychological well-being in adult life. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *4*(4), 99–104.

Ryff, C. D. & Singer, B. H. (2006). Best news yet on the six-factor model of well-being. *Social Science Research*, *35*(4), 1103–1119.

Said, E. (1993). *Culture and imperialism*. London: Chatto and Windus.

Schau, H. J. & Gilly, M. C. (2003). We are what we post? Self-presentation in personal Web space. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *30*(3), 385–404.

Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). *Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment*. New York: Free Press.

Sharma, S., Conduit, J., Karpen, I. O., Hill, S. R., & Farrelly, F. (2016). Co-Creation in a Service Innovation Context. In *Looking Forward, Looking Back: Drawing on the Past to Shape the Future of Marketing*, pp. 217–217. Springer International Publishing.

Sherry, J. F. (1991). Postmodern alternatives: the interpretive turn in consumer research. In S. Robertson Thompson & H. Kassarjian Harold (Eds.), *Handbook of Consumer Behavior*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 548–591.

Sotgiu, I. (2016). How Do We Remember Happy Life Events? A Comparison Between Eudaimonic and Hedonic Autobiographical Memories. *The Journal of Psychology*, *150*(6), 685–703.

Tapscott, D. & Williams, A. D. (2006). *Wikinomics: How mass collaboration changes*. New York: Portfolio.

Thompson, C. J. (2004). Marketplace mythology and discourses of power. *Journal of Consumer* Research, *31*(1), 162–180.

TofflerA. (1980). *The third wave*. New York: William Morrow & Company.

Tonner, A. (2016). Liminal mothers' negotiation of conflicting service consumption. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *32*(1–2), 100–120.

Troye, S. V. & Supphellen, M. (2012). Consumer participation in coproduction: "I made it myself" effects on consumers' sensory perceptions and evaluations of outcome and input product. *Journal of Marketing*, *76*(2), 33–46.

Turban, D. B. & Yan, W. (2016). Relationship of eudaimonia and hedonia with work outcomes. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *31*(6), 1006–1020.

Ulver-Sneistrup, S., Askegaard, S. & Brogård Kristensen, D. (2011). The new work ethics of consumption and the paradox of mundane brand resistance. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *11*(2), 215–238.

Vargo, S. L. & Lusch, R. F. (2004). Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, *68*(1), 1–17.

Waterman, A. S. (1993). Two conceptions of happiness: Contrasts of personal expressiveness (eudaimonia) and hedonic enjoyment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *64*(4), 678–691.

Watson, M. & Shove, E. (2008). Product, competence, project and practice: DIY and the dynamics of craft consumption. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, *8*(1), 69–89.

We Are Social. (2017). Digital Yearbook. Internet, social media and mobile data for 239 countries around the world. Retrieved from https://wearesocial.com/uk/special-reports/2017-digital-yearbook.

Xie, C., Bagozzi, R. P., & Villads Troye, S. (2008). Trying to prosume: toward a theory of consumers as co-creators of value. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *36*(1), 109–122.

Yang, X., Mao, H. & Peracchio, L. A. (2012). It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game? The role of process and outcome in experience consumption. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *49*(6), 954–966.

Zheng, Q., Xia, L. & Fan, X. (2016). Beyond hedonic enjoyment: eudaimonia experience in craft consumption. *Journal of Consumer* Marketing, *33*(6), 479–488.