

# Marketing Colloquia

## 2021 Fall

**Adriana Samper**

*Associate Professor*

Arizona State University, W. P. Carey School of Business

**Thursday, October 7, 2021**

12:00 PM to 1:10 PM

Colloquia will be held via Zoom

**Zoom:** <https://upenn.zoom.us/j/98189593755>

**YOU LIKE THIS, NOT THAT:**

### **HOW PHYSICAL DISABILITY SHAPES INFERRED PRODUCT PREFERENCES**

*ABSTRACT:* People with disabilities comprise over 15% of the global and 25% of the United States population. However, more than 30 years since the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act, many disability advocates maintain that the tastes and preferences of disabled people are largely ignored by policymakers and brands alike. We propose that is in part due to stereotyped inferences of disabled consumers' preferences. Specifically, we argue that nondisabled consumers interpret a cue of physical disability (e.g., crutches, wheelchair) as a signal of need for additional support (regardless of stated need), which elicits a belief that disabled consumers' utilitarian needs are not being met. As a result, across 7 studies we show that relative to nondisabled consumers, observers infer that disabled consumers prefer utilitarian products more and hedonic products less. This bias occurs even when observers are informed that the product is a gift, when provided substantial information about the target consumer's hedonic interests, or when presented with suboptimal utilitarian options. We further demonstrate that this suppression of hedonic interests and pursuits can be mitigated if the target's perceived need for support is attenuated through improvements in environmental accessibility. This work seeks to address the paucity of disability community representation in consumer research, identifies how aspects of the consumption environment can limit consumers with disabilities, and highlights opportunities to minimize these stereotypes by expanding accessibility.