

WHARTON MARKETING CAMP

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Naomi Mandel is the Yellow Corporation Professor of Marketing at the W.P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University. Professor Mandel's research examines consumer identity, food decision-making, materialism, and compensatory consumption. Additional research examines how activating high-level concepts in an individual's memory, including self-conceptions or feelings about mortality, can influence preference and choice. Her work has appeared in journals including the Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Marketing, Journal of Consumer Psychology, and Journal of Interactive Marketing.

She currently serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Consumer Psychology, and Journal of Marketing. She has also served as associate editor at the Journal of Consumer Psychology and the Journal of Marketing Research. She has received awards for her contributions to academia, most recently winning the 2016-17 Outstanding Doctoral Faculty Award.

ON THE FLEXIBILITY OF SELF-REPAIR: INTERDEPENDENCE FACILITATES FLUID COMPENSATORY CONSUMPTION

(Qin Wang, Monika Lisjak, & Naomi Mandel (Arizona State University))

Abstract: Prior research has shown that when consumers experience a threat to the self, they may seek products or activities to affirm the self in important domains that are either related (within-domain compensation) or unrelated (fluid compensation) to the threat (for a review, see Mandel et al., 2017). While this prior research has shown that people often cope with self-threat by engaging in within-domain compensation, the evidence for fluid compensation is relatively scant. The current research addresses this gap by examining the conditions under which consumers use fluid compensation to offset a self-threat, and the underlying mechanism.

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Specifically, we develop a conceptual model of how interdependence changes how individuals respond to self-discrepancy, and show that when experiencing a self-discrepancy (vs. control) in a particular domain, people high in interdependence are more likely to engage in fluid compensation, relative to those low in interdependence. This happens because when faced with a self-discrepancy, a high level of interdependence increases the salience of associations between the self and other important domains, thereby facilitating fluid compensation. Across six experiments, we provide evidence for the role of interdependence in fluid compensation and the underlying mechanism. Finally, we discuss the contributions to the broader literature on compensatory consumption and the implications for consumers' well-being.