Brand Activism in Social Media: The Effect of Sarcastic and Explanatory Responses and Social Identity on Consumer Brand Attitude

Abstract

Brands have been shifting from a neutral to a more proactive stance on controversial issues. By publicly taking side on a hot-topic debate, these companies are likely to be questioned by part of their consumers who do not agree with the brand's positioning. Brands usually use either a sarcastic or an explanatory tone to reply to consumers. However, it is unclear which type of response is the most effective for building brands' reputation. In two experiments, we demonstrate that: (1) explanatory (vs sarcastic) responses are better evaluated; (2) this relation is mediated by perceived aggressiveness, (3) while out-group members evaluate better explanatory responses, in-group members evaluate both type of responses similarly; and (4) when sarcastic responses are not aggressive, both type of responses are evaluated similarly.

INTRODUCTION

Brands have been shifting from a neutral standpoint towards societal problems, increasingly embracing social activism, which is likely to touch on controversial issues. For instance, Gillette has recently launched an ad criticizing toxic masculinity, while Adidas used a same sex couple in its Valentine day's ad. Sarkar and Kotler (2018) refer to this effort as brand activism.

In such situations, the social cause becomes an integral part of the brand's identity, engendering both positive and negative reactions among consumers – who may agree or disagree with the brand's standpoint. Therefore, brands have been facing communication challenges within social media platforms related to their social positioning. Companies have been required to deal with discontent consumers, who may be prone to use their social media profiles to publicly complain against the brand's standpoint.

The literature on consumer complaint may offer some insights on how to deal with discontent consumers, but it is not enough to fully understand the phenomenon under activism. In the latter case, customer complaint is not generated by a company's failure, but from its positioning in a controversial societal issue. Most studies on customer complaints are focused on how to successfully deal with service failures, for instance, by investigating the role of contingency variables and its impacts on consumer satisfaction (Pizzutti & Fernandes, 2010), consumer forgiveness (Harrison-Walker, 2019), or the impacts of complaint handling on trust and commitment (Tax, Brown, & Chandrashekaran, 1998). However, so far marketing literature has not focused on tactics and strategies companies use to deal with complaints that do not involve a product/service failure, but a cause or an opinion about a controversial issue. We aim to open a new path in the customer complaint literature.

While some brands – such as Sony and Adidas – have given sarcastic responses to consumers who have questioned their positioning, others – such as Gillette and Avon – have replied with explanatory messages. However, it is unclear which type of communication is the most effective for building brands' attitude and why. We investigate the effect of the type of response (sarcastic vs. explanatory) on consumers' attitude towards the brand.

Sarcasm has been regarded as a type of humor, something unexpected that violates the prevalent order (Berger, 1976). Also, with sarcasm, the author intends to chastise (Long & Graesser, 1988) or to be aggressive, usually with a clear target in mind (Attardo, 1999). Because of its dubious characteristic (aggressive and humorous) it is unclear whether a sarcastic message will elicit positive affect, with previous studies revealing disputable results in this regard

(Colston, 1997; Dews, Kaplan & Winner 1995). Our study also contributes to the understanding of the effects of sarcastic messages by brands on consumer attitudes.

Finally, some individuals may see sarcasm in a positive light, while others may find it inappropriate. Specifically, using the social identity literature, we propose that when the observer is an out-group member (i.e. the brand is pro-feminism and the observer is male), he will consider the sarcastic message aggressive and, therefore, think it is not appropriate, while when the observer is an in-group member (i.e. the brand is pro-feminism and the observer is female), she will consider the sarcastic appropriate.

THEORETICAL BACKGOUND

Brand activism

Gillette launched an ad about toxic masculinity (Knowledge @Wharton, 2019); Adidas used a same sex couple in its Valentine day's ad (Huffpost, 2016); and Diesel's ad message says, "Make love not walls" (Forbes, 2017). These are few examples of a current trend: big brands are taking a step further on brand activism (Sarkar & Kotler 2018) as a means of helping shape public opinion, while simultaneously cementing their reputations as moral leaders and change agents (Forbes, 2018). While in the past brands would take a more neutral standpoint on social issues, now they are embracing more controversial topics, speaking out on hot-button issues, such as those related to gender roles, homosexuality, immigration, politics, etc.

As a relatively recent trend, little research has investigated brand activism in the marketing literature. Activism is mostly explored from the consumer side, that is, consumer activism, when individuals take actions to change or transform consumer culture and business practices toward a more sustainable and responsible society (Kozinets & Handelman, 2004). From the companies' side, activism has been described as an evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility programs (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018). Still according to these authors, brand activism can be defined as "a business effort to promote, impede, or direct social, political, economic, and/or environmental reform or stasis with the desire to promote or impede improvements in society" (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018). They also suggest a framework in which brand activism can be split in five different categories according to the causes supported: social activism (e.g. gender and racial issues), legal activism (e.g. employment laws, workplace), business activism (e.g. CEO pay, labor and union relations), economic activism (e.g. tax policies, inequality), political activism (e.g. voting, lobbying), and environmental activism (e.g. conservation, environmental, water pollution). Although brand activism is not exactly new (for example, companies have been adopting environmentally friendly practices for a while), the way it has been approached by business seems to be under change. For Sarkar and Kotler (2018), we are witnessing what the authors call a "progressive activism", meaning that brands are shifting from a neutral standpoint towards societal problems to a more proactive one. And as it is clear from the examples of Gillette, Adidas, and Diesel already highlighted, brands are not only more progressive in their activism, but also increasingly embracing social activism, which includes causes that are normally more controversial.

By choosing to address social issues, the company's positioning on these topics become an integral part of the brand's identity, generating both positive and negative reactions among consumers – who may agree or disagree with the brand's opinion. Because those topics are usually controversial, companies are likely to deal with discontent consumers, who may not agree with the company's opinion or even feel offended by it.

The literature on consumer complaint may offer some insights on how to deal with discontent consumers, but it is not enough to fully understand it under activism. In the latter case, customer complaint is not generated by a company's failure, but from its positioning in

controversial societal issues. Most studies on customer complaints are focused on how to successfully deal with service failures, for instance, by investigating the role of contingency variables and its impacts on consumer satisfaction (Pizzutti & Fernandes, 2010), consumer forgiveness (Harrison-Walker, 2019), or the impacts of complaint handling on trust and commitment (Tax, Brown, & Chandrashekaran, 1998). However, thus far marketing literature has not focused on tactics and strategies companies use to deal with complaints that do not involve a failure.

Sarcasm and sarcastic responses

In this context, brands face a new challenge: how to respond to consumers who may feel discontent or even offended by the brand's positioning (made explicit by brand activism), at the same time having other consumers (who may support the brand's positioning) as part of the audience. While some brands – such as Sony and Adidas – have given sarcastic responses to consumers who have questioned their positioning, others, such as Gillette and Avon, have replied with explanatory messages. It is unclear which one is the most effective type of message (sarcastic or explanatory) for building brands' reputation in social media, and what are the underlying mechanisms that explain such effectiveness. This research project aims to fill this gap.

Sarcasm has been already defined as a subtype of irony (Dews, Kaplan & Winner, 1995). In both cases, the speaker says something that is different or even opposite to what he or she actually aims to express. With sarcasm, however, the author often intends to chastise (Long & Graesser, 1988) or to be aggressive, often with a clear target in mind (Attardo, 1999). Sarcasm has also been regarded as a type of humor or a humor technique, given that it comes up as something unexpected, one that violates the prevalent order (Berger, 1976). Because of its dubious characteristic (aggressive and humorous) it is unclear how a sarcastic message will be perceived by consumers as a reply to a consumer who disagrees with the activist brand positioning.

Social identity

Social identity theory postulates that a person's identity is largely influenced by group membership (Tajfel, 1979). People tend to compare the group to which they belong (in-group) to other groups (out-groups), especially when relevant issues are at stake. In some situations, for example when intergroup competition exists and when the opportunities for social mobility is rare, social identity is likely to be determined by group membership rather than by individuals' identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). It is expected that a person who sees herself as part of a given group may reinforce the perceived differences between herself and out-group members (Stets & Burke 2000). According to social identity theory, people tend to maximize the positive distinctiveness of the group they belong. Depending on the strength someone identifies with a given group, she will be more (or less) inclined to support and defend that group (Deaux, 1994).

People tend to perceive themselves as members of a social group under different situations and with different motivations. While accepting that individuals can circulate among different groups simultaneously, Deaux (1994) classifies social identities under five broad dimensions: ethnic and religious identities, political identities, vocations and avocations, personal relationships, and stigmatized groups. An issue that has been regarded as a category of social identity is sexual orientation, not only for personal relationship commonalties but also

because of prejudice and stigmatization. People who share the same social identity are likely to exhibit similar attitudes toward issues that are meaningful to the group (Deaux, 1994). One consequence of social identity is intergroup bias, defined as a tendency to evaluate ingroup members more favorably than outgroup ones (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990).

We propose that social identity influences the way a response is perceived. Specifically, we propose that when the observer is an out-group member (i.e. the brand is pro-feminism and the observer is male), he will consider the sarcastic message aggressive and, therefore, think it is not appropriate, while when the observer is an in-group member (i.e. the brand is pro-feminism and the observer is female), she will consider the sarcastic appropriate.

STUDY 1

Study 1 investigates whether the type of response (sarcastic vs explanatory) has an effect on consumers' attitude toward the response and whether this relation is moderated by social identity (in-group vs out-group).

Participants and Design. One hundred and ninety-nine Brazilian adults (58.8% female; M_{age} = 32.76, *SD* = 9.80) were recruited through a consumer panel (Toluna). We randomly assigned participants to a two (response type: sarcastic vs. explanatory) by two (social identity: LGBT vs. non-LGBT) between-subjects design. To operationalize social identity, we recruited the same number of participants who belonged (vs. not) to the LGBT group.

Procedure. Participants were told they were taking part in a study related to how a brand interacts with consumers in social media platforms. They read a scenario in which a company replied to a customer's comment on one of its posts on Facebook. The company's name is not given (it is replaced by the word BRAND) and the customer's name has been replaced by the term Internet user. The post said that "Brand takes a stand against LGBT phobia", and the customer's comment was "I shouldn't be compelled to collude with this homosexual idiocy and that's what should be respected. I hope you have a son like that." The brand's post and the customer's comment are the same for all participants.

The manipulation came next. In the sarcastic response, Brand replied "Hi, Internet user. Nobody should be compelled to collude with anything, right? Respect is good, and everyone appreciates it: you, me, idiots, and LGBT people. As it happens, I already have several LGBT children, so your wish has come true. I'm not going to bear a grudge, OK?". In the explanatory response, Brand replied "Hi, Internet user. To collude means to conspire with some activity that is wrong, but homosexuality isn't an activity, let alone wrong. I believe love is never wrong, whatever form it takes. I hope to have helped and given you some food for thought."

Next, participants completed some measures assessing their attitude toward the response, how they would react, how aggressive they perceived the response, and a manipulation check. All the questions were measured on a 7-point scale (ranging from 1, *strongly disagree* to 7, *strongly agree*). The questions were displayed in a randomized order.

Attitude toward the response. Participants responded to the following question: *"The brand's response was appropriate."*

Attitude toward the brand. Participants responded to the following question: *"The way the brand answered the Internet user made me see it in a positive light."*

Behavioral intentions. Participants responded to three questions measuring their likelihood of engaging into the discussion: *"It makes me want to comment on the subject."; "It makes me want to engage into the discussion.";* and "*I would share the brand's reply."* We created a composite measure averaging these three items (α = .84).

Perceived aggressiveness. Participants responded to the following question: *"The brand's reply was agressive."*

Manipulation check. To check if participants perceived the response as explanatory, they responded to the following question: *"The brand's reply was explanatory."* To check if they perceived the response as sarcastic, participants responded to three questions *"The brand's reply was sarcastic."*; *"The brand's reply was ironic."*; and *"The brand's reply was mocking."* We created a composite measure averaging these three items ($\alpha = .88$).

Results

Manipulation check. Participants perceived the sarcastic response as more sarcastic ($M_{sarcastic} = 4.62$, $SD = 1.52$; $M_{explanatory} = 2.62$, $SD = 1.75$, $t(197) = -8.62$, $p < .001$) and less explanatory than the explanatory response ($M_{sarcastic} = 5.10$, $SD = 1.80$; $M_{explanatory} = 6.13$, $SD = 1.10$, $t(197) = 4.87$, $p < .001$).

Attitude toward the response. We found a main effect of response type, so that participants evaluated the explanatory response better than the sarcastic ($M_{explanatory} = 6.03$, $SD = 1.45$; $M_{sarcastic} = 5.33$, $SD = 1.94$; $F(1,198) = 10.08$, $p = .002$). We also found a main effect of social identity, in which in-group participants evaluated the responses better than the out-groups ($M_{ingroup} = 6.10$, $SD = 1.48$; $M_{outgroup} = 5.21$, $SD = 1.90$; $F(1,198) = 15.67$, $p < .001$). More interestingly, we found a significant interaction ($F(1,198) = 5.82$, $p = .017$), in a way that out-group participants found the explanatory response more appropriate than the sarcastic ($M_{explanatory} = 5.85$, $SD = 1.38$; $M_{sarcastic} = 4.55$, $SD = 2.13$; $p < .001$), while in-group participants found both responses equally appropriate ($M_{explanatory} = 6.20$, $SD = 1.51$; $M_{sarcastic} = 6.02$, $SD = 1.46$; $p = .58$).

Attitude toward the brand. Consistently, we found a main effect of response type, so that participants indicated that would see the brand in a more positive light when they saw the explanatory response than when they was the sarcastic ($M_{explanatory} = 5.96$, $SD = 1.41$; $M_{sarcastic} = 5.29$, $SD = 1.96$; $F(1,198) = 10.02$, $p = .002$). We also found a main effect of social identity in the same direction ($M_{ingroup} = 6.22$, $SD = 1.32$; $M_{outgroup} = 4.97$, $SD = 1.90$; $F(1,198) = 31.74$, $p < .001$). More interestingly, we found a significant interaction ($F(1,198) = 4.04$, $p = .046$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$, observed power = .52), in a way that out-group participants found that the explanatory response would lead them to see the brand in a more positive light than the sarcastic ($M_{explanatory} = 5.54$, $SD = 1.54$; $M_{sarcastic} = 4.38$, $SD = 2.06$; $p < .001$), while no differences appeared for in-group participants ($M_{explanatory} = 6.35$, $SD = 1.14$; $M_{sarcastic} = 6.09$, $SD = 1.47$; $p = .40$).

Behavioral intentions. We found a main effect of type of response, in which respondents' intentions were higher when the response was explanatory than when it was sarcastic ($M_{explanatory} = 5.40$, $SD = 1.48$; $M_{sarcastic} = 5.00$, $SD = 1.66$; $F(1,198) = 4.12$, $p = .044$), and a main effect of social identity, in which ingroups' intentions were higher than outgroups ($M_{ingroup} = 5.75$, $SD = 1.38$; $M_{outgroup} = 4.60$, $SD = 1.58$; $F(1,198) = 30.89$, $p < .001$). However, we did not find any interaction ($F(1,198) = 0.11$, $p = .74$).

Mediation analysis. We next examined whether the attitude toward the response, and the attitude toward the brand were mediated by perceived aggressiveness. To do so, we first conducted a moderated mediation analysis by performing a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 replications (PROCESS model 14). The results indicate a full moderated mediation for perceived aggressiveness, in which the indirect effect of perceived aggressiveness on the attitude toward the response through perceived aggressiveness was larger for the out-group ($\beta = -0.56$, 95% CI: -1.005 to -0.205) than for the in-group ($\beta = -0.28$, 95% CI: -0.646 to -0.052).

We repeated the procedure for attitude toward the brand. Results replicate: the indirect effect of perceived aggressiveness on the attitude toward the brand through perceived

aggressiveness was larger for the out-group (β = -0.52, 95% CI: -0.913 to -0.207) than for the in-group (β = -0.33, 95% CI: -0.642 to -0.115).

Discussion

This study provides initial evidence that when an activist brand replies to a consumer, outgroup members see the response in a more positive light when it is explanatory than when it is sarcastic. In-group members, however, likes the response similarly when it is explanatory or sarcastic. We found that the preference for an explanatory response is explained by perceived aggressiveness. Both outgroup and ingroup members see the sarcastic response as more aggressive than the explanatory, but the effect of aggression on attitudes is lower for ingroups than for outgroups.

This study has two limitations. First, the sarcastic response was perceived as aggressive, but it is also possible to have a non-aggressive sarcastic response. Also, a fictitious brand may not fit with a sarcastic tone, but there are brands who position themselves as sarcastic. Study 2 tackles these limitations.

STUDY 2

Study 2 replicates Study 1 with the intention of minimizing its limitation. For this, a real brand name was addressed, and the sarcastic response was less aggressive. Sony Music was chosen because recently it got involved in a similar situation on social medias. As in Study 1, this study investigates whether the type of response (sarcastic vs explanatory) has an effect on consumers' attitude toward the response and whether this relation is moderated by social identity (in-group vs out-group).

Participants and Design. Two hundred and one Brazilian adults (54.8% female; M_{age} = 32.2, SD_{age} = 10.04) were recruited through a consumer panel (Toluna). We randomly assigned participants to a two (response type: sarcastic vs. explanatory) by two (social identity: LGBT vs. non-LGBT) between-subjects design. To operationalize social identity, we did the same procedure as Study 1 recruiting the same number of participants who belonged (vs. not) to the LGBT group.

Procedure. We used the same procedures of Study 1 with the following differences. Participants read a scenario in which Sony Music replied to a customer's comment on one of its posts on Facebook. The post said that "Brand takes a stand against LGBT phobia" with a picture of a famous transgender singer named Pabllo Vittar. The customer's name has been replaced by the term Internet user and his comment was "I shouldn't be compelled to collude with this homosexual idiocy and mush less with that thing singing. I hope you have a son like that." Sony's post and the customer's comment are the same for all participants.

The manipulation came next. In the sarcastic response, Sony replied "It is not Thing that you should say, it is Gorgeous Diva! Pabllo Vittar is already my daughter, so your wish has come true. I'm very proud of her the way she is.". In the explanatory response, Sony replied "To clarify, the word you used indicates disease and homosexuality is not a disease. Everyone deserves respect. Pabllo Vittar is as wonderful as any other artist who expresses the self freely." Next, participants completed some questions identical to those measured in the Study 1.

Results

Manipulation check. Participants perceived the sarcastic response as more sarcastic ($M_{sarcastic}$ = 4.09, SD = 1.74; $M_{explanatory}$= 3.12, SD = 1.79, $t(199) = 4.87$, $p < .001$) and less

explanatory than the explanatory response ($M_{sarcastic}$ = 4.86, SD = 1.94; $M_{explanatory}$= 5.70, SD = 1.66, t(199) = 3.30, p < .001).

Attitude toward the response. We found a main effect of response type, so that participants evaluated the explanatory response better than the sarcastic ($M_{explanatory}$ = 5.86, SD =1.65; $M_{sarcastic}$ = 5.26, SD = 1.85; F(1,200) = 5.48, p = .020). We also found a main effect of social identity, in which in-group participants evaluated the responses better than the out-groups ($M_{ingroup}$ = 6.13, SD = 1.41; $M_{outgroup}$ = 5.03, SD = 1.92; F(1,200) = 20.60, p < .001). However, we did not found a significant interaction (F(1,200) = 1.49, p = .223).

Attitude toward the brand. We did not found a main effect of response type, so that participants indicated that would see the brand as positive light as same for the explanatory and sarcastic response ($M_{explanatory}$ = 5.75, SD =1.73; $M_{sarcastic}$ = 5.53, SD = 1.75; F(1,200) = .592, p = .442). We found a main effect of social identity ($M_{ingroup}$ = 6.28, SD = 1.25; $M_{outgroup}$ = 5.06, SD = 1.92; F(1,200) = 27.09, p < .001). However, we did not found a significant interaction (F(1,200) = .028, p = .868).

Behavioral intentions. We did not find a main effect of type of response, in which respondents' intentions were similar for both responses ($M_{explanatory}$ = 5.08, SD =1.74; $M_{sarcastic}$ = 4.82, SD = 1.68; F(1,200) = .851, p = .357). However, we found a main effect of social identity, in which ingroups' intentions were higher than outgroups ($M_{ingroup}$ = 5.55, SD = 1.44; $M_{outgroup}$ = 4.40, SD = 1.75; F(1,200) = 25.28, p < .001). We also did not find any interaction (F(1,200) = 2.01, p = .157).

Perceived aggressiveness. Both the explanatory and sarcastic messages were perceived as having the same level of aggressiveness ($M_{explanatory}$ = 2.55, SD =1.92; $M_{sarcastic}$ = 2.75, SD = 1.91; t(199) = .736, p = .46).

Discussion

This study reinforces the findings of Study 1 that the preference for an explanatory response is explained by perceived aggressiveness of the sarcastic response. By removing the aggressiveness of the sarcastic Sony response, the effects disappeared. When an activist brand replies to a consumer in a sarcastic, but not aggressive tone, both outgroup and ingroup members see the response in a positive light when it is either explanatory or sarcastic.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Brands have been increasingly adopting a clearer and public stance on societal issues, which has been referred to as brand activism. This strategy, however, may not praise all consumers: some of them are likely to feel dissatisfied or even offended by the brand's positioning. Under this condition, it is expected that those who do not agree with the company's attitude will comment and complain on social media platforms. Therefore, it is paramount to understand how companies should respond to negative messages posted by consumers.

The present research aimed to investigate whether a sarcastic response would be more appropriate than an explanatory one. Based on a context involving a criticism to the LGBT cause, we showed that outgroup members (non-LGBTs) are likely to response in a more positive light when the response its explanatory rather than sarcastic. We also found evidence that this preference is explained by the message's perceived aggressiveness, either when the brand is known (Sony Music) or unknown (no brand).

From a managerial standpoint, the findings provided here shed new light on brand activism, that is, a tendency among some brands to engage on societal problems on a more assertive manner. Companies that adopt this stance are likely to face a backlash from consumers

who do not agree with their positioning. Therefore, it is important for marketers to understand how to reply to negative messages in a way that does not harm the brand's reputation.

In terms of theoretical implications, this study contributes to the literature on consumer complaint by investigating a type of complaint that is not related to service or product failure. Also, we provide a further understanding of the use of sarcasm in marketing communication. Future studies investigating the role of sarcasm and explanatory responses on different contexts (e.g. with other societal causes other than LGBT) are welcomed.

REFERENCES

Attardo, Salvatore (1999): The place of cooperation in cognition. European Conference of Cognitive Science (ECCS'99) Sienna, Italy. October 27-30, 1999: 459-464.

Berger, A. A. (1976). Anatomy of the joke. *Journal of Communication*, 26(3), 113-115.

Colston, H. L. (1997). Salting a wound or sugaring a pill: the pragmatic functions of ironic criticism. *Discourse Processes,* 23(1), 25-45.

Crocker, J., & Luhtanen, R. (1990). Collective self-esteem and ingroup bias. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *58*(1), 60.

Deaux, K. (1994). Social identity. *PSYCHOLOGIST-LEICESTER-*, *7*, 259-259.

Dews, S., Kaplan, J., & Winner, E. (1995). Why not say it directly? The social functions of irony. *Discourse Processes*, 19(3), 347-367.

Forbes (2017). This Fashion Brand Wants You To Make Love, Not Walls. Retrieved January 28, 2019, from https://www.forbes.com/sites/susannahbreslin/2017/02/28/diesel-make-love-not-walls/#39687fe825de

Forbes (2018). Big Brands And Political Activism: What Do Marketers Think? Retrieved January 28, 2019, from https://www.forbes.com/sites/christinemoorman/2018/09/04/big-brands-and-political-activism-what-do-marketers-think/#3d1bdc027cc9

Harrison-Walker, L. J. (2019). The critical role of customer forgiveness in successful service recovery. *Journal of Business Research*, 95, 376-391.

Hayes, A. F. (2013). Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach. *Guilford Press*.

Huffpost (2016). Adidas Shuts Down Homophobic Commenters In The Best Way Possible. Retrieved January 28, 2019, from https://www.huffpostbrasil.com/entry/adidas-valentines-day-ad-same-sex-couple_n_56c56250e4b08ffac127b0eb

Knowledge @Wharton (2019). Did Gillette Miss the Mark with Its Toxic Masculinity Ad? Retrieved January 28, 2019, from http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/gillette-toxic-masculinity-ad/

Kozinets, R. V., & Handelman, J. M. (2004). Adversaries of consumption: Consumer movements, activism, and ideology. Journal of Consumer Research, 31(3), 691-704.

Long, D. L., & Graesser, A. C. (1988). Wit and humor in discourse processing. *Discourse Processes*, 11(1), 35-60.

Pizzutti, C., & Fernandes, D. (2010). Effect of recovery efforts on consumer trust and loyalty in e-tail: a contingency model. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 14(4), 127-160.

Sarkar, C., and Kotler, P. (2018). Brand Activism: From Purpose to Action. Retrieved November 22, 2018, from https://www.amazon.com/Brand-Activism-Purpose-Christian-Sarkar-ebook/dp/B07K71B413

Stets, J. E., & Burke, P. J. (2000). Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social psychology quarterly*, 224-237.

Tajfel, H. (1979). Individuals and groups in social psychology. *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, *18*(2), 183-190.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). An integrative theory of intergroup relations. *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, 7-24.

Tax, S. S., Brown, S. W., & Chandrashekaran, M. (1998). Customer evaluations of service complaint experiences: implications for relationship marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 60-76.

Warren, C., Barsky, A. & McGraw, A. P. (2018) Humor, Comedy, and Consumer Behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 45 (3) 529–552.