

WHARTON MARKETING CAMP

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Claudia Townsend is an associate professor of marketing at the University of Miami, School of Business. She performs research on consumer behavior and decision-making. Specifically, she examines how people make choices with a focus on how the visual presentation of information influences judgment and choice. She has published in leading marketing journals including the Journal of Consumer Research, the Journal of Marketing Research, and the Journal of Marketing. Dr. Townsend is on the Editorial Review Board of the Journal of Consumer Research as well as the Journal of Business Research. Dr. Townsend also has industry experience in market research and economic consulting. Dr. Townsend received her PhD at UCLA's Anderson School of Management and B.A. from Brown University graduating *magna cum laude* with honors.

Buying Beauty for the Long Run: (Mis)predicting Liking of Product Aesthetics

Abstract: How well can consumers predict future liking of different product designs? The present research identifies a systematic error in consumers' preferences and predicted liking for product aesthetics. Consumers predict a faster decrease in liking for high (vs. low) arousal potential product designs (i.e., intense colors or intense patterns) over repeat exposure because high arousal potential designs are expected to become increasingly irritating. These predictions are misguided, however, falsely leading consumers to avoid products with high arousal potential designs when making decision for extended product use. Seven studies test this conceptualization in the lab and in the field. The first five studies examine predicted liking for product designs of varying arousal potential levels over repeat exposure and how these intuitions influence product design preferences for long (vs. short) term use. The last two studies then investigate the accuracy of these intuitions by directly comparing predicted versus experienced liking for product designs of varying arousal potential levels over repeat exposure. The studies reveal a systematic error in prediction whereby consumers overestimate satiation from high arousal potential product designs. Managerial and theoretical applications are discussed.